



County of San Diego

NICK MACCHIONE, FACHE
AGENCY DIRECTOR

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
6255 MISSION GORGE ROAD, MAIL STOP S-555
SAN DIEGO, CA 92120-3599
(619) 285-6429 • FAX (619) 285-6531

NICK YPHANTIDES, M.D., M.P.H.
CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER

March 15, 2020

EMS MEDICAL DIRECTOR URGES SOCIAL DISTANCING DURING THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK

As you are aware, San Diego County has seen a serious uptick in COVID-19 cases. As a coordinated approach across the region, we are implementing a wide array of containment and mitigation strategies to slow the spread of the virus and to conserve valuable healthcare resources.

Our community needs us to be ready and able to respond. We will be exposed to the COVID-19 virus in the course of our work and do not want to become vectors of the virus to the general public, colleagues, friends, or family. In addition, we cannot afford to lose EMS providers to disease or to quarantine restrictions.

We are hereby urging all EMS providers to **implement social distancing immediately**. This means whenever possible – *and not required as part of emergency responses* – to:

- Stay away from public places, including limiting all non-essential on-duty public visits
- Stay away from public gatherings such as movie theaters, sporting events, nightclubs, concerts, houses of worship and other places where groups of people assemble
- Attend all meetings, training sessions, or other work-related gatherings electronically unless physical presence is absolutely necessary. Replace non-essential meetings with email or other electronic communications
- Eliminate all non-essential travel
- Protect yourself at work using appropriate PPE and frequent handwashing/hand sanitizing

We recognize that EMS providers are called to these public venues daily as a member of the emergency response system, and these recommendations should not be interpreted as a directive to avoid professional duties. Instead, we encourage EMS providers to exercise extra diligence to their safety off the job.

Thank you for your continued support and attention to managing this unprecedented event. 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.

Respectfully,

Kristi L. Koenig, MD, FACEP, FIFEM, FAEMS, Medical Director
Emergency Medical Services
County of San Diego Health & Human Services Agency

cc: Nick Yphantides, MD, MPH, Chief Medical Officer
Andrew Parr, EMS Administrator