

COVID-19 FACT SHEET

First Responder Attendance at Incident where a Person has Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19

Principles

- NSW RFS First Responders can minimise risk of exposure to and the spread of COVID-19, via methods of personal protection, cleaning and waste disposal when undertaking activities such as the following:
 - Community First Responders (CFRs);
 - Ambulance Assist;
 - First Aid and Resuscitation (e.g. motor vehicle accident (MVA), search and rescue, and firefighting).

Actions and Advice

- CFRs are to continue to operate in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding between NSW RFS and Ambulance NSW. Under this MoU, CFRs are supplied with Ambulance supplied PPE, PPC and relevant training and we expect this service to continue under these arrangements.
- Volunteers who are not CFRs, but are called upon to assist Ambulance or provide first aid or resuscitation in the course of their duties, are to follow this health and safety procedure:
- Preparation:
 - Before the potential risk of exposure to a person suspected of or confirmed COVID-19, a NSW RFS member is to wear the following NSW RFS issued Personal Protective Equipment/Clothing (PPE/C):
 - Protective eyewear (smoke goggles);
 - Disposable P2 masks (certified to AS/NZS 1716:2003: Respiratory Protective Devices). Refer to [P2 Mask Importance of Fit posters](#);
 - Disposable impermeable gloves (e.g. nitrile gloves);
 - Firefighter jacket, trousers and boots;
 - Utilise NSW RFS issued first aid kit and AED where necessary:
 - If performing CPR, use protective equipment such as single-use resuscitation bag. If this is not available, use a disposable resuscitation pocket mask with filter.
- Post Incident - Removal sequence of PPE/C:
 - Prepare a non-leak plastic bag for waste and a non-leak plastic bag for future cleaning of contaminated PPC/PPE;
 - Remove disposable nitrile gloves (without touching outside of gloves with bare hands) and places into waste bag;
 - Wash hands with soap and water (20 secs) or if not available, apply alcohol based hand sanitizer;
 - Remove boots and place in bag for cleaning and stand in a safe area;

- Remove PPC jacket and trousers touching inside of PPC only where possible and place into bag for cleaning;
 - Wash hands with soap and water (20 secs) or if not available, apply alcohol based hand sanitizer;
 - Remove other garments like shirts and shorts etc (if suspected contamination by COVID-19) by touching inside of garments only where possible and place in bag for cleaning;
 - Wash hands with soap and water (20 secs) or if not available, apply alcohol based hand sanitizer;
 - Remove goggles by lifting strap at rear over the head and not touching front surface of goggles and place into bag for cleaning;
 - Tie up the bag for cleaning without touching inside of the bag;
 - Wash hands with soap and water (20 secs) or if not available, apply alcohol based hand sanitizer;
 - Remove disposable P2 mask by lifting rear straps over the head first and not touching front surface of mask. Place mask into waste bag and tie up this bag;
 - Wash hands with soap and water (20 secs) or if not available, apply alcohol based hand sanitizer;
 - NSW RFS member dresses in new clothing and boots;
 - Waste bag placed in general waste;
 - Bag for cleaning placed back in NSW RFS vehicle for future cleaning (safety precautions will be needed when removing items from the bag and cleaning the potentially contaminated items); and
 - Wash hands with soap and water (20 secs) or if not available, apply alcohol based hand sanitizer.
- Cleaning requirements:
- Equipment
 - It is recommended that the firefighter jacket and trousers are to be machine washed in water temperature at 60°C with synthetic detergents (e.g. Cold Power, OMO, Radiant) and preferably dried naturally, out of direct sunlight.
 - Smoke goggles and boots to be washed in/with warm soapy water and dried naturally.
 - Resuscitation bag and resuscitation pocket mask are single use items which are to be bagged for normal waste disposal.
 - Vehicle
 - All PPE/C must be removed before entering vehicle to prevent contamination.
- In circumstances where a NSW RFS First Responder has been exposed to a person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19, refer to [COVID-19 Response Action Process](#).

Further Information

- Check www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/coronavirus for updates.

Current as at 20 March 2020