Note: This Special Order SOP will most likely change with the implementation of Governmental Directives, Health Department Mandates and changes in best practice. When these changes occur, this SOP will be modified to reflect those changes and mandates.

I. PURPOSE

This SOP provides guidance for development of contingency plans, organization of resources, and establishment of departmental protocols that can be used to respond to and help mitigate the effects and spread of the COVID-19 disease or similar health emergency.

II. BACKGROUND

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is the name given by the World Health Organization for a respiratory disease first identified in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. It has now been identified in more than 90 countries. Coronaviruses are a family of viruses found in people and animals causing a range of illnesses from the common cold to severe respiratory infection. Due to the increased availability of testing, more COVID-19 infections are being identified every day. As it is a newly identified virus, this is an emerging and rapidly evolving situation and new information becomes available daily. The inevitable shortages of employees and resources make it essential that the Sheriff’s Office establish plans and take measures in advance to ensure crucial law enforcement services are not disrupted, and employees are provided with the means to prevent or mitigate the spread of infection.

III. DEFINITIONS

Essential Positions and Assignments: Employees who possess special knowledge, skills, or abilities and whose extended absence would create serious disruptions to a critical agency function. At this time, these positions are identified as:

- Sworn Staff
- Crime Scene Specialists and Supervisors
- Evidence Technicians and Supervisors
- 911 Telecommunicators and Supervisors
- Law Enforcement Specialists

Incubation Period: Interval between infection and onset of symptoms.

Isolation: Separation of infected persons from those who are not infected.
**Pandemic:** Occurs when a new virus emerges for which there is little or no immunity among humans, begins to cause serious illness, and then spreads easily from person to person worldwide.

**Quarantine:** Legally enforceable order that restricts movement into or out of the area of quarantine of one person, a large group of people, or community; designed to reduce the likelihood of transmission of contagious disease among persons in and to persons outside the affected area. When applied to all inhabitants of an area (typically a community or neighborhood), the intervention is referred to as a cordon sanitaire (sanitary barrier).

**Voluntary Quarantine:** A request that persons remain at home, ban visitors, wear a mask when in the same room as other members of the household, and sleep in a separate room. These protocols were developed to decrease the risk of transmitting the SARS coronavirus during its outbreak in Toronto and would likely be the primary means of social distancing during a pandemic.

**IV. PROCEDURES**

**A. Modification of agency response to Calls for Service**

1. Dispatchers will ask all callers if they, or anyone around them are experiencing common symptoms of COVID-19 infection:

   - Fever
   - Cough
   - Shortness of Breath or difficulty in breathing
   - Tiredness/fatigue
   - Aches and Pains
   - Sore throat
   - Nasal congestion
   - Chills
   - Nausea and/or vomiting
   - If they have been diagnosed with the COVID-19 virus

2. If any of these conditions are present, the dispatcher will alert all responders that the patient may have a “Possible Infection Respiratory Illness” and to utilize the appropriate PPE which shall include masks, gloves, and maintaining a distance from the victim if necessary. This can be accomplished within CAD.

3. In order to limit exposure to deputies responding to calls for service, and one or more of the above conditions are present, deputies will not enter the premises of the emergency unless the following criteria are met:

   - Crime in Progress
• CPR in progress
• Suicidal subjects
• Other immediate condition where a loss of life or serious injury is imminent
• Any other indicators or conditions that are present and the deputy believes immediate action is necessary

4. Deputies responding to EMS requests at medical facilities such as doctor’s offices, laboratories, nursing homes, urgent care facilities, treatment facilities, and senior complexes will not enter the facility unless the above listed criteria are met.

5. In the event one or more of the above listed criteria are met, deputies will limit the number making entry into the premises to the absolute minimum number necessary to perform the required task. Safety will be paramount when deciding how many deputies will enter the premises.

6. Deputies entering any premises where a person shows one or more of the signs listed above will adhere to the following minimum personal protective equipment standard:

• N-95 or higher-level respirator or facemask.
• Nitrile gloves
• Eye protection
• After use, officers shall properly dispose of all personal protective equipment (eye protection can be cleaned and re-used). This is not considered biohazard and can be thrown away

7. Documentation of incidents where a subject is suspected to have or has been diagnosed with COVID-19.

• Dispatch should be notified so that caution notes can be added to CAD.

