

**From:** [DHHEOC@la.gov](mailto:DHHEOC@la.gov)  
**Subject:** Louisiana Health Alert Network (LA HAN)--Allowable Medical, Surgical, & Dental Procedures: Updated 4/24/2020  
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[ATT00002.png](#)

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Message Urgency: **HIGH**

This is a message from the Louisiana Department of Health Emergency Operation Center (LDH EOC). This is a message for the Louisiana Health Alert Network (LA HAN). Please read the message below regarding **Allowable Medical, Surgical, and Dental Procedures: Update 04/24/2020** . Please share and distribute this alert concerning the outbreak of COVID-19 with relevant stakeholders and partners through your own distribution channels.

**John Bel  
Edwards**



**Dr. Courtney N. Phillips**

## **State of Louisiana**

Louisiana Department of Health  
Office of the Secretary

### **Allowable Medical, Surgical and Dental Procedures: Update 04/24/2020**

This message is intended to simplify and clarify the Louisiana Health Alert Network Message 20-25: Healthcare Facility Notice/Order #2020-COVID19-ALL-010 that was issued on Monday, April 20, 2020 by the State Health Officer and distributed via the LA HAN on Wednesday, April 22, 2020. The notice is applicable to all licensed healthcare facilities in Louisiana, as well as all healthcare professionals licensed, certified, authorized, or permitted by any board, authority, or commission under LDH.

All CMS guidance for facility reopening should be followed.

#### **Summary Points:**

- The decision to proceed with any medical, surgical, or dental procedure will be up to the professional judgement of the medical or dental professional.
- Doctors/Dentists operating in good faith will not be in violation of this order.
- If a provider, in their professional judgement, decides that a medical, surgical, or dental procedure is a time sensitive medical condition for an individual patient, the provider must document this in the patient's medical/dental chart.

- All providers should make every effort to follow PPE, social distancing, and environmental cleaning recommendations outlined by the CDC to protect their patients and staff both during procedures and business operations.
- PPE needs and stockpile should be determined by the medical professional performing the procedure and should correspond to the CDC guidance for the particular procedure being performed:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html>
- At time of appointment, screen the patient for COVID-19 symptoms, test (or refer for testing) if appropriate, and postpone symptomatic patients.
- Patients and staff should comply with social distancing before and up to the procedure.
- Each facility or provider that performs an invasive medical, surgical, or dental procedure shall contact the patient 10-14 days after the procedure/encounter to inquire about signs/symptoms and/or testing for COVID-19 and will make recommendations to any patient who responds affirmatively.
- Patients who have been identified on follow-up as a COVID-19 presumptive (symptomatic) or positive should be reported electronically to LDH-OPH.
- Follow-up within 10-14 days is required from the last date (discharge) of the time-sensitive procedure(s).
- COVID-19 testing should be performed (or referred) through normal available testing channels using an FDA approved or EUA COVID-19 test.

#### **Allowable Procedures:**

- An emergency medical condition
- To prevent further harms from an underlying health condition
- To address a time sensitive medical or dental condition
- Time sensitive conditions are those surgical, medical, or dental procedures in which a delay, in the opinion of the medical/dental professional, might adversely affect the patient or underlying disease process.
- Preventive procedures/visits can be deemed time-sensitive if performed with recommended preventive and social distancing precautions (i.e. dental cleanings or well child visits).

#### **Facility Requirements:**

- Adequate supplies, equipment, and medications for the procedure
- Appropriate staff to perform the procedure
- Adequate COVID-19 precautions and monitoring

#### **COVID-19 Precautions:**

- Prior to, and at the time of appointment, screen the patient for COVID-19 symptoms and test (or refer for testing) if appropriate.

- Comply with social distancing before and up to the procedure.
- Facility must have adequate and appropriate PPE to perform the procedure based on CDC guidance.
- Each facility or provider that performs an invasive medical, surgical, or dental procedure shall contact the patient 10-14 days after the procedure/encounter to inquire about signs/symptoms and/or testing for COVID-19 and will make recommendations to any patient who responds affirmatively.
- Patients who are identified a COVID-19 presumptive (symptomatic) or tested positive should be reported electronically to LOPH.

## **Professional Medical Judgement**

The decision to proceed with any medical, surgical or dental procedure will be up to the professional judgement of the medical or dental professional acting within his/her scope of practice and pursuant to the standard of care for that procedure.

Postpone any medical, surgical or dental procedure that can be delayed without adversely affecting the particular patient or the underlying disease.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What type of procedures are considered to be “time sensitive”?**

Time sensitive medical conditions are those that need to be performed because they have been postponed due to the previous order and because of that delay, may cause pain, distress, or further negative outcomes for the patient. These *can* include preventive procedures with appropriate precaution.

### **Are we differentiating the types of PPE (COVID, surgical, homemade, etc.) for different interactions and is there guidance on how to calculate the 5 day supply?**

Please refer to the CDC guidance on the appropriate PPE for COVID-19 and the procedure being performed.

A daily “burn rate” can be determined by a few factors: the number of staff in the facility, the number of patients seen, and number of procedures.

### **Where can we recommend patients who exhibit symptoms to go get tested?**

You can refer patients to their primary care physician, local hospital, or testing site – please ask that they call ahead. If patients have questions about testing sites or do not have a primary care physician, they can dial 2-1-1 for more information and assistance.

### **Do all patients need to have a COVID-19 test before coming in for a procedure?**

Testing should only be done before the procedure if a patient is exhibiting symptoms, which include a fever, cough, shortness of breath, etc. Obviously, the procedure should be postponed for any (non-emergency) symptomatic patient.

### **If our clinic has an accredited lab, will the state allow us to perform testing, or will we need to send our patients to a different location?**

COVID-19 testing can be conducted by any accredited medical facility/laboratory/test. Results should be sent to whatever lab you would normally use to collect and analyze samples.

**Should we continue telehealth visits?**

When available and medically appropriate, preventative checks or procedures should continue to be conducted via telehealth.

**Do the current CDC capacity limits (no more than 10 people in a gathering) apply to office staff?**

The capacity limits and social distancing should be followed whenever possible. To assist, it is recommended that you do not have patients packed in your waiting rooms but rather call them “back” individually at the time of their scheduled visit and have patients wait outside (in vehicles) whenever possible.

**Do all patients need a follow-up 10-14 days after their procedure, including preventative or follow-up appointments?**

No. The 10-14 day follow-up is only required for patients undergoing invasive procedures.