



Information for Families on Requiring SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) Testing of All Decedents in the City and County of San Francisco

UPDATED June 26, 2020

If your loved one is being tested, what do you need to know?

- On June 25, 2020, [Health Officer Order No. C19-14](#) was issued in San Francisco. It requires testing of the recently deceased for COVID-19.
- You will be asked to provide an email or phone number so you can be contacted if the test result is positive.
- If the result is positive, the Department of Public Health will be in touch with you as part of their contact tracing program. You will not be contacted if the result is negative.

AUDIENCE: Family members, loved ones or care givers of recently passed.

BACKGROUND: As of June 25, 2020, [Health Officer Order No. C19-14](#) was issued making testing for SARS-CoV-2 of the recently deceased mandatory. As the pandemic continues in the City and County of San Francisco, it is important to discover as much information as possible about the virus's spread within the community.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is this test being done?

This is a mandatory Health Officer Order that was issued by San Francisco. It will assist in learning about the spread of the virus and help families protect themselves and others.

May we decline or refuse the testing?

Since this is a mandatory Health Officer Order, it needs to be followed and cannot be declined.

What does the testing involve?

COVID-19 testing is performed by inserting a swab into the nose to take a sample. Your loved one will be treated with respect during this simple procedure.

What happens if my loved one tests positive for COVID-19?

You will only be contacted by the Department of Public Health if the results are positive. If you are contacted, it will be followed up with one of their contact tracers getting in touch with you for additional questions.



Who is paying for the test?

The City and County of San Francisco will be paying for the test. The order forbids anyone to pass on fees related to the test to the family, next of kin or the estate of the deceased.

When will I receive the test results?

Families will be notified of positive results within 2-3 working days from the test being performed. Please note, it could take longer during periods of high testing volume. If the result is negative, you will not be notified and nothing further will happen.

Will this testing delay our family's plans for a service, burial or moving the body outside of the city?

It should not delay plans because testing can take place during business hours and after hours as well. The only delay would be that the test needs to be done before a body is prepared for its final disposition. If a body is being transported out of the City, the test has to occur before the transport is done.

What is contact tracing?

Contact tracing is a program that helps determine who may have been in contact with an infected person in the days before they died, including when that person had no symptoms. If you had contact with the deceased before their death, you may be contacted by the San Francisco Department of Public Health who will guide you through the next steps.

Resources

Stay informed. Information is changing rapidly. Useful resources can be found at:

- **Resources for bereavement**
 - <https://www.ucsfhealth.org/education/bereavement-resources-and-services>
- **San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH)**
 - General preventive measures
 - <https://www.sfcddcp.org/covid19>
 - San Francisco Public Health Emergency Isolation & Quarantine Directives Frequently Asked Questions for the Public
 - <https://www.sfcddcp.org/Isolation-Quarantine-Packet>
 - Contact tracing
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#Contact-Tracing>