

COVID-19 Update and Law Enforcement Guidance (last updated 4/8/20)

Public Health Communication

Do not call Public Health to report suspected COVID-19 cases. Healthcare providers will contact Public Health to report when they request COVID-19 testing.

Recommended Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Law enforcement who must make contact with individuals confirmed or suspected to have COVID-19 should follow Maricopa County Department of Public Health's [guidance for EMS](#). Different styles of PPE may be necessary to perform operational duties. These alternative styles (i.e. coveralls) must provide protection that is at least as great as that provided by the minimum amount of PPE recommended: **Standard, Contact, and Droplet Precautions, including the use of eye protection.**
- **Recommended PPE includes:**
 - **A single pair of disposable patient examination gloves. Change gloves if they become torn or heavily contaminated,**
 - **Disposable isolation gown,**
 - **Surgical mask (or N95 respirator if no surgical mask is available), and**
 - **Eye protection (i.e., goggles or disposable face shield that fully covers the front and sides of the face).**

**If unable to wear a disposable gown or coveralls because it limits access to duty belt and gear, ensure duty belt and gear are disinfected after contact with individual.*
- Law enforcement **should wear an N95 respirator** and exercise caution if participating in an aerosol-generating procedure (e.g., bag valve mask [BVM] ventilation, endotracheal intubation, or resuscitation involving emergency intubation or cardiopulmonary resuscitation [CPR]).
- After contact with a person with respiratory symptoms or known COVID-19, equipment should be cleaned in the routine fashion using manufacturer-approved cleaners.

Reuse of N95 Respirators

When N95 Supplies are Running Low:

- N95 respirators can be used beyond the manufacturer-designated shelf life.
- Limited re-use of N95s can be considered, but caution should be used since like many respiratory illnesses, COVID-19 can be transmitted via direct contact.
- There is no way of determining the maximum possible number of safe reuses for an N95 respirator as a generic number to be applied in all cases.

Guidelines for Reuse:

- Discard N95 respirators following use during aerosol generating procedures (e.g., CPR).
- Discard N95 respirators contaminated with blood, respiratory or nasal secretions, or other bodily fluids.

- Discard any respirator that is obviously damaged or becomes hard to breathe through
- Hang used respirators in a designated storage area or keep them in a clean, breathable container such as a paper bag between uses. To minimize potential cross-contamination, store respirators so that they do not touch each other and the person using the respirator is clearly identified. Storage containers should be disposed of or cleaned regularly.

Reminders about reusing N95 respirators:

- Remind staff to minimize unnecessary contact with the respirator surface, strict adherence to hand hygiene practices, and proper PPE donning and doffing technique, including physical inspection and performing a user seal check.
- Clean hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer before and after touching or adjusting the respirator.
- Avoid touching the inside of the respirator.

For additional guidance, see:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/hcwcontrols/recommendedguidanceextuse.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/respirators-strategy/crisis-alternate-strategies.html>

Protect Yourself Against Respiratory Illness

- If possible, maintain a distance of at least 6 feet when initially making contact with an individual with respiratory symptoms such as cough or shortness of breath.
- Practice proper hand hygiene. Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
- If illicit drugs are suspected, do not use alcohol based sanitizers.
- Ensure only trained personnel wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) have contact with individuals who have or are suspected of having COVID-19.
- Clean and disinfect duty belt and gear prior to reuse using a household cleaning spray or wipe, according to the product label.
- Follow standard operating procedures for the containment and disposal of used PPE.
- Follow standard operating procedures for containing and laundering clothes. Avoid shaking the clothes.

Law Enforcement Agency Responsibilities

The responsibilities described in this section are not specific for the apprehension and/or transport of persons suspected to have COVID-19 or person with confirmed COVID-19. However, this interim guidance presents an opportunity to assess current practices and verify that training and procedures are up-to-date.

- Law Enforcement Agencies should have infection control policies and procedures in place, including describing a recommended sequence for safely donning and doffing PPE.
- Provide all employees with job- or task-specific education and training on preventing transmission of infectious agents, including refresher training.
- Officers should have an adequate supply of PPE.
- Ensure an adequate supply of or access to EPA-registered hospital grade disinfectants (see above for more information) for adequate decontamination of transport vehicles and their contents.

- Follow the [COVID-19 Business Guidance](#) for routine internal social distancing practices including:
 - Minimizing the amount of in person meetings of 10 or more people.
 - Utilizing telework policies when possible.
 - Ensuring sick time policies are understood by employees.
 - Do not require a negative COVID-19 test for employees to return to work.

Law Enforcement agencies should:

- **Develop a system** to regularly monitor all employees' symptoms that could be consistent with COVID-19 like **fever (>100.4 °F) and any respiratory symptoms that are not known to be part of a chronic condition (i.e., asthma, allergies)**. (e.g., employees could be expected to monitor their temperature and any symptoms twice a day or before working a shift.)
 - **Respiratory symptoms include: cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, sneezing, full body/muscle aches**
- Reinforce that **employees should not report to work when ill**.

If employees develop any symptoms consistent with COVID-19 (fever or respiratory symptoms) while at work, they must:

- **Cease contact** with patients.
- **Put on a facemask** immediately (if not already wearing).
- **Notify** their supervisor or occupational health services prior to leaving work.
- Public Health does **not** need to be notified of ill employees.
- Employees should stay home until 72 hours after fever and symptoms of acute infection (not allergies or asthma) are gone, without the use of fever-reducing medication. This recommendation applies **regardless** of whether the individual has been tested for COVID-19 and is advised to reduce overall risk of transmission of flu-like symptoms before returning to work.

What to do if employees have had a known exposure to COVID-19:

- Allow **asymptomatic** employees to continue to work after consultation with their occupational health program. Use your monitoring system to **ensure exposed employees are monitored daily** for the 14 days after the last exposure.
- If the Law Enforcement agency has a sufficient supply, employees **who were not wearing recommended PPE during the COVID-19 exposure** could be asked to wear a facemask while at work for the 14 days after the exposure.

Maricopa County Department of Public Health Recommendations:

- **DO NOT** require a healthcare provider's note for employees who are sick with acute respiratory illness to validate their illness or return to work, as healthcare provider offices and medical facilities are extremely busy and not able to provide such documentation in a timely manner.
- **DO NOT** require a negative COVID-19 test for employee to return to work. Testing requires the use of personal protective equipment (PPE), which is in short supply and should be reserved for those who require medical care for their symptoms.