



Recommended Covid-19 Operational Guidelines for Law enforcement April 8, 2020

Public safety is always a priority for law enforcement and agency staffing levels are strained now more than ever as officers are potentially exposed with Covid-19, requiring monitoring periods which impact their availability for duty.

Maintaining proper staffing levels during this time of crisis requires innovation, creativity, and options we would not consider under normal conditions. The following recommendations are intended to serve as considerations to protect our officers to the extent possible, with the understanding that there are no perfect solutions, or a one size fits all response.

Operational Response Recommendations:

1. Agencies should limit normal proactive and public-engaging activities during the Covid-19 Pandemic. Recommendations are that officers will only respond to the most urgent public safety needs and crimes where a citizen's safety is at risk- violent felonies, domestic calls, assaults in progress, etc.
2. Agencies should handle routine calls and reports by phone and discontinue officer response to report-only crimes. These can be delayed or handled with other non-contact solutions.
3. Misdemeanor crimes should be handled with extreme discretion utilizing citations and criminal summons in lieu of arrest, while considering non-arrest solutions and mediation.
4. Traffic enforcement should be utilized only for the most serious violations. If a traffic stop must be made, consideration should be given for a passenger side approach, positioning the officer so that the interior can be viewed, while allowing for additional distancing.
5. Officers should limit foot patrols in public areas and businesses.
6. Officers should be directed to stage in publicly visible areas- PVA's, traffic areas, business locations, and prepared for urgent priority calls- similar to a natural disaster (Hurricane, floods, snowstorms, etc.)
7. ***What to do if a citizen approaches the officer's vehicle?*** Officers should be equipped with a small placard or simple sign that reads- "Please step to the front of the patrol vehicle and I will assist you". This will provide proper distancing.
8. Agencies should consider ZOOM, or Skype type meetings for roll-call briefings and other departmental meetings. Otherwise, always maintain 6- foot distancing at roll call and between officers. Limit all face to face interactions as much as possible.



9. All staff members should be trained/reminded in the proper use of PPE, wearing gloves routinely, and importance of disinfecting daily accessed surfaces to control the spread of Covid-19.
10. Officers should practice proper cough/sneeze covering and immediately report even suspected Covid-19 symptoms to their supervisors. Officers should report known exposures including potential exposures from family members who might have been exposed or are showing symptoms.

Officer Safety Recommendations:

1. Subject to availability, Officers should be equipped with PPE, hand sanitizer, sanitizing wipes.
2. Officers should wear latex gloves on any call for service regardless of the circumstances, being mindful not to touch the face with or without gloves.
3. Cloth facemasks can be considered and if utilized, should be cleaned after usage and not reused unless disinfected. (Radio testing should be conducted to verify proper transmissions)
4. After any call for service, especially when having made an arrest, officers should disinfect the duty belt, handcuffs/holder, ink-pen, clipboard, or anything else touched during the interaction.
5. Vehicle interior should be disinfected prior to use including all handles, steering wheel, keyboards, etc. This is very important when sharing a vehicle, and also important to continually disinfect surfaces throughout the shift.
6. The rear prisoner transport area should be disinfected-sprayed, following every prisoner transport.

Facility Disinfecting Recommendations:

1. All exterior and interior door handles should be disinfected prior to normal business operation starting and closing times and routinely disinfected throughout the day.
2. Areas with 24/7 citizen access should be disinfected routinely and after obvious citizen activity.
3. All employee accessible areas should also be routinely disinfected daily. This includes all handles, buttons, keyboards, phones, countertops, reachable areas, and any other routinely handled items.

For more information and Covid-19 resources, please contact: tanderson@nclm.org

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