



Humboldt Bay Fire News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Subject : HBF & COVID: PPE, Protection, and Exposure

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Humboldt Bay Fire and the City of Eureka are evaluating the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on our services in light of State and Federal recommendations. We continue to adjust our operating procedures as we learn more about the virus in an effort to provide the highest level of service to the public while protecting our personnel, patients, and community.

Increase in Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)– In light of recent changes in recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF), and as a further measure to reduce our crews' exposure to COVID-19 moving forward, we will be enhancing usage of PPE when interacting with the public.

Before, you may have seen our crew in a medical aid jacket, gloves, and eye protection for a typical medical aid call. As of late, our crew would have looked a little more clinical on calls including flu-like symptoms- wearing an N95 mask and Tyvek gown in addition to their jacket, gloves, and eye protection.

Now, crews will be wearing gloves, N95 masks, gowns, and eye protection on every medical aid call. In addition, crews will be wearing gloves, masks, and eye protection for every interaction with the public, call-related or otherwise.

These changes have been made in an abundance of caution to protect our personnel and their families, patients, and the community at large in light of the community spread of COVID-19.

Other Protection Efforts– Station-based protection measures include frequent hand washing and sanitizing, proper coughing and sneezing etiquette, social distancing, and regular cleaning of the stations, engines/trucks, and equipment with CDC-approved solutions. In addition, personnel are now screening themselves for symptoms and taking temperatures twice daily.

Exposure Planning– As the community spread of COVID-19 continues, we plan for the likelihood that personnel may be exposed to asymptomatic or symptomatic positive case(s) of COVID-19. We have a pandemic plan in place that accounts for personnel exposure, isolation, staffing, and continuity of operations to ensure the safety of our personnel and community.

Recently, several of our personnel were exposed to an asymptomatic patient who was hospitalized, became symptomatic, and later tested positive for COVID-19. This resulted in some personnel, none of whom have any symptoms, being quarantined. This underlines the importance of abiding by the guidance of the County Health Officer and working together as a community to flatten the curve of this virus and protect one another. As first responders, your Humboldt Bay Firefighters remain on the front lines and potentially at risk. Currently, over 3,700 firefighters in the U.S. are quarantined for symptoms related to

COVID-19; Please do not let your Humboldt Bay Firefighters further add to that number. Stay at home for us so that we can stay at work for you.

Stations Remain Closed– Our stations remain closed to the public, so please refrain from in-person visits. If you are exhibiting any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 including fever, cough, shortness of breath, or gastrointestinal issues, please contact your health care provider. Call 9-1-1 if you are experiencing a true medical emergency and *alert the dispatcher to any flu-like symptoms*.

Questions or Concerns about COVID-19? Contact the County of Humboldt's Joint Information Center (JIC) at **707-441-5000** or email **covidinfo@co.humboldt.ca.us**

Humboldt Bay Fire, the City of Eureka, and the County of Humboldt will continue to evaluate the threat of COVID-19 to our community and provide updates as warranted. We remain committed to the safety of our community, and we will get through this together. Please help us by staying home. Together, we can flatten the curve.

#HumboldtTogether
#HumCoCOVID
#StayHomeStaySafeSaveLives

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