**Standard Operating Guideline:** COVID-19 Ambulance Decontamination

**Issued:**

**Effective Dates:**

**PURPOSE**: To provide a standardized method of decontaminating ambulances to prevent spread of the COVID-19 virus to responders and subsequent patients.

**SCOPE**: To provide a consistent and interoperable capability among all fire departments in Massachusetts, this Standard Operating Guideline should be followed by all departments.

**GUIDELINES:** EMS personnel are to clean the ambulance in which any patient at risk

of COVID-19 exposure was transported, in accordance with the CDC’s recommendations, and in conjunction with the Service’s routine cleaning practices. Specifically, the CDC recommends the following guidelines for cleaning or maintaining EMS transport vehicles and equipment after transporting a patient under investigation for COVID-19:

1. After transporting the patient, leave the rear doors of the transport vehicle open to allow for sufficient air changes to remove potentially infectious particles. The time to complete transfer of the patient to the receiving facility and complete all documentation should provide sufficient air changes.
2. When cleaning the vehicle, EMS personnel should wear a disposable gown and gloves. A face shield or facemask and goggles should also be worn if splashes or sprays during cleaning are anticipated.
3. Ensure that environmental cleaning and disinfection procedures are followed consistently and correctly, to include the provision of adequate ventilation when chemicals are in use. Doors should remain open when cleaning the vehicle.
4. Routine cleaning and disinfection procedures (e.g., using cleaners and water to pre-clean surfaces prior to applying an EPA-registered, hospital-grade disinfectant to frequently touched surfaces or objects for appropriate contact times as indicated on the product’s label) are appropriate for severe acute respiratory syndrome COVID-19 (coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2)) in healthcare settings, including those patient-care areas in which aerosol-generating procedures are performed.
   1. The EPA has updated guidance about recommended EPA-registered disinfectants that meet the criteria for use against SARS-CoV-2, which is posted online at: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>.
5. Clean and disinfect the vehicle in accordance with standard operating procedures. **All surfaces** [[1]](#footnote-1)that may have come in contact with the patient or materials contaminated during patient care (e.g., stretcher, rails, control panels, floors, walls, work surfaces) should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected using an EPA-registered hospital grade disinfectant in accordance with the product label.
6. Clean and disinfect reusable patient-care equipment before use on another patient, according to manufacturer’s instructions.
7. Follow standard operating procedures for the containment and disposal of used PPE and regulated medical waste.
8. Follow standard operating procedures for containing and laundering used linen. Avoid shaking the linen.[[2]](#footnote-2)

1. Emphasis added. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The above SOG was entirely derived from a Mass DPH Memorandum addressing Post Transport Cleaning, dated March 20, 2020. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)