

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES

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March 10, 2022

TO: REGIONAL CENTER EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT DIRECTIVE 01-031022: TRACKING COVID-19
INCIDENCE

Welfare and Institutions (W&I) Code section 4639.6 authorizes the Director of the Department of Developmental Services (Department) to issue directives to regional centers as the Director deems necessary to protect consumer rights, health, safety, or welfare, or in accordance with W&I Code section 4434. Regional centers must comply with any directive issued by the Director pursuant to this section.

Beginning March 14, 2022, the requirements for completing COVID-19 special incident reports (SIRs) as specified in the Department's [May 22, 2020 Directive](#) are amended as follows:

- An individual tests positive for a new case of COVID-19; or
- ~~An individual receives medical attention at a hospital, emergency room, or urgent care clinic due to COVID-19 symptoms; or~~
- An individual's death is ~~related~~ attributed to COVID-19, either by confirmed COVID-19 positive testing or by medical diagnosis ~~unconfirmed by testing.~~

Service providers and regional centers should only report COVID-19 related incidents that meet the amended requirements above, and clearly indicate in each SIR a description of which reporting requirement applies. For clarity:

1. A "new case" means the first time someone becomes ill from COVID-19, or a subsequent illness after recovery from a prior COVID-19 illness. Please do not report every positive test result for the same instance of illness. For example, do not report every positive test result as someone tries to achieve a negative test to exit quarantine.
2. Please note, this change therefore shifts from reporting the number of *individuals* who have been sick, to the number of COVID-19 *cases* that occur. Reporting is intended to capture illness trends and where they occur. This change will capture multiple cases for one individual (e.g., someone who got both delta and omicron several months apart).
3. "An individual's death is attributed to COVID-19" means a death described in the SIR as attributed to COVID-19.

"Building Partnerships, Supporting Choices"

Regional center risk management teams have access to submitted information for analysis and other reporting needs. Public reporting of COVID-19 incidence will continue on the Department's [COVID-19 data webpage](#).

Additionally, reporting to the Department of COVID-19 incidence using the Excel-based tracker, known as the "surveillance tracker," is no longer required. To maintain timely response and technical assistance to COVID-19 situations, particularly in high-risk residential settings, regional centers should timely connect service providers directly to the Department's clinical services team, at ClinicalServices@dds.ca.gov.

The continued management and support in response to COVID-19 by self-advocates, families, service providers and regional centers in reporting known incidents is appreciated. Continued reporting through SIRs will enable us to collect and monitor valuable information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nancy Bargmann", is written over a light gray rectangular background.

NANCY BARGMANN
Director

cc: Regional Center Board Presidents
Regional Center Administrators
Regional Center Directors of Consumer Services
Regional Center Community Services Directors
Association of Regional Center Agencies