

Memorandum

Rogers Fire Department



To: All Personnel
From: Fire Chief Tom Jenkins
CC:
Date: March 24, 2020
Re: COVID-19 Preparedness and Response

Due to the spread of COVID-19 virus in the United States the Rogers Fire Department has determined that there is a need to standardize the response to patients *potentially* infected. This response will start with interrogation of the caller through our dispatch center using EMD/PROQA protocols. Should it be determined that the caller meets the established criteria, the dispatchers will notify the responding crews that the patient is being monitored for possible exposure to COVID-19, or the “coronavirus”. People being monitored due to their possible exposure to this virus are considered Persons Under Investigation (PUI) and DO NOT have a confirmed infection and are asymptomatic. However, they might become symptomatic and precautions are recommended for those who must have contact with them.

Patient contact with PUI’s should be limited to those responders necessary for patient care and support. Any emergency personnel encountering such a person should use the following precautions:

- Mask the Patient
- Gloves
- Gowns
- Mask (N95 preferable)
- Eye protection

The N95 masks used by responders are permitted for reuse by the same responder through guidance issued by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). Reuse should be discouraged if masks become grossly contaminated, soiled or hard to breathe through. Unusable masks should be discarded. Hang used masks in a clean storage area or keep them marked in a breathable container. Masks should not come in contact with other masks. Masks should be donned and doffed with medical gloves.

Utilization of recommended PPE will result in a low risk exposure, allowing the provider to continue without work restrictions. Members involved with low risk exposure will self-monitor by assessing their temperature twice daily for 14 days following the contact. If member remains asymptomatic and afebrile they may return to work as normal. If symptoms including fever, cough, shortness of breath, or sore throat should appear the member must immediately self-isolate and notify their shift commander for further direction.

To minimize the possibility of further spread of the COVID-19 virus it is *strongly* recommended that if the patient is stable (i.e. normotensive, normal respiratory function, no indication of sepsis etc) that they be encouraged to self-quarantine for 14 days from last possible exposure. Crews should limit their congregation around a patient and should place as much distance (6+ feet) between themselves and the patient as possible while still providing care. If the patient demands to be transported or if the patient presents with signs/symptoms that require transport, notify the receiving facility as soon as possible by stating in your radio report that you are transporting a potentially infected patient. Once you arrive at the hospital you should expect to go to the Decontamination room of the emergency department and be decontaminated by the emergency room staff.

If an RFD Member comes in contact with a confirmed or a possible COVID-19 patient, the RFD member should fill out city workers compensation forms as soon as prudent to do so.

It should be noted that currently there are strict guidelines from the CDC on testing possible COVID-19 patients. No prophylactic test are being given at this time. For further questions or information feel free to visit the Arkansas department of health or the CDC websites.