



DIRECTIVE: JOB CORPS PROGRAM INSTRUCTION NOTICE NO. 23-09

TO: ALL JOB CORPS NATIONAL OFFICE STAFF
 ALL JOB CORPS REGIONAL OFFICE STAFF
 ALL JOB CORPS CENTER DIRECTORS
 ALL JOB CORPS CENTER OPERATORS
 ALL FOREST SERVICE JOB CORPS CENTERS
 ALL NATIONAL TRAINING AND SUPPORT CONTRACTORS
 ALL OUTREACH, ADMISSIONS, AND CTS CONTRACTORS
 ALL CENTER USERS

FROM: ERIN MCGEE
 Acting National Director
 Office of Job Corps

SUBJECT: Managing Respiratory Viruses on Job Corps Centers

1. **Purpose.** To inform Job Corps centers of the new guidance for managing respiratory viruses including COVID-19 released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
2. **Background.** Although COVID-19 remains an important public health threat, it is no longer the emergency that it once was, and its health impacts increasingly resemble those of other respiratory viral illnesses.

Key drivers and indicators of the reduction in threat from COVID-19 include:

- **High degree of population immunity against COVID-19** - there are now fewer hospitalizations and deaths due to COVID-19. [Weekly hospital admissions for COVID-19 have decreased by more than 75% and deaths. Additionally, more than 98 percent of the U.S. population now has some degree of protective immunity against COVID-19 from vaccination, prior infection, or both by more than 90% compared to January 2022, the peak of the initial Omicron wave.](#)
- **Effectiveness of protective tools, like vaccines and treatments** - [COVID-19 vaccination reduces the risk of symptomatic disease and hospitalization by about 50% compared to people not up to date on vaccination.](#)

On March 1, 2024, the CDC provided updated guidance on the current level of risk COVID-19 poses. As the threat from COVID-19 becomes similar to that of other common respiratory virus (e.g., influenza and RSV), the CDC issued [Respiratory Virus Guidance](#), rather than additional virus-specific guidance. This brings a unified, practical approach to addressing risk from a range of common respiratory viral illnesses that have similar routes of transmission and symptoms and similar prevention strategies. The updated guidance on steps to prevent spread reflects the key

reality that many people with respiratory virus symptoms do not know the specific virus they are infected with.

3. **Action.**

a. Program Instruction Notice (PIN) Rescission

PIN 22-17: Ending of COVID-19 State of Emergency and Updating Job Corps Procedures and
PIN 23-04: Guidance for Vaccine Preventable Respiratory Infections for the 2023-2024
Season are rescinded.

b. Job Corps centers are encouraged to continue to take actions to prevent respiratory illnesses including:

- ***Ensure Health and Wellness Staff are familiar with CDC Respiratory Illness Guidance:*** Centers are encouraged to review the new CDC's [Respiratory Virus Guidance](#).
- ***Encourage immunizations:*** Students should be encouraged to receive the most recent influenza and COVID-19 immunizations, [following CDC guidelines](#). Centers are encouraged to host vaccination clinics in common areas and conduct outreach and education.
- ***Promote good hygiene practices:*** Centers should continue to display communication materials that encourage handwashing, covering coughs and sneezes, and to frequently clean high-touch areas. More guidance and a link to free posters is available on the [CDC website](#).
- ***Educate and support precautions to prevent the spread of respiratory illness:*** The CDC guidance focuses on what to do when sick with a respiratory illness, including staying home and away from others when cold or flu symptoms start. Resume normal activities when:
 - Symptoms are getting better overall, and
 - No fever has been present (without using fever-reducing medication).After resuming normal activities, continue to be cautious over the next 5 days. Consider taking additional [steps for cleaner air](#), [hygiene](#), [masks](#), and [physical distancing](#) when around other people indoors.
- ***Evaluate and treat, as indicated:*** Healthcare providers are encouraged to review [CDC's resources for healthcare providers](#), and:
 - Instruct students to contact the Health and Wellness Center if they develop respiratory symptoms, such as fever, chills, body aches, coughing, sneezing or congestion.
 - Ensure appropriate Health and Wellness Staff evaluate individual student should these respiratory symptoms arise.
 - Clinicians may decide whether flu and/or COVID-19 testing is warranted based on:
 - Individual students' risk for severe disease including [influenza](#) or [COVID-19](#)
 - Respiratory illness patterns on campus

- ***Significant Incident Reporting:*** Centers should continue to complete a Significant Incident Report if 10 percent or greater of students have a respiratory illness.

4. **Effective Date.** Immediately.

5. **Expiration Date.** Until superseded.

6. **Inquiries.** Inquiries should be directed to Johnetta Davis at (202) 309-3953 or davis.johnetta@dol.gov.