



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Expanding the State's Testing Workforce

DCA Director Waives Requirements to Allow for More Testing

SACRAMENTO – The Governor announced today efforts to expand the state's ability to provide more COVID-19 testing, including the ability for pharmacists to order and collect specimens necessary to perform tests for the virus. For pharmacists to help, the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) had to waive specific requirements that previously only allowed pharmacists to order certain tests and perform certain services.

"Testing for COVID-19 to help with identifying the safest way to return to work is vital for our state," said Kimberly Kirchmeyer, Director of DCA. "Pharmacists were a natural fit for the role as they already have the ability to order certain tests and perform certain healthcare services. We are happy to expand their ability to help meet the moment."

DCA's waiver allows pharmacists to order tests for the presence of COVID-19 in individual patients, and without coordination with the patient's primary care provider or diagnosing prescriber. Pharmacists may also collect test specimens (such as using nasopharyngeal swabs or other means) necessary to allow for analysis and interpretation of such COVID-19 tests.

The waiver is subject to the following conditions:

- The test is authorized by the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and is processed in a public health, commercial, or clinical laboratory pursuant to state and federal rules; and,
- The pharmacist is competent and trained to collect the specimen necessary to perform the test, and the specimen is collected consistent with the provisions of an Emergency Use Authorization issued by the FDA.

The full waiver can be read on the [DCA website](#) along with other waivers issued.

The waivers are issued as the Director exercises the authority under Governor Gavin Newsom's Executive Order N-39-20, which authorized the Director to waive any statutory or regulatory professional licensing requirement governing healing arts licensees and amend their scopes of practice. The Department of Consumer Affairs is working hand in hand with its healing arts licensing boards to determine which licensing requirement waivers would allow individuals to continue assisting with the COVID-19 pandemic while at the same time maintaining consumer protection.

The Department of Consumer Affairs is a consumer protection department under the Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency and has been working closely with other state departments and stakeholders to respond to and protect all Californians during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS: *The Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) promotes and protects the interests of California consumers while ensuring a competent and fair marketplace. DCA helps consumers learn how to protect themselves from unscrupulous and unqualified individuals. The department also protects professionals (licensees) from unfair competition by unlicensed practitioners. Consumers can file complaints against licensees by contacting DCA at (800) 952-5210. Consumers can also file a complaint online at dca.ca.gov.*