



**Bureau of  
Emergency Medical Services  
and Trauma Systems**

**POLICY STATEMENT**

*Supercedes/Updates:*

No. 20-04

Date: March 20, 2020

Re: COVID19 EMS  
Provider Exposure (V.01)

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**NOTICE: THIS IS A RAPIDLY EVOLVING SITUATION.  
PLEASE CHECK BACK DAILY FOR ANY UPDATES TO THIS POLICY.  
UPDATED 03.20.2020**

**PURPOSE**

This policy statement addresses agencies that provide Emergency Medical Services (EMS Agencies) and staff exposure to COVID19 patients.

**DAILY MONITORING AND RISK REDUCTION:**

Please refer to NYS DOH Bureau of EMS Policies 20-02 and 20-07 for the following risk reduction procedures:

1. **ALL AGENCIES:** Screen/Survey Providers at start of every shift (or directly prior to responding to a call for a volunteer or every 12 hours).
2. **ALL PROVIDERS:** Pre-screen patients from 6 feet away.
3. **ALL PROVIDERS:** Limit exposure risk by using a single surgical mask (unless damaged or soiled) whenever possible during EMS shift.

**EXPOSED PROVIDERS:**

Healthcare facilities and EMS Agencies, may allow healthcare personnel (HCP), which include EMS personnel, exposed to or recovering from COVID-19, whether direct care providers or other facility or agency staff, to work under the following conditions:

1. **OPERATIONS:** Exposed providers can continue to work permitting they are not symptomatic, and their absence would adversely impact the ability for an agency or EMS system to continue to provide an appropriate level of response. Self-monitoring should be continued as recommended below.
1. **ASYMPTOMATIC PROVIDERS:** HCP and EMS staff who have had contacts with confirmed or suspected cases and are asymptomatic.
  - **RETURN TO WORK ACTION:** HCP and EMS staff who are asymptomatic contacts of confirmed or suspected cases should self-monitor twice a day (temperature, symptoms), and undergo temperature monitoring and symptom checks at the beginning of each shift and at least every 12 hours.
  - **RETURN TO WORK ACTION:** Staff who are asymptomatic contacts should wear a facemask while working until 14 days after the last high-risk exposure.

2. **SYMPTOMATIC PROVIDERS:** HCP and EMS staff with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 have maintained isolation for at least 7 days after illness onset and have been at least 72 hours fever-free with other symptoms improving.
    - **RETURN TO WORK ACTION:** At the current time, staff who are recovered from COVID-19 should wear a facemask until 14 days after onset of illness if mild symptoms persist but are improving.
  3. **REDUCED RISK ASSIGNMENT** (if possible): At the current time, staff working under these conditions should preferentially be assigned, whenever possible, to job functions that have less contacts with others. Staffing models may consider assigning partners who are both in this category to reduce risk. Crews may be assigned to work a slower response area that may have fewer patient contacts. As this pandemic grows, the potential that all staff will need to be assigned to any assignment will grow.
  4. **PROVIDER BECOMES SYMPTOMATIC:** If staff who are asymptomatic develop symptoms consistent with COVID-19, they should immediately stop work and isolate at home. Testing should be prioritized for hospitalized health care workers. All staff with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 should be dealt with as if they have this infection regardless of the availability of test results.
- **QUESTIONS:**
    - General questions or comments about this advisory can be sent to [emsinfo@health.ny.gov](mailto:emsinfo@health.ny.gov)
    - **Call the Novel Coronavirus Hotline 24/7 at 1-888-364-3065 for additional guidance**