B. Specific Patrol Function Restrictions

1. Motor Vehicle Stops/Citizen contacts

• To minimize contact with the public and diminish any spread of the virus, motor vehicle stops shall be kept to a minimum and shall be initiated only for those serious motor vehicle offenses.
• When conducting stops or at scenes of motor vehicle crashes it is recommended that deputies wear nitrile gloves to minimize the transfer of germs from documents to the officer/patrol unit.
• During citizen contacts officers should maintain a safe distance and, if possible, maintain a distance of at least 6 feet from the person.
2. Arrests

- Subjects who are placed under arrest or detained who are known to be COVID-19 positive or are exhibit signs and symptoms as listed above in Procedures Section 1. Subsection A, shall be given a mask to minimize the spread of germs. Officer shall utilize the appropriate PPE, to include nitrile gloves, mask, and eye protection
- EMS shall be called for arrested or detained subjects who are experiencing respiratory issues or other serious medical issues as listed above.
- If any arrested person is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, deputies will call the Central Booking Sergeant at 512-854-5960 to discuss protocols with medical and intake.
- Arrests should only be made if absolutely necessary.

3. Calls for Service/Reports

- Officers should utilize a call by phone method of obtaining information on non-emergency calls. Dispatchers should ask if the caller needs to speak to an officer and advise that information can be received over the phone. Utilization of email should be considered if documents or other information needs to be collected. Online reporting should be encouraged whenever practical.

C. Department Personnel Precautionary Measures

1. All agency personnel shall ensure that all areas within the commands and the patrol vehicles remain sanitized to prevent and minimize the spread of germs. All staff will:

- Periodically clean/sanitize computer keyboards, terminals, drawers, door handles, cabinets, phones, arm rests and chairs, light switches, TV remotes and department cell phones.
- Periodically clean/sanitize patrol vehicles, vehicles-steering wheels, door handles, any shared equipment, computer keyboards and terminals, and radio mics.
- Use extra precautions when utilizing bathrooms. Wipe down faucets, toilet handles, doors, dispensers, and showers, if necessary.
- Kitchen and common areas-wipe down refrigerator handles, microwaves, drawer handles, countertops, chairs, tables, light fixtures, TV remotes. There should be no shared food or food containers in this area.
- Staff is authorized to wear face masks on a daily basis. Homemade, clothe masks are approved as long as they are single color or basic design. Bandanas are not authorized.

2. Agency personnel will take their temperature at home prior to shift with a thermometer designed to determine the body temperature of a human subject. If the thermometer indicates the body temperature is 99.6-degrees Fahrenheit or higher the employee will immediately
contact their supervisor to discuss options. Employees who are exhibiting signs of illness that are associated with a virus or were possibly exposed while off-duty are to remain home.

3. Employees may use paid sick time for self-isolation or quarantine, even if they are not sick, when it is required or recommended by health care providers or to care for other family members.

4. Employees who have any of the following symptoms must report their illness to their supervisor and seek the appropriate medical attention:
   - Dry Cough
   - Fever (A fever is defined as a temperature above 99.6 degrees Fahrenheit)
   - Difficulty breathing
   - Shortness of breath
   - Persistent pain or pressure in the chest

5. Employees with any of the listed symptoms shall not return to work without a doctor’s note, indicating they are not carrying the Coronavirus and are not contagious. Employees must be free from any fever for 24 hours with no medication.

