



Frequently asked Questions by Licensees Regarding Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Please note that this is a rapidly evolving situation and guidance can change accordingly.

Please refer to guidelines distributed by:

- 1) The Governor's Website – Coronavirus (COVID-19) in California:

<https://covid19.ca.gov/>

- 2) The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

- 3) The California Department of Public Health (CDPH):

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/nCOV2019.aspx>

- 4) Your local health department (the below link lists local health departments by locale):

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Pages/LocalHealthServicesAndOffices.aspx>

Who can I contact if I suspect someone has COVID-19 or has been exposed to someone with COVID-19? Are Acupuncturists required to report outbreaks of diseases?

Please contact your local county public health department (third link listed above). While acupuncturists are not required to make a report, it is highly encouraged to notify your local public health department of suspected cases.

Can acupuncturists write notes excusing patients from school or work obligations?

Yes, however, it is often up to a receiving organization's policy to determine if the "excuse note" is acceptable for the purposes of their attendance policy.

Can acupuncturists turn away patients if a patient is suspected to have been exposed to COVID-19?

The Board urges all licensees to take all reasonable preventive measures, as recommended by the California Department of Public Health, the Center for Disease Control and the local health departments, to protect themselves, their staff and their patients from possible exposure to COVID-19.

In deciding what measure is appropriate for your situation, please note Business and Professions Code section 4955 (k), where patient abandonment is defined under unprofessional conduct as: "The abandonment of a patient by the licensee without written

notice to the patient that treatment is to be discontinued and before the patient has had a reasonable opportunity to secure the services of another practitioner. “

Therefore, if you do feel the need to suspend the treatment of a patient in order to protect your staff and your other patients from possible exposure to COVID-19, the Board recommends that you provide written notice to the patient in question explaining the situation and when you plan to resume care.

How do I notify patients if I am temporarily closing my acupuncture practice?

The Board recommends contacting patients via documented telephone calls, email or USPS. Licensee's may also want to offer some type of signage at their place of practice that messages office closure information to their clients.

How can I complete my continuing education (CE) requirements to renew my license when I cannot attend in-person continuing education courses?

Live webinars and distance education are options that allow licensees the ability to complete continuing education courses from their homes. Live webinars are considered live courses and not subject to the limitation on distance/home study courses. Licensees can view the list of approved courses on the Board's website to assist in locating Board approved CE courses. These lists can be found here:

https://www.acupuncture.ca.gov/licensees/approved_courses.shtml

My renewal is due, and, my continuing education course was cancelled, or I have experienced other challenges due to COVID-19. Now I cannot meet the minimum number of CE hours required to renew. What can I do?

Two Step Process:

- 1) Draft a letter asking for an extension of CE compliance, include your name, license number, and sign and date the request.
- 2) Send the extension request, your renewal form, and renewal payment to:

**Acupuncture Board
1747 N. Market Blvd, Suite 180
Sacramento, CA 95834**

The Board will grant an extension of CE compliance to renew your license. Please note that upon your next renewal, you will be required to show proof of all the required units for both licensing periods.

Am I required to close my office or keep it open during this public health crisis?

The Board does not have a recommendation on whether to remain open or to close. Please contact your local county health official (third link listed at the start of the document) with any questions specific to COVID-19 in your area.