

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT PERSONNEL AND FIRST RESPONDERS**

*\*The recommendations below provide a summary of CDC guidelines for healthcare providers (including first responders) and law enforcement personnel. They do not reflect the opinions of the authors, AHN, AHNEMM, or USACS. The reference to these CDC guidelines is provided below.*

### **General information**

- Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus that spreads from person to person through respiratory droplets. Droplets commonly form when an infected person coughs or sneezes, and can then land in the mouth/nose/lungs of people who are nearby.
- Symptoms may appear 2 to 14 days after exposure to the virus. 80% of infected patients develop minimal to mild symptoms.
- Symptoms can include fever, cough, difficulty breathing, and shortness of breath.
- Transmission of the virus can occur following close contact with an individual who has COVID 19 including:
  - Being within 6ft of an individual with COVID-19 for a prolonged period of time.
  - Direct contact with bodily fluids (blood, phlegm, or respiratory droplets) from a person with COVID-19
  - **If proper PPE is worn, being in contact with an individual with COVID-19 does not constitute an exposure unless there is a failure of the PPE.**

### **Proper PPE and preventative measures include:**

- Maintain a 6ft distance if possible
- Avoid touching your face
- Wash your hands regularly though-out the day and after each interaction with a patient
- Wear proper PPE including
  - A single pair of disposable gloves
  - An N-95 filter mask. Facemasks are acceptable as long a no procedures generating aerosols are being performed.
  - Eye protection, not including personal contacts or glasses
  - A disposable isolation gown/coveralls as supply allows
- If you are unable to wear a disposable gown due to availability of stock, or cannot wear gown because it limits access to your duty belt or bunker gear, you must ensure duty belt and gear is disinfected after contact with an individual suspected of COVID-19.
- **If aerosol generating procedures are being performed then an N95 mask must be used. These include:**
  - Suctioning
  - Ventilating with a bag valve mask (BVM)
  - Intubation
  - Nebulizer treatment – including nasal Narcan administration
  - Continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) or BIPAP
  - Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)
- If you drive a patient to the hospital, PPE should be removed if the driver's cabin is isolated from the patient compartment to reduce contamination. If the driver's cabin is not isolated, the driver should keep their mask on and practice hand hygiene prior to transport.
- Disinfection of surfaces and clothing can be performed with any household cleaning spray or wipe.

### **Personnel who have been exposed to a patient with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 should**

- Notify their chain of command to ensure appropriate follow-up.
- Any unprotected exposure (e.g., not wearing recommended PPE) should be reported to occupational health services, a supervisor, or a designated infection control officer for evaluation.
- Personnel should be alert for fever or respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath, sore throat). If symptoms develop, they should self-isolate and notify occupational health services and/or their public health authority (PA DOH: 1-877-724-3258) to arrange for appropriate evaluation.

### **Reference**

- CDC Resources for First Responders and Law Enforcement. Available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/first-responders.html> . Accessed 3/18/2020 @0933.