



COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS) AND LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

The 2019 novel coronavirus or SARS-CoV-2 is a new respiratory illness that can affect your lungs and airways and make people sick especially those with low immunity. Law enforcement officers performing daily routine office activities are considered low risk especially when practicing preventative measures.

COMMON SYMPTOMS



Cough



Fever



Shortness of breath



Sore throat



Headache

Other symptoms include:
Body aches and pains
Weakness or fatigue
Severe respiratory distress

TRANSMISSION



HOW COULD THE OFFICER BE AT RISK OF BEING INFECTED WITH COVID-19?

Close contact with people increases your risk:

- ▶▶ Being within approximately 1-2m feet of an individual with COVID-19 for a prolonged period of time.
- ▶▶ Having direct contact with body fluids (such as blood, phlegm, and respiratory droplets) from a COVID-19 infected individual.

HOW CAN LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS PROTECT THEMSELVES?



- Avoid close contact with anyone unless extremely necessary by maintaining a distance of about 1-2 meters from members of the public and colleagues whenever possible.
- Stop handshaking when greeting people – use other non-contact methods.



- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing or after touching objects from the public or other colleagues.
- If soap and water is not available in the field, use a hand sanitiser that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Do not touch your face with unwashed hands.
- Gloves are not routinely recommended as they cannot be sanitized easily and if not used correctly may spread the virus from one surface to another.



- When coughing or sneezing, cover your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue.
- Put used tissues into a bin and wash your hands.



- Stay home if you are feeling sick or have COVID-19 symptoms. Call your health care provider or the NICD hotline at **0800 029 999** as well as your superiors for further advice.
- Self-quarantine and monitor yourself for symptoms for 14 days if you have had prolonged contact with someone who is infected with COVID-19 and seek further guidance from your superiors.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):

- PPE should be informed by a risk assessment for each worker and the task that they are performing.
- Minimal PPE should include uniform and boots.
- Only law enforcement officers who **must** make contact with individuals confirmed or suspected to have COVID-19 should have additional PPE.

Disinfect frequently used items with solutions containing hypochloride, hydrogen peroxide or >60 % alcohol

These include: duty belt, phone, laptop, clipboard, patrol car equipment, steering wheel, gear shift, dispatch radio, door handles and edges.

For more information, contact
NIOH: info@nioh.ac.za
or www.nioh.ac.za