



TOWNSEND FIRE-EMS DEPARTMENT

Proudly serving the citizens of Townsend since 1875

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DIRECTIVE

To: All Personnel
From: Mark R. Boynton, Fire-EMS Chief
Subject: COVID19Update
Date: March 26, 2020

Please read entire document, information has been updated throughout.

Friday March 13th an SOG for highly infected patients was issued followed by a March 23rd Directive in Covid19. As the pandemic progresses we will continue to monitor the situation and recommendations from CDC, FEMA, MEMA, DPH. At this time the SOG issued continues to be the best practice. Please make sure you are familiar with this guideline and respond as indicated.

The key points are: all calls for ill subjects, flu like symptoms, possible COVID19 the response and number of emergency responders shall be limited as much as possible. Proper protective clothing shall be worn and at a minimum be a surgical mask, double pair of gloves, safety glasses, Tyvek suit or gown. It is important to put a surgical mask on the patient as soon as possible if they will tolerate it. If the suspected COVID19 patient is in need of life saving measures such as nebulizer treatment, CPAP, intubation, CPR or rescue breathing all responders with patient contact shall wear a N95 mask. Nebulizer and CPAP must be discontinued prior to entering the emergency room. If proper protective clothing is utilized the risk of exposure is very low.

Supply's - We now have 150 N95 masks, 50 donated construction face masks that will be used in place of surgical masks if we run out, 4 boxes of surgical masks (200), 25 gowns and plenty of gloves. Because we have no idea how long this pandemic will last and how long it will take to get supplies if N95 masks are used on a call do not dispose of them unless they were splashed with bodily fluids. After the call place them in a brown paper bag, write your name on it and it can be reused by the same person five times. This will be your assigned mask until it can be replaced.

Off Duty Exposure - Out of an abundance of caution if you have a family member living in your house that has been exposed and is quarantined you will not be allowed to work until that family member tests negative and is allowed to return to work. If the family member tests positive you will not be allowed to return to work until you test negative as described below.

If you are in close contact with friends, family members or personnel you work with at another place of employment and they become symptomatic you must inform Captain Scott or Captain Grimley

as soon as possible and prior to reporting for duty or responding to any calls. To limit exposure other emergency responder and patients you will not be allowed to return to work and respond to any calls until you are tested and the results are negative.

If the initial test is negative you may return to work and follow twice daily health screenings. If you test positive you may not return until you test negative in two consecutive test.

Confirmed Cases - Currently there have been NO confirmed cases of COVID19 in Townsend. The Nashoba Department of Health will notify me when we have a confirmed case. If we treated this patient responders that were on the call will then be notified by Captain Scott or myself. All responses to suspected COVID19 patients shall be documented as an exposure or potential exposure. See attached "ADVISORY 03-02-2020" Again if crew members were properly protected the risk is low. Per Massachusetts Department of Public Health memorandum dated March 19th and CDC Guidelines <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-for-ems.html> those crew members can continue to work if it will affect staffing levels. However they shall be monitored for symptoms at the start of each shift and must wear a surgical mask while at work.

Unprotected exposure to individuals with COVID19 will follow CDC Guidelines <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-risk-assesment-hcp.html>

Inspections – All annual inspections are on hold, all other inspections (oil burner, propane tank, smoke/CO etc) will continue as they are low risk and essential. The Governor has allowed home owners to defer 26F and 26F1/2 inspections for 90 days after the state of emergency is terminated if the buyer agrees to accept responsibility. If an owner or buyer calls indicating they will be deferring the inspection please record the name, date, address and contact information and forward it to Captain Grimley and myself so we can follow up. When conducting inspections please adhere to the following guidelines:

- Prior to the inspection, on the same day as the inspection call the occupant or relator and ask if anyone in the house is sick or has been sick? If the answer is yes the inspection shall be rescheduled 21 days in the future. The occupant/relator shall be directed to the Governors order allowing deferral of inspection as an option.
- Personnel may wear and surgical mask while performing inspections, keep 6 feet away from all other people and limit the time in the dwelling.

Staffing – Current staffing levels are sufficient with very few open shifts. We do have two regular shift employees quarantined opening up a few shifts. We also have two personnel that are not taking shifts currently do reduce exposure and be available for their primary employer. We are concerned this could be a sign of staffing shortages in the near future. For this reason would like to remind paid-on-call personnel to let Captain Grimley know if you are available to work during this unprecedented time. We will continue to follow our staffing policy as long as possible. Knowing additional staff are available to maintain a fire response and drive EMS apparatus will be helpful moving forward.

Health Screening – At the beginning and end of each shift personnel shall screen each other for signs of COVID19 by taking each other's temperature and record any signs or symptoms. This means personnel working 10 hour shift will be screened twice. Personnel working a 24 will be screened 3 times etc. The information shall be recorded in the log book located in the kitchen. Anyone with a temperature greater than 100.4 shall notify Captain Grimley or Captain Scott and you will not be allowed to work.

COVID19 Testing – CVS Pharmacy 720 Boston Turnpike in Shrewsbury MA has been set up as a drive through test site for first responders. They are currently testing from 8am to 8pm seven days a week by appointment only. The only criteria to be tested is that you are a first responder. Test can be scheduled by calling 401-374-6777. Please let Captain Martin or myself know if you decide to get tested and provide us with the results.

Training – At the start of each shift ALL Personnel shall review the latest COVID19 information located in the "COVID19 Information and Reference Material" binder also located in the kitchen at the central fire station. Once the material have been reviewed the training log shall be dated and signed.

On-call-personnel are encouraged to stop by the central station to review the information or it can be viewed and acknowledged as being viewed on Fire Rescue 1 Academy <https://olt.firerescue1academy.com/login/#login>

All personnel shall watch the attached PPE donning and doffing video as soon and possible. This maybe done on Fire Rescue 1. On duty personnel can clicking the link below and complete a training sheet and submitting it to Captain Scott.

<https://utmb.ensemblevideo.com/hapi/v1/contents/permalinks/Nk9n7Q6H/view>

All personnel please take note, this document is a directive and shall be followed by all personnel. Failure to abide by this directive will result in disciplinary action.

This is a dynamic situation that is changing rapidly. If you have any questions please feel free to reach out to Captain Scott or myself, we will do our best to keep you updated with the latest information and any changes to our operations.