

Updated COVID-19 Healthcare Crisis Staffing Tiers

November 19, 2020

The New Mexico Department of Health (NMDOH) is updating entitled “Updated COVID-19 Healthcare Surge Staffing Tiers” distributed on November 10, 2020. The NMDOH is providing guidance for hospital systems within the state who are facing healthcare personnel (HCP) shortages secondary to the COVID-19 pandemic. There is a current surge in COVID-19 cases related to high levels of community transmission and all residents of NM are at risk. This guidance is based on the available scientific evidence related to the novel SARS-CoV2 virus, current CDC guidance, and the local context in New Mexico.

Implementation of crisis staffing plans is dynamic and a reflection of local burden of disease and staffing resources. Hospital administration will determine appropriate trigger points for the crisis staffing tiers depending on census and severity of HCP shortages. The ultimate goal is always to maintain the safest possible environment for HCP, patients, and the community.

For additional details see “NM Statewide Acute Care Medical Surge Plan for COVID-19 Pandemic Response”: <https://cvmodeling.nmhealth.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2020/05/NM-CSC-Plan-V.4.17.20.pdf>

Tier description	HCP may work if all tier criteria below are met
<p>TIER 1*</p> <p>Asymptomatic HCP with high risk occupational COVID-19 exposure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asymptomatic and not known to be infected • Complete a daily employee screening with temperature check before working • Comply with strict masking with procedural mask or higher grade • Maintain physical distance of 6 feet or more from others • Eat and drink alone • Complete a daily symptom survey for 14 days • Stop working if even mild symptoms develop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Notify supervisor ○ Get tested per protocol
<p>TIER 2</p> <p>Asymptomatic HCP with</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cohort patient setting is preferred • May continue to work after positive test if asymptomatic and able to perform all required tasks • Complete a daily employee screening with temperature check before working

EPIDEMIOLOGY AND RESPONSE

<p>confirmed COVID-19 allowed to work with confirmed COVID patients</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restricted from working with severely immunocompromised patients (transplant, hem-onc) • Stop working if even mild symptoms develop • Must wear N95 at all times in the work environment • Communication to notify staff when working under these conditions and actions taken to protect their health and safety
<p>TIER 3</p> <p>Asymptomatic HCP with confirmed COVID-19 allowed to work with non-COVID patients</p> <p>Should be considered as last resort option</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cohort patient setting is preferred • May continue to work after positive test if asymptomatic and able to perform all required tasks • Complete a daily employee screening with temperature check before working • Restricted from working with severely immunocompromised patients (transplant, hem-onc) • Stop working if even mild symptoms develop • Must wear N95 at all times in the work environment • Communication to notify staff when working under these conditions and actions taken to protect their health and safety • Refer to CDC Guidance for more detail: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/mitigating-staff-shortages.html

***HCP deemed a close contact of a COVID-19-positive individual outside of the work environment should consult with their employer but may return to work per the applicable crisis staffing tier**

The surge staffing tier description has been adapted from a University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center guidance document.