



**ALAMEDA COUNTY HEALTH CARE SERVICES AGENCY
PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

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Tuberculosis Health Update

Screening for Healthcare Personnel & Nationwide Tuberculin Skin Test Shortage September 2019

Current Situation

Several updates regarding tuberculosis (TB) have been sent to healthcare facilities in the past few months by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The Alameda County Public Health Department (ACPHD) is releasing this health update to provide a brief summary of two of these notifications: 1) CDPH All Facilities Letter 19–28 regarding TB Screening for Healthcare Personnel; and 2) CDC Nationwide Shortage of TB Skin Test Antigens.

CDPH All Facilities Letter 19–28 -Updates on TB Screening Recommendations for Healthcare Personnel

- [This letter issued by CDPH’s Licensing and Certification Branch](#) provided information regarding:
 - [CDC’s updated TB screening recommendations for health care personnel](#)
 - Submission of a TB Program Flexibility request to follow the new CDC guidelines rather than Title 22 requirements
- Information regarding submission of a TB Program Facility request can be found in a [previously issued All Facilities Letter](#), which links to the [Program Flexibility Form](#)
 - A [sample TB Program Flexibility request](#) was included in the All Facilities Letter 19–28

All questions regarding the TB Program Flexibility form or Title 22 requirements of the California Code of Regulations should be directed to the appropriate [CDPH Licensing and Certification District Office](#)

All questions regarding Title 8 of the Aerosol Transmissible Diseases Standard, should be directed to [CalOSHA](#).

CDC Nationwide Shortage of TB Skin Test Antigens

A [Health Advisory and Morbidity Mortality Weekly Report](#) provided information regarding:

- An expected 3- to 10-month nationwide shortage of Aplisol, which is one of two purified protein derivative (PPD) TB antigens licensed for use in performing TB skin tests
- Clinical and Public Health Recommendations to help reduce the impact of TB testing capability that may result from an expected shortage of Aplisol include:
 - Substitute interferon-gamma release assay (IGRA) blood tests for tuberculin skin tests (TSTs). Clinicians should be aware that criteria for IGRA test interpretation are different from criteria for interpretation of TSTs
 - Utilize Tubersol instead of Aplisol for TSTs
 - Prioritize allocation of TSTs in consultation with state and local public health authorities. Prioritization might require deferment of testing for some persons. Also, CDC recommends prioritizing testing only persons at high risk for TB such as:
 - Persons who are recent contacts exposed to persons with TB disease
 - Those born in or who frequently travel to countries where TB disease is common
 - Those who currently or previously lived in large group settings (e.g., homeless shelters or correctional facilities)
 - Persons with compromised immune systems, including those with health conditions or taking medications that alter immunity
 - Children, especially those aged < 5 years old, if they are in one of the risk groups noted above

If you have any questions regarding these recommendations, then please contact the **Alameda County Public Health Department TB Control Section** at (510) 667–3096.