



COVID-19 Preparedness & Prevention

In addition to our standard program excellence for client care and safety, we have added the following in compliance with COVID-19 best practices. The guidelines outline our program preparedness for and response to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. We continue to make sure that the safety and health of our clients and staff is our top priority. Best practices will navigate this new frontier.

The checklist was prepared based on the information available at the time of its creation. Our team continuously monitors the recommendations from the local, state, and federal governing and regulatory bodies (i.e., CDPH, CDC, DHCS, TJC). As we learn more, we will continue to assess and evaluate our best practices. Below are some adjustments we are making to ensure best practice safety.

COVID-19 is spread through close contact from person-to-person and can be spread by people with active symptoms and by those who are not showing symptoms. People are encouraged to maintain social distancing from one another. The virus is spread through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks.

Key Areas of Prevention

- Handwashing frequently throughout the day by all staff members and clients and reminded daily about the importance of handwashing.
- Hand sanitizers are available and recommended to be used throughout the day.
- Facial masks to be worn.
- Social Distancing.
- Staff and clients have been educated to avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Nonessential community outings and appointments will be limited and determined on a case-by-case basis.
- Routine disinfecting of high-touch surfaces (e.g., doorknobs and handles) throughout the day.
- Active screening and monitoring of clients and staff for fever and respiratory symptoms.
- Essential staff to keep our patients safe and provide clinical excellence, while reducing nonessential staff from coming in and out of the buildings. By keeping this volume down, we are implementing a best practice 'Safer at Home' modeling for our clients' home environment.

COVID-19 Cleaning Guidelines

- The following is a guide for the use of products that should be utilized to clean and disinfect various surfaces, fixtures, and furnishings within our program.

- As part of standard infection control practices, routine cleaning should be rigorous and ongoing throughout the day.
- Surfaces touched most frequently should be prioritized for routine cleaning because these surfaces can be reservoirs for germs and an exposure pathway for transmission to people through contact with these surfaces.
- It is the responsibility of all staff to keep our program clean and disinfected to prevent exposure to germs.
- Wear gloves before beginning any cleaning procedure.

Solid Surfaces

- Countertops, tables, desks, appliances, kitchen faucets, bathroom fixtures, etc.
- Wear gloves before beginning the cleaning process.
- Frequently used solid surfaces must be cleaned on a regular basis throughout the day.
- Bleach solutions are recommended.

Electronic Devices

- Computers, keyboards, phones, remote controls
- Alcohol prep pads can be used to wipe down electronic devices.
- Shared or communal electronic devices (e.g., phone, remote controls) must be cleaned after every unique user.

High-Touch Fixtures

- Doorknobs, candles, light switches, etc.
- Busy times of day, high-touch fixtures must be cleaned throughout the day.

Fabric and Sensitive Surfaces

- Vehicle interiors, seats, desk chairs, etc.
- Wear gloves while using a disinfectant cleaner.
- Cleaning is recommended in communal areas throughout the day.

Program Adjustments

We have made the following programming adjustments while the county Exec Order 'Safer at Home' is in place.

- 12-Step Meetings will be in house or via Zoom to participate in online meetings.
- Visitors on site will be limited to an urgent need in an emergency.
- Increased phone time will be an accommodation to the change in visitation.
- Doctor visits will be conducted sessions via telehealth.
- Client public outings will be evaluated in accordance with the current government executive order. While the 'Safer at Home' Order is in effect, outings will be limited to essential travel.

Social Distancing Guidelines

- Clients will be reminded to wash hands before and after all meals.
- Group facilitators will support clients in managing appropriate social distancing.
- Staff will ensure that appropriate distance is maintained when working one-to-one with clients.
- Exercise areas will be monitored to ensure distancing and sanitation after each use.

Admission Protocol

Our admission and leadership team are committed to ensuring the safety of our staff and clients. With the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, we wanted to add to our admission screening the most up-to-date recommended screening checklist. Below are the additional questions that our admissions team (Edrick Banks, Director of Admissions and Armen Akopyan, Community Outreach Coordinator) are implementing before someone is considered a potential admission. If someone meets the criteria for admission, they are screened again with a temperature reading before completion of the comprehensive in-person admission process.

