**Standard Operating Guideline:** **Risk-Based Guidance for Exposure Reduction**

**Issued:**

**Effective Dates:**

**PURPOSE**: Reduce the risk to fire fighters and EMS providers, and reduce the number of same placed at risk, to COVID-19 exposure through modified response practices.

**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:** The following measures are recommended to minimize exposure:

1. Modified Actions for Medical Responses – It is not recommended that fire departments alter their response to medical emergencies by eliminating tiered response or the support of an engine, ladder or rescue company responding as first responders or in support of EMS units. Modifications are made regarding actions taken upon arrival, based upon triage and on scene observations.
2. Actions for 1st Responder apparatus – Does to EMS Ambulance

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| **Incident Type/Severity** | **Initial Actions** | **Follow-on Actions** |
| Minor illness/injury, NOT related to COVID-19 | Stage response team outside of the occupancy. If possible, make verbal contact with the patient and determine if immediate aid is needed. | **No Answer**: Send in one or two responder(s) with communications and “All patient contact” PPE (see PPE SOG) and 1st responder medical equipment |
| **Immediate assistance needed**: Full team, dons PPE as above and makes entry |
| **Patient/Caller state no immediate need**: Stage outside, awaiting EMS, continue communication with patient/caller |
| Major illness/injury, no known or suspected nexus to COVID-19 | Prepare response team for immediate entry with PPE for “Unknown, critical patient.” | As determined by IC – Unless oxygen mask is required, apply surgical mask to the patient |
| Non-Acute Presentation of known or suspected COVID-19 | Stage response team outside of the occupancy. If possible, make verbal contact with the patient and determine if immediate aid is needed.If entry is made, unless oxygen mask is required, apply surgical mask to the patient | **No Answer**: Send in one responder with communications and “Patient within a close space” PPE (see PPE SOG) and 1st responder medical equipment |
| **Immediate assistance needed**: Full team, dons PPE as above and makes entry |
| **Patient/Caller state no immediate need**: Stage outside, awaiting EMS, continue communication with patient/caller |
| If no immediate entry is required, determine if the patient can exit the building without assistance | **If no:** Proceed as above |
| **If Yes:** Ask the patient/family to prepare to come outside , but await the arrival and preparation of the ambulance before asking them to move |
| Acute Presentation of known or suspected COVID-19 | Prepare response team for immediate entry with PPE for “Unknown, critical patient.” | As determined by IC |
| See Decontamination SOG |

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