6. Department personnel who show up to work showing signs of being ill or symptoms of the virus will be sent home.

7. If an exposure or the symptoms are related to an on-duty incident, the staff member must notify their chain of command immediately. The Bureau Major may authorize Paid Admin Leave. Supervisors must:
   - Notify Chain of Command
   - Complete a First Report of Injury and communicate with HR
   - Call the First Responder hotline at 737-210-9740 for guidance
   - Lodging may be available so an employee does not have to stay at home

8. Department personnel are to closely monitor their health and follow the following public health guidelines and good hygiene proactive tips from the CDC and World Health Organization:
   - Frequently clean hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or an alcohol based hand rub (that contains 60-95% alcohol) if soap and water is unavailable
   - Clean commonly touched areas and surfaces
   - Reduce personal contact, hugging, shaking hands (non-family)
   - Cover mouth and nose with flexed elbow or tissue or sleeve when coughing and sneezing
   - Avoid close contact with anyone who has a fever or cough
   - Avoid touching your face, specifically your mouth, eyes and nose
• If you have a fever stay at home and do not come to work until you are fever free for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever reducing or other symptom-altering medications
• If you have a fever or cough, and difficulty breathing, seek medical care early and share previous travel history with your healthcare provider
• If a member of your household has tested positive for COVID-19, you shall notify the staff on call
• Check the CDC’s traveler’s health notice for the latest guidance and recommendations for travel

I. EXHIBITS

A. COVID-19 Flow Chart
B. Work Related COVID-19 Flow Chart
C. COVID-19 Mental Health Resources
D. First Responder Lodging
E. Cleaning Transport Vehicles
TCSO WORK RELATED COVID-19 EXPOSURE FLOWCHART

Was the employee in contact with a person exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms per the CDC guidelines?

YES

Supervisor complete the First Report of Injury (DWC-1). Contact HR for direction. Is the employee exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms?

YES

Did the employee test positive for COVID-19?

YES

High Risk
- Immediate isolation, medical evaluation guided by PUI definition; pre-notify healthcare services; controlled travel.

NO

NO

Medium Risk
- Stay home; active monitoring or self-monitoring. Follow/seek CDC/ Health Professional advice.

Low Risk
- Self observation. Active monitoring or self-monitoring. Follow/seek CDC/ Health Professional advice.

NO

Was the employee in the same indoor environment as a case for a prolonged period but did not meet the definition of close contact?

YES

No Identifiable Risk
- None

NO

Actions for employees
- Employee should follow the CDC guidelines and medical professionals (self quarantine/14 days). Employee will utilize accruals and offer FMLA. They should contact HR for further guidance. Employee should present a note before returning to work and be fever free for a minimum of 24 hours.

Actions for supervisors
- Employee should stay home from work, avoid contact with others, don’t travel. Seek health advice. Use accruals and apply for FMLA if time out is longer than 3 days. Employee should present a note before returning to work and be fever free for a minimum of 24 hours.

Employee should report to work. If employee chooses to stay home, accruals will be used.
COVID 19 – MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES – MARCH 20 2020

- MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS for ANY REASON contact the 24/7 helpline at 512-472-HELP (4357) – TTY 512-703-1395
- Experiencing STRESS / ANXIETY regarding COVID-19 virus receive support through the CRISIS TEXT LINE by texting TX to 741741. This provides free crisis support via text.
- DISASTER DISTRESS HELPLINE 1-800-985-5990 provides 24/7 year round crisis counseling and support to people experiencing emotional distress related to natural or human-caused disasters INCLUDING a public health crisis.
- Questions about my health and COVID 19 virus call the COVID 19 hotline at 512-978-8775. This number provides support to all TRAVIS COUNTY residents who have questions, are experiencing COVID 19 symptoms and do not have insurance and/or access to primary physician.
- For URGENT mental health care Integral Care PSYCHIATRIC EMERGENCY SERVICES (PES) remains open and serving the community. Individuals should call 512-472-4357 before arrival so a brief health screening can be completed. PES is located at 1165 Airport Blvd., Second Floor, Austin, TX 78702 and the service hours are: Monday – Friday 8am to 10pm; Saturday, Sunday and Holidays, 10am to 8pm. PES serves both Children and Adults.
- COVID-19 information and referrals to COMMUNITY RESOURCES across Texas: 2-1-1 – They are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

WEBSITES
- Central Health - [https://www.centralhealth.net/covid19/](https://www.centralhealth.net/covid19/)
- St. David’s HealthCare - [https://stdavids.com/covid-19/](https://stdavids.com/covid-19/)
FIRST RESPONDER & CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE EMPLOYEE EXPOSURE REQUIRING LODGING

This is the interim procedures to follow for First Responders and Critical Infrastructure employee that have a documented exposure to a COVID19 patient and requires lodging. This will change once a permanent facility has been established. Please provide appropriate dissemination among your department.

