



Emergency Medical Services Agency

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MEMORANDUM

TO: All Alameda County First Responders and Care Workers
FROM: Alameda County EMS Agency *Mon*
DATE: March 20, 2020
RE: First Responder and Healthcare Worker Guidance for Possible Exposure – COVID-19

Please see the below guidance regarding possible exposure to COVID-19. Work-related exposures should be reported through employers' existing internal procedures. As testing is not yet available on a broad scale, there is a strong possibility that confirmation of infection may not be obtainable. It is important to note that the treatment modality for COVID-19 does not change based on test results and is driven by mitigation of symptoms. Please follow the guidance below, which is in accordance with the declaration from the Governor's Office and guidance from Alameda County Public Health.

Declaration from the Governor's Office on 3/16/20

To address the increased demand for healthcare workers and first responders, state departments shall authorize first responders, care providers and workers who are asymptomatic and taking precautions to prevent the transmission of COVID-19, to continue working during the period of this emergency.

Possible Exposure Guidance

First responders, both medical and non-medical, and healthcare providers who may be exposed to people showing signs of a respiratory infection (i.e. cough, fever, shortness of breath) should:

- **Report to work** if you do NOT have any of these symptoms:
 - Cough
 - Fever above 100.4 F (38 C)
 - Shortness of Breath
- If you develop cough, fever, and/or shortness of breath, **stay home (self-isolate)**.
 - Contact your primary healthcare provider as needed. Do not go to the hospital or activate 9-1-1 unless there are emergent symptoms that require immediate intervention.
 - Follow self-care guidance which is also valid for the general public and available at:
<https://ems.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/71/2020/03/EMSA-Home-Care-Instructions.pdf>
- **Do not return to work until:**
 - You are fever-free for 72 hours (3 days) *without* the use of fever-reducing medications (i.e. Tylenol, Motrin, Advil, etc.),
 - Cough or shortness of breath has improved, **and**
 - 7 days have passed since you started having signs or symptoms
 - Healthcare providers, including first responders, who have confirmed COVID infection may be cleared to return to work after these criteria are met but must mask up at work until symptoms fully resolve or 14 days have passed since symptom onset, whichever is longer.

In summary, practice standard **Universal Precautions** (disposable gloves, eye protection) to minimize exposure, and follow recommended **Social Distancing** (keep 6 feet away) if possible. Testing is not widely available so exposure confirmation may not be available but is not necessary to take the appropriate actions. Monitor yourself for cough, fever and/or shortness of breath, and stay home if you start feeling sick. Only access 9-1-1 or hospital services if necessary. Return to work based on guidance above.