

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

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?

If your renewal was/is due between March 31, 2020 and September 30, 2021, you can send your regular renewal form without attesting to the completion of the required CEU's and your license will be renewed with the requirement that any remaining units must be completed by January 262. This waiver process is also available when renewing on the Board's website.

Please note that this is a deferment of the CE requirement as a condition for renewal, not a waiver of the requirement. Please save all CE certificates for 4 years in case you are chosen at random for a CE audit.

To review the full waiver language, please refer to the DCA Waiver page:

https://www.dca.ca.gov/licensees/dca_waivers.shtml

If your renewal is due after September 30, 2021, requesting a CE extension will require you to:

- 1) Draft a letter requesting an extension of CE compliance, include your name, license number, expiration date, and sign and date the request.
- 2) Mail the request, your license 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. You will receive a letter with details on submitting the remaining units.