The process to follow for a documented exposure (defined as PPE failure or PPE not used) to a COVID19 patient is as follows:

1. Decontaminate individuals as much as possible on scene.
2. Contact the Public Safety COVID19 exposure assessment hotline at 737.210.9740 to assess the individual's risk. If the hotline recommends quarantine AND the individual(s) do not have a place to stay call 512.569.9446
3. A hotel room will be made available to the individual(s).
4. The attached information should be given to the individual(s) and the hotel staff upon arrival at the hotel. The individual(s) are to remain at the hotel until given further directions.

EXPOSED PERSON INSTRUCTIONS

1. Go directly to your room.
2. Do not leave your room unless there is an evacuation emergency.
3. Do not interact directly (face-to-face) with hotel staff or the public.
4. Place the “Do Not Disturb” marker on the outside of the door.
5. No visitors.
6. Order room service for meals.
   a. Request the meal be prepared with disposable “to-go” containers and cutlery.
7. For all requested provisions (room service, extra towels, etc.) instruct the staff to leave the items outside the door, knock, and leave.
8. Hotel staff will not be entering your room. There will be no housekeeping or maintenance services provided. Arrangements will be made for trash removal and laundry services.
9. Worker’s compensation and HR questions as well as any other unaddressed needs should be directed to your chain of command.
10. You will be informed if and when COVID testing will take place.
HOTEL STAFF INFORMATION FOR COVID-19 INDIVIDUAL

COVID-19 exposed guests will be designated with a marked placard on the door be aware of this

- Staff should not enter the room for any reason.
- Place do not disturb sign on door.
- If the individual has requested items leave them outside, knock on the door, and leave.
- These guests will order room service for meals
- Please serve all meals in a To-Go setting with disposable flatware
- Wash your hands after contact with room.
- Do not touch your face, mouth, and eyes.
- Please provide the guest with plastic garbage disposal bags. They will take care of their own trash.
- Hotel staff should not handle laundry, bedding, dishes, or any other item.
- No repair/service requests should be performed while COVID individual is present in room. Any maintenance emergency should be mitigated to the extent possible from outside the room while the 24 hour emergency line is contacted for assistance.
- Should a COVID guest need to be relocated to another room, call the 24-hour emergency line.
- You do not need to worry about exposure unless in direct contact.(less than 6 feet)
- Laundry will be handled by an outside company.

EMERGENCY NUMBER: 512-569-9446
CLEANING TRANSPORT VEHICLES AFTER TRANSPORTING A SUSPECT OR INMATE WITH CONFIRMED OR SUSPECTED COVID-19

The following are general guidelines for cleaning or maintaining transport vehicles and equipment after transporting a subject with COVID-19.

• Select an appropriate site for transport vehicle decontamination that protects the vehicle and the officers from weather elements, preferably a well-ventilated large enclosed structure. This location should be away from other people.

• After transporting the subject, leave the rear doors of the transport vehicle open to allow for sufficient air changes to remove potentially infectious particles. 10 Minutes or longer.

• We recommend applying disinfectant or 10 to 1 water to bleach solution to all contaminated surfaces and allowing a 10 minute contact time before wiping the surface. Disinfectant or the 10 to 1 bleach solution can be found in the TCSO Central Booking Sally port and at each command.

• When cleaning the vehicle, officers should wear a mask, face shield and gloves.

• Ensure that the manufacture recommendations on 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.

• Please do not forget to clean the driver’s area also. When available use Lysol or a product that will not destroy the fabric. Take special care to clean anything that may have been touched during the encounter. Pen, Flashlight, Taser etc.

• Clean and disinfect the vehicle in accordance with standard operating procedures. All surfaces that may have come in contact with the subject or materials contaminated during transport (e.g. windows, floors, walls, work surfaces) should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected in accordance with the product label.

• Clean and disinfect reusable equipment (handcuffs) before use on another subject, according to manufacturer’s instructions.

• Follow standard operating procedures for the containment and disposal of used PPE and regulated medical waste.