



09/17/20

To: All PAEMS Agencies and Providers

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Notice to All Providers:

It has come to our attention that many providers are selectively choosing which patients to wear a mask with, and feel that masking with patients is optional.

To clarify, it is **required** that all personnel coming less than 6 feet of ANY patient should wear PPE in accordance with guidelines set forth in the system COVID-19 policy. At a minimum, a surgical style mask (no cloth masks) should be worn with all patients, regardless of complaint. It is further recommended that eye protection should be worn with all patients, and if available, gowns should be worn, especially during direct patient care, or if close contact is anticipated during patient care.

If an aerosol generating procedure is being performed (CPR, nebulizers/inhalers, suctioning, airway manipulation), or if the patient is actively coughing, sneezing, or demonstrating symptoms consistent with SARS-CoV-2 infection, a NIOSH certified N95 or higher rated mask, along with eye protection, and gown shall be worn.

Furthermore, it is required that all patients have some sort of face covering as well (surgical PPE masks are ideal and shall be used when available).

In addition, it is recommended that all EMS crews wear masks when in the vehicle with one another, (even when not on a call), or when at that station (or other locations) when social distancing is not possible. If patient care is not being performed, a personal cloth mask is acceptable.

It is known that there are significant circulating levels of SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) in the community, which may be associated with minimal to no symptoms in patients. These patients, while presenting with other problems not related to COVID-19, may easily pass the infection to providers if precautions are not adhered to. Due to this, it would be easy for an entire department to be shut down due to spread of the virus among providers. Conversely, EMS providers may have the virus, and may not have symptoms, placing our patients at serious risk of transmission.

In short, masking with a surgical mask designed for PPE use is MANDATORY with all patient contact.

This mandate is to protect you as well as our patients.

Please contact the EMS office for any questions or concerns, and stay safe.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matthew N. Jackson, M.D.", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Matthew N. Jackson, M.D., FAAEM, FACEP

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