



March 24, 2020

To: All EMS and Fire

From: Kraig Kinney, EMS Director

We are now over a week into enhanced operations to address Covid-19. I wanted to make sure we are all on the same page and create a brief that includes areas that keep occurring.

- All IDHS coronavirus information (General Waiver Orders and Guidance) is available at <https://www.in.gov/dhs/4142.htm> both under COVID-19 News & Resources and also under News/updates both on the Home page.
 - Note that we have providers asking about waivers on equipment, staffing, coverage. All of those are addressed in the Blanket Waiver Order #2.
 - There is also great guidance on PPE, determining an exposure for EMS crews and how to address, and guidance on aerosol-generating procedures, which is the greatest risk to EMS providers.
- PPE and exposure guidelines and basic Covid-19 information is available from the CDC and Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH).
 - <https://www.in.gov/isdh/28470.htm>
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-for-ems.html>
- **PPE is in limited supplies nationwide and should be conserved and utilized responsibly.**
 - Note that the CDC guidance indicates that N95 masks are preferred but when in limited supply should be reserved for invasive procedures on a patient.
 - Responders should continue utilizing simple face masks and gowns for suspected coronavirus response.
 - When N95 is utilized, evaluate carefully whether it may be preserved. Current guidance is that if it is not physically soiled, an N95 respirator may be re-used. There are cleaning guidelines as well.
 - Some hospitals and providers have been innovative in cycling N95 masks so that a mask is used for a shift and then set aside for 7 days so that any viral contamination should be gone.
- One area that IDHS is monitoring large potential exposure is too many responders on scene. Traditionally, police and fire have appropriately assisted and entered scenes. IF they cannot be properly protected like an EMS crews, they should be disregarded or remain outside of the residence and away from the patient if they are not needed for patient care purposes. Consider asking your Medical Director to alter EMD dispatch parameters to remove extra personnel from the scene. **Limit personnel that are allowed to enter a scene!**

To close, thank you all for your great work during the initial phase of this health emergency. Things are going to become more challenging before better. Take care of yourselves and show our appreciation for the responders that are doing a great job with this new working environment. If you believe this brief provides a response to a question or could help your provider organizations, please feel free to forward it.