

Legislative Report Submitted by Dr Naomi Melvin – Legislative Chair

FLSSAMT – July 26,2021

The State of Florida Regulations

1. July 1, 2021 the State of Florida Department of Health announced the expiration of Florida's Emergency Order 20-002 and Emergency 20-003 related to Covid. Reference https://ahca.myflorida.com/MCHQ/Health_Facility_Regulation/Rulemaking.shtml.

- a) Out of state practitioners are no longer authorized to render services for patients in the State of Florida unless they become licensed to practice in Florida.
- b) Out of State practitioners can no longer authorized to perform telehealth services for patients in Florida.
- c) Controlled substances prescribers are required to conduct an in person physical examination to renew prescriptions.

2. Rule Chapter 59 A, -3, 59A-8, 59A-11,59A-18 are rules covering facility licensure and the rules are being reviewed for updating. No public face to face meetings are being done by the state Dept of Health., Licensed healthcare providers can participate in Open Voice conference line 1-888-585-9008.

3. OSHA Covid Standard 29 CFR Part 1910.502 was passed by OSHA and became Effective 7/21/2021. OSHA recognized the SAR-CoV-2 virus as a high occupational risk to many types of workers. The initial OSHA Covid plan that is required under this rule must identify the service areas in clinics, hospitals, ambulance and fire services where PPE, engineering devices and environmental barriers must be provided to reduce risk of exposure to Covid by healthcare workers in the facility. As of May 24, 2021 there were 491,816 healthcare workers infected with Covid 19 in this worldwide pandemic, 1600 deaths among this group and 600,000 deaths from Covid 19 in the United States alone. OSHA determined that exposure to this virus by healthcare workers is a grave danger that required employers to begin the development of OSHA guidelines to reduce the danger to the healthcare workers. Areas identified by OSHA are ERs, clinics, inpatient wards nursing homes, dental clinics and EMS services to list a few. An example of the OSHA guidelines follow:

The guidelines identify the need for having policies for employees that are exposed to Covid 19 based on a testing strategy and a symptoms strategy. **For Individuals with laboratory confirmed COVID-19 who have not had any symptoms:**

Time based strategy- Exclude workers until:

- 10 days have passed since the date of their first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test assuming they have not developed symptoms since their positive test. *Note because symptoms cannot be used to gauge where these individuals are in the course of their illness, it is possible the duration of viral shedding can be longer or shorter than 10 days. Serological antibody tests may be used to establish the course of the infection by the presence of IgM and IgG antibodies present in their blood.*

Test based strategy- Exclude from work until:

- Negative results of an FDA Emergency Use Authorized COVID-19 molecular assay for detection of SARS-CoV-2 RNA from two nasal pharyngeal swabs collected > 24 hours apart (total of two negative specimens).
- Serologic tests should be offered as a method to support diagnosis of acute COVID-19 for persons who present 9-14 days after illness onset with the development of IgM antibodies. Serological testing maximizes sensitivity of results as the PCR test sensitivity decreases.

All facilities need to have a written plan, identify risk areas of exposure, create mitigation strategies and implement the use of all preventive measures in the workplace.