



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

**Winnebago County  
Health Department**

# First Responder Exposure to **KNOWN** COVID-19 Case

Updated 04/01/2020

The following has been established as the Winnebago County Health Department (WCHD) guidelines for work exclusion for EMS, Law Enforcement (3), and Fire Department personnel (from here on out referred to as Emergency personnel or EP) who have an **exposure to a KNOWN COVID 19** case. This is not a CDC document, but was largely taken directly and nearly verbatim from the "Interim U.S. Guidance for Risk Assessment and Public Health Management of Healthcare Personnel with Potential Exposure in a Healthcare Setting to Patients with Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)" and adapted for this population. Official CDC guidance for Law Enforcement and EMS refers to the above named document as the reference to use when assessing risk. For ease of use, this has been modified to help use in situations encountered by EP.

EP=emergency personnel (police, fire, EMS, first responders); PPE=personal protective equipment

Step 1: Assess exposure risk by finding the closest matching scenario below (1 or 2), then underneath scenario locate which PPE the EP was wearing or not wearing in that scenario. For the next step, slide to the right to locate risk level in "Step 2" and then any work restrictions in "Step 3"	Step 2: Assign Risk Category	Step 3: Find Corresponding Work Guidance-We recommend communicating with Public Health to assure this guidance has not changed
Exposure risk factors	Exposure category	Work Restrictions for Asymptomatic EP
<b>Scenario #1: EP has Prolonged close contact with a COVID-19 patient who <u>was not</u> wearing a facemask</b>		
EP PPE: None	High	Exclude from work X 14 days after last exposure
EP PPE: Not wearing a facemask or respirator	High	Exclude from work X 14 days after last exposure
EP PPE: Not wearing eye protection, b	Medium	Exclude from work X 14 days after last exposure
EP PPE: Not wearing gown or gloves a,b	Low	None
EP PPE: Wearing all recommended PPE (except wearing a facemask instead of a respirator)b	Low	None
<b>Scenario #2: EP has Prolonged close contact with a COVID-19 patient who <u>was</u> wearing a facemask</b>		
EP PPE: None	Medium	Exclude from work X 14 days after last exposure
EP PPE: Not wearing a facemask or respirator	Medium	Exclude from work X 14 days after last exposure
EP PPE: Not wearing eye protection	Low	None
EP PPE: Not wearing gown or gloves, a	Low	None
EP PPE: Wearing all recommended PPE (except wearing a facemask instead of a respirator)	Low	None

**Footnotes:**

**a** The risk category for these rows would be elevated by one level if EP had extensive body contact with the patients (e.g., rolling the patient, close physical engagement with positive case as in law enforcement maneuvers).

**b** The risk category for these rows would be elevated by one level if EP performed or were present for a procedure likely to generate higher concentrations of respiratory secretions or aerosols (e.g., cardiopulmonary resuscitation, intubation, extubation, bronchoscopy, nebulizer therapy, sputum induction). For example, EP who were wearing a gown, gloves, eye protection and a facemask (instead of a respirator) during an aerosol-generating procedure would be considered to have a medium-risk exposure.

**Close contact** for healthcare exposures (and adapted for EP) is defined by the CDC as:

- a) being within approximately 6 feet (2 meters), of a person with COVID-19 for a prolonged period of time (such as caring for or visiting the patient; or sitting within 6 feet of the patient in a healthcare waiting area or room); or
- b) having unprotected direct contact with infectious secretions or excretions of the patient (e.g., being coughed on, touching used tissues with a bare hand). One can concluded this would also apply to EP.

**Prolonged Exposure:**

- Data are insufficient to precisely define the duration of time that constitutes a prolonged exposure.
- It is reasonable to consider an exposure greater than a few minutes as a prolonged exposure.

**Considerations:**

- **Duration of exposure:** longer exposure time likely increases exposure risk
- **Clinical symptoms of the patient:** e.g., coughing likely increases exposure risk; aerosol-generating procedures
- **PPE worn by EP and Positive Case:** whether the patient was wearing a facemask (which can efficiently block respiratory secretions from contaminating others and the environment), PPE used by personnel
- **Risk:** all HCP are at some risk for exposure to COVID-19, whether in the workplace or in the community