



County of San Diego

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EMS PERSONNEL MASKING RECOMMENDATIONS DURING THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK

Best practices for management of the COVID-19 outbreak are dynamic due to the rapidly evolving situation and changing scientific knowledge. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance for [EMS providers](#) and [healthcare personnel](#) are continuously updated. All healthcare personnel should review these recommendations regularly.

On April 1st, the [California Department of Public Health \(CDPH\) recommended the general public wear face coverings](#). On April 3, CDC [recommended cloth face coverings in public settings](#). EMS personnel should take the following precautions:

- Continue to wear N95 respirators (or equivalent) when likely to engage in aerosol-generating procedures **OR while encountering patients with severe aerosol-generating symptoms** (e.g., coughing, sneezing);
- **Place a surgical facemask on all EMS patients** at initial encounter, as tolerated;
- **Wear respiratory protection for every EMS response** (facemask or higher level protection as indicated);
- Institute a 1-crew member “scout” procedure to determine the nature of the EMS contact and the appropriate level of crew PPE;
- Follow CDPH and [County Public Health](#) recommendations when on- and off-duty, including maintaining social distancing, frequent hand washing, and face coverings when leaving your home.

These interventions will help protect you as you protect our community – including from asymptomatic transmission of the novel coronavirus. Thank you for your continued support and attention to managing this unprecedented event.

Respectfully,

Kristi L. Koenig, MD, FACEP, FIFEM, FAEMS, Medical Director
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cc: Nick Yphantides, MD, MPH, Chief Medical Officer
Andrew Parr, EMS Administrator