



CALIFORNIA ACADEMY OF
FAMILY PHYSICIANS
STRONG MEDICINE FOR CALIFORNIA



CALIFORNIA
IMMUNIZATION
COALITION



CALIFORNIA
MEDICAL
ASSOCIATION

March 27, 2023

Dear California Physicians:

RE: Ending the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency: Recommendations for Pediatric Immunization Providers

Thanks to our collective efforts, the risks of severe COVID-19 to immunized Californians in the ongoing pandemic have decreased, contributing to the ending in 2023 of state and federal public health declarations of emergency (Table, page 3). However, [CDC COVID-NET data](#) indicate that hospitalization of infants and young children for COVID-19 have increased over the last year emphasizing the need to continue our efforts to increase their low rates of immunization as Californians have resumed everyday activities.

During Fall 2023, the federal government is expected to cease being the sole purchaser of COVID-19 vaccine, which will then be sold on the private market similar to other routine vaccines (See table page 3). We encourage you to order and administer COVID-19 vaccine for all eligible patients now, while it is free of cost and to consider the following strategies to get your patients up to date before the summer break starts:

- Promote COVID-19 vaccine availability to your patients via patient portals or other communications; some families may still be unaware children under 5 years of age are eligible to get vaccinated.
- Encourage patients to download their [digital vaccine records](#), which now include full immunization records, including reminder messages when immunizations are due.
- Administer COVID-19 vaccines at all visits, including well-child checks
- Use the [immunization registry](#) or your EHR to identify those due for COVID-19 vaccination.
- Schedule 2nd doses and boosters before families leave the clinic.
- Plan immunization catch-up clinics at times convenient for working parents, including weekends and evenings.
- Personal testimonials are persuasive and memorable; share the reasons why you believe vaccinating against COVID-19 is still important.
- Consider modifying your clinic's post COVID-19 vaccination observational time, as the 15-minute observational period is now optional. See [CDC clinical considerations](#) for more details.

As parents bring in their children to receive vaccines required for school/childcare entry, please offer COVID-19 vaccine and other routine immunizations missed during the pandemic.

Additional Resources:

- [Resources to Promote the COVID-19 Vaccine for Children & Teens](#) (CDC)
- [Talking with Parents about COVID-19 Vaccines for Children Webinar](#)
- [Don't Wait – Vaccinate Toolkit](#)
- [California COVID-19 Vaccination Program](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine Timing Schedule](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine Product Guide](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccination Best Practice Checklist](#)

Thank you again for keeping California kids healthy and protected against COVID-19 disease.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Yasuko Fukuda', followed by the letters 'MD'.

Yasuko Fukuda, MD FAAP
Chair, American Academy of Pediatrics, District IX California

Lauren Simon, MD
President, California Academy of Family Physicians

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Jasjit Singh'.

Jasjit Singh, MD
President, California Immunization Coalition

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Donaldo Hernandez'.

Donaldo Hernandez, MD
President, California Medical Association

(See Table next page)

Table: Estimated changes in status of pandemic measures

Date	Consequence	Declaration Ending / Authority
2/28/2023	Return to routine scope of work for EMTs and others	CA Public Health Emergency / CA Governor
4/1/2023	“Unwinding”: Temporary MediCal continuous coverage ends – annual renewal resumes	(No Declaration) / CMS – CA DHCS
5/11/2023	Minimal effect on vaccine coverage (separate requirements for no-cost coverage of recommended vaccines)	Federal Public Health Emergency / Federal HHS National Emergency Declaration / President
5/31/2023	DHCS COVID Uninsured Program Ends	(No Declaration) / CMS – CA DHCS
Fall 2023	“Commercialization”: COVID-19 Vaccine available on private market; CDPH manages VFC and other public supply orders	(End of federal contracts sole payor for vaccine)
10/1/2024	End to liability protection for countermeasures under EUA	PREP Act, 9th Amendment / Federal HHS