

Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

Recent Updates:

6/27/20: Symptoms of COVID-19 updated. Also clarified that individuals with COVID-19 may also be asymptomatic.

7/23/20: Provided instructions on working after an exposure to COVID-19 on the job.

The Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) situation is rapidly evolving, therefore Public Safety and First Responders are encouraged to check the Department of Public Health COVID-19 [webpage](#) and the CDC [website](#) for current information.

1. What are the typical symptoms of COVID-19?

Reported illnesses have ranged from people with mild symptoms to people becoming severely ill, requiring admission to the hospital, and dying.

Symptoms of COVID-19 may include the following: fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body ache, headache, sore throat, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, congestion or runny nose, or new loss of taste or smell. This list of symptoms is not all inclusive. Please consult your medical provider about any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you.



2. How is the virus spread?

Like other respiratory illnesses, human coronaviruses most commonly spread to others from an infected person through:

- Droplets produced through coughing, sneezing or talking.
- [Close personal contact](#)
- Touching an object or surface with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes before washing your hands.

Some people get COVID-19 without ever showing symptoms but they can still spread the infection to others.

3. What should I do if I have to interact with a person with respiratory symptoms?

If the person has a fever, shortness of breath/difficulty breathing, or cough:

- If possible, maintain a distance of at least 6 feet.
- Have a trained Emergency Medical Service/ Emergency Medical Technician (EMS/EMT) assess and transport anyone that has symptoms of fever and cough or shortness of breath and who may require evaluation at a healthcare facility.
- If contact must be made then follow [CDC's Interim Guidance for EMS](#) for recommended personal protective equipment. At minimum this should include:
 - Disposable examination gloves
 - Isolation gown or single use coveralls (if gowns or overalls are unavailable be sure to clean

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duty belts and gear as noted below)

- Surgical mask
- Eye protection (i.e., goggles or disposable face shield that fully covers the front and sides of the face).
- Wash your hands with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds after contact. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- If close contact has occurred with someone who has symptoms of COVID-19 noted above, be sure to clean and disinfect your duty belt and gear prior to reusing it with a household cleaning spray or wipe and follow standard procedures for disposal of any personal protective equipment and for laundering of clothes.

4. Can I work if I have been exposed to COVID-19 while on the job?

You should stay at home and quarantine for 14 days if you were exposed to a person with COVID-19 on the job and were not wearing a facemask. If there is a staffing critical shortage, First Responders and Public Safety workers who are close contacts to a patient with COVID-19 may be permitted to work by their employer as long as they remain asymptomatic and wear a surgical facemask for the full 14 days after the exposure event (Be sure to follow your department's specific protocols). A cloth face covering is not adequate protection in this setting. Exposed staff should self-monitor for fever and symptoms of COVID-19 two times a day – once before going to work, and 12 hours later. When you are not at work you must observe full home quarantine. Testing for COVID-19 is not recommended if you were exposed to a case that you may have encountered while on the job unless you develop symptoms of COVID-19.

5. What else can I do to protect myself?

As with other respiratory illnesses, there are steps that everyone can take daily to reduce the risk of getting sick or infecting others with circulating viruses. You should:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash. If you do not have a tissue, use your sleeve (not your hands).
- Learn your employer's plan for exposure control and participate in all-hands training on the use of Protective Personal Equipment (PPE) for respiratory protection, if available.

You can also refer to CDC's Guidance on [What Law Enforcement Personnel Need to Know about Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#) for additional information.

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Always check with reliable sources for the up-to-date, accurate information about COVID-19.

- Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LACDPH, County)
 - <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/>
- California Department of Public Health (CDPH, State)
 - <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/nCOV2019.aspx>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, National)
 - <http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/novel-coronavirus-2019.html>
- World Health Organization (WHO, International)
 - <https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus>

If you have questions and would like to speak to someone call 2-1-1.

