



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO HEALTH AGENCY
PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT
PROVIDER HEALTH ADVISORY

Date: June 13, 2023

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Update: Death Certificates for COVID-19 Patients

By the end of this month, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) will change the way it counts COVID-19 deaths to only count deaths for which COVID-19 is present on the death certificate. **With this change, please be sure to note COVID-19 on the death certificate if a patient has died of causes including COVID-19.**

This change will align CDPH practice with the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists and the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC). It will also align the reporting of COVID-19 deaths with methods typical of other high-volume conditions, such as influenza and RSV. Using death certificate data supports long-term surveillance with less need for time-intensive investigations.

Death data remains crucial, locally and at state and national levels, to understanding the impact of COVID-19 overall and on specific communities. We ask for your extra diligence during and following this transition with COVID-19 death surveillance to ensure accurate local reporting.

Thank you for your ongoing work to support local epidemiologic surveillance as you care for SLO County's community members.

For more information on reporting/coding deaths due to COVID-19, please visit:
www.cdc.gov/nchs/covid19/coding-and-reporting.htm

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