



State of Louisiana
Louisiana Department of Health

HEALTHCARE FACILITY NOTICE/ORDER
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TO: All licensed Nursing Facilities in Louisiana

FROM: LDH Office of Public Health
Joseph Kanter, M.D.
State Health Officer

RE: State Health Officer Order

DATE: July 26, 2021

EFFECTIVE DATES: This Emergency Order shall be effective immediately and shall remain in effect until further notice from the State Health Officer.

RATIONALE AND LEGAL AUTHORITY:

On January 30, 2020, the International Health Regulations Emergency Committee of the World Health Organization declared the COVID-19 outbreak a "public health emergency of international concern" (PHEIC). On January 31, 2020, Health and Human Services Secretary Alex M. Azar II declared a public health emergency (PHE) for the United States, effective January 27, 2020. Pursuant to the Louisiana Health Emergency Powers Act, R.S. 29:760, *et seq.*, a state of public health emergency resulting from the outbreak of "coronavirus disease 2019" ("COVID-19") was declared to exist in the entire State of Louisiana by Proclamation Number 25 JBE 2020.

The COVID-19 outbreak in Louisiana continues. Measures are necessary to protect the health and safety of the public.

The State Health Officer expressly finds that the measures ordered herein are necessary to help control and prevent further spread of COVID-19, a communicable, contagious, and infectious disease that represent a serious and imminent threat to the public health.

NOW THEREFORE, pursuant to the powers vested in me by L.R.S. 40:1 *et seq.*, particularly La. R.S. 40:4(A)(13) and La. R.S. 40:5(A)(2), I, Joseph Kanter, M.D., State Health Officer, do hereby issue the following emergency order:



- (1) All Nursing Facilities licensed in Louisiana are mandated and directed to reinstate universal masking, regardless of COVID-19 vaccination status, in the nursing facility for all staff, residents and visitors. This is a temporary measure to protect the health and safety of all staff, residents and visitors due to the current surge of COVID-19 cases in Louisiana.**
 - (a) Each nursing facility shall revise its current policy and procedure to reflect this new requirement.**
 - (b) Residents DO NOT need to wear a mask when they are in their own room without visitors, while eating or if the resident has a medical condition that precludes masking.**
- (2) Any licensed-only (i.e., not certified for Medicare/Medicaid) nursing facility in Louisiana may impose stricter universal masking policies for all staff, residents and visitors than mandated in this Order if the facility chooses, provided that the facility has a policy and procedure in place to address such masking restrictions.**
- (3) This State Health Officer Order replaces and supersedes any previously issued State Health Officer orders/notices to licensed nursing facilities regarding masking of all staff, residents and visitors.**

Signed in Baton Rouge, Louisiana on July 26, 2021.



Joseph Kanter, MD, MPH
State Health Officer

Concurrence:

Dr. Courtney N. Phillips
LDH Secretary