Pre-Admission

The additional COVID-19 Symptoms Screening Checklist includes:

- 1) Traveled out of town recently?
- 2) Traveled internationally or had close contact with someone who has?
- 3) Traveled to/from a COVID-19 hotspot?
- 4) Had contact with COVID-19 patients?
- 5) Fever > 100 degrees (last 14 days)?
- 6) Coughing (last 14 days)?
- 7) Chest pressure (last 14 days)?
- 8) Breathing troubles (last 14 days)?
- 9) Wheezing or any other respiratory symptoms (last 14 days)?
- 10) Weakness (last 14 days)?
- 11) Aches and Pains (last 14 days)?
- 12) Loss of taste and smell (last 14 days)?
- 13) Diarrhea (last 14 days)?
- 14) Sore throat (last 14 days)?
- 15) Other health symptoms notes (description of concerns)

If any of the above are answered "YES," the potential admission will be guided to contact their Health Care Provider via phone for direction.

If the answers are "NO" and the potential admission meets our criteria for admission, they will have a temperature reading to determine appropriateness before completion of the admission process. A newly admitted client will be isolated in their own room until their test results confirm negative for the active virus. Clients will be taken to a testing site (diagnostic testing for the active virus) as soon as possible. Testing sites require an appointment to be set up in advance and state the purpose of the testing. The testing site may ask for the reason for the test as our clients are not symptomatic. The reason for testing is it is a requirement for residential treatment admission.

Two testing sites have been located for use:

- Most sites have the capacity and expanding their capacity to asymptomatic residents of a congregate living facility. There is a testing location finder at <https://covid19.ca.gov/testing-and-treatment/>

- The Torrance site is located at 20054 Hawthorne Blvd, Torrance, CA 90503. Bring insurance card, and whatever is not covered with their insurance, you can use the program credit card to cover those costs. If insurance does not cover it, the private pay rate is \$49 for the appointment and \$60 for the results. <https://virtual.providence.org/>

Client Develops Symptoms

- If a client develops symptoms that could indicate a COVID-19 infection, staff will immediately alert our MD team for a consultation.
- The client will need to stay in a room designated for isolation to limit the exposure of any other clients.
- In consultation with the MD team, the assessment of symptom severity and the client's needs will determine a potential transfer to a higher level of care.

Staff

With respect to our team, we should follow the guidance communicated through the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and other governmental health services authorities. If you are sick, you should stay at home.

- Check for any signs of illness before reporting to work each day and notify your supervisor if you develop symptoms.
- Prior to the start of your shift, you will be asked about any symptoms, and a confirmatory temperature reading will be completed.
- If you are feeling sick (e.g., fever, cough), **do not** come to work. Seek medical assistance immediately.
- Eliminate all unnecessary travel. Use video and phone conferencing whenever possible. Reduce extra trips or travel to the store for essential program items.
- If you believe you have been in close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19, contact your health care provider for guidance and get appropriate medical attention, and **do not** come back to work until you have tested negative or until the expiration of 14-day home quarantine.
- We strongly encourage anyone who has any vulnerability, such as: immunocompromised, asthmatic, pregnant, diabetic, or otherwise at risk, to seek guidance from your health care provider on what is best for you. Staff who are in one of the risk categories or staff who are not in a risk category but have concerns may self-quarantine if they desire. If you decide you want to do this, you will need to talk to your supervisor and let them know. In the event you wish to do this, we want you to know that the state of California has waived the one week waiting period to file unemployment for the two or three weeks you are off work. You can register an unemployment claim online.

Guidance Materials

https://www.thenationalcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/NCBH_COVID19_Guidance_for_BH_Facilities.pdf?dof=375ateTbd56

[COVID-19 Testing Task Force](#)

[California Department of Public Health Coronavirus Updates](#)