

Vermont EMS Personal Protective Equipment Memorandum

TO: Vermont Emergency Providers, Service Leaders, District Medical Advisors

CC: Daniel Wolfson, MD - State EMS Medical Director

FROM: Dan Batsie, Chief of EMS, Vermont Department of Health

DATE: May 20, 2020

Subject: Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Personal Protective Equipment Update

SUMMARY – For the last two months Vermont EMS has recommended a personal protective equipment standard that exceeds the minimum recommendations outlined in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Interim Guidance for EMS. This action was taken out of an abundance of caution and with the best interest of protecting EMS providers in mind. However, since the issuance of that standard, both the posture and distribution of COVID-19 in Vermont has changed. While risk is still present, current modeling suggests that it is reasonable to realign with the current CDC guidelines. Therefore, in consultation with the State Epidemiologist and the Epidemiology Division of the Department of Health, Vermont EMS is updating its Emergency Responder Personal Protective Equipment Guidance in the following manner:

PROCEDURE:

Personal protective equipment should be worn on all emergency medical responses. Minimum equipment for all calls should include:

- **Facemask**
- **Eye protection** (i.e., goggles or disposable face shield that fully covers the front and sides of the face). Personal eyeglasses and contact lenses are NOT considered adequate eye protection.
- **A single pair of disposable patient examination gloves.** Change gloves if they become torn or heavily contaminated.

Full personal protective equipment is recommended if PSAP call takers advise that the patient is suspected of having COVID-19, if assessment (beginning outside a 6-foot radius) identifies a suspected COVID-19 patient,* or when performing or present for any aerosolizing procedures such as bag mask ventilation, advanced airway, nebulizer treatments, CPAP, or CPR.

Full personal protective equipment (PPE) includes the following:

- **N95 respirator**
- **Eye protection**
- **A single pair of disposable patient examination gloves.**
- **Isolation gown**

* A suspected COVID-19 patient is defined as a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, been recently exposed to a COVID-19 positive patient, or has symptoms of infection including: fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, muscle pain, new loss of taste or smell, vomiting or diarrhea, and/or sore throat.

For more specific information regarding EMS interaction with COVID-19 please see the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Interim EMS Guidance](#).