

International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF)

Education and Training to Respond to Bioemergencies and Manage Risks

Training for Emergency Responders

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International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF)

- The IAFF is the driving force behind nearly every advance in the fire and emergency services in the 21st century.
- Headquartered in Washington, DC, and Ottawa, Ontario, the IAFF represents more than 320,000 full-time professional fire fighters and paramedics in more than 3,500 affiliates.
- IAFF members protect more than 85 percent of the population in communities throughout the United States and Canada.



Preparation

- Review your department's exposure control plan.
- Plan to meet or connect with local and state health departments to discuss policies, procedures and precautions in case COVID-19 becomes widespread.
- Maintain an adequate supply of N-95 and surgical masks and monitor the availability of both masks with your medical supply vendor.
- Routinely check the IAFF website for more information about COVID-19 <https://www.iaff.org/coronavirus/>.



Potential Exposure

- If you treat a patient who shows signs and symptoms addressed below, document potential exposures according to your exposure control plan.
- Notify your infection control officer.
- If you present signs and symptoms, immediately follow up with your healthcare provider and identify your exposure.



Protection

- The CDC recommends N-95 or P100 with eye protection
 - N-95 and higher levels of respiratory protection require fit testing
 - Eye protection should be face shield or goggles
 - Surgical masks with plastic eye lenses are **inappropriate** PPE
- If possible and tolerated, place a surgical mask on patients to minimize exposure
- Use a clean, non-sterile, long-sleeved, fluid-resistant gown
- Gloves
- Use either single-use, disposable equipment or dedicated equipment to decontaminate. If equipment needs to be shared among patients, clean and disinfect between each patient using ethyl alcohol (70%) or bleach solution (ratio of ¼ cup of bleach in a gallon of water)
- Hand washing
- Minimize patient contact in poorly ventilated areas
- Disinfect the ambulance with bleach solution
 - Routinely clean and disinfect patient-contact areas



Decontaminating Gear & Equipment

- Dispose of disposable respirator, respirator filters, gloves and other disposable equipment/supplies used at the scene as bio-hazardous waste.
- If the turnout gear or station uniform is visibly contaminated by bodily fluid, it should be placed in a biohazard bag at the scene and washed following prescribed laundry procedures. Chlorinated bleach shall not be used with any fire fighter protective clothing. Fire departments should follow the decontamination guidelines in [National Fire Protection Association \(NFPA\) 1851, Standard on Selection, Care, and Maintenance of Structural Fire Fighting Protective Ensembles](#).
- Non-disposable respirators shall be cleaned and disinfected in accordance with manufacturer's recommendation.
- For decontamination of non-disposable equipment, follow manufacturer and departmental standard operating procedures.
- Vehicles used to transport persons suspected of having COVID-19 should be cleaned by staff wearing protective equipment, using a bleach solution as a disinfectant cleanser.
- See the EPA's list of [Registered Antimicrobial Products for Use Against Novel Coronavirus SARS-Cov-2, the Cause of COVID-19](#) as of March 3, 2020.

