

COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS) AND LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

COVID-19 is a relatively new respiratory illness that can affect your lungs and other organs. The illness is caused by a virus called SARS CoV2 disease and can cause a mild illness similar to the common cold or more severe like pneumonia, particularly in those with low immunity. Law enforcement officers performing daily routine office activities are considered low risk especially when practicing preventative measures.

COMMON SYMPTOMS

Know the symptoms of COVID-19, which can include the following:



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

A health risk assessment should be done to determine who is at risk and what is their level of risk?

Close contact increases your risk for COVID-19 this includes:

- ▶▶ Being within approximately 1-2m of a person infected with COVID-19 for a prolonged period of time
- ▶▶ Breathing in air when close to an infected person who is exhaling small droplets and particles that contain the virus.
- ▶▶ Having direct contact with body fluids (such as blood, phlegm, and respiratory droplets) from an individual infected with COVID-19.

HOW CAN LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS PROTECT THEMSELVES?



Ventilation - Promote cross ventilation by ensuring there is an open window/door on the opposite side when indoors or in a vehicle.



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.



Vaccination – COVID-19 vaccines reduce your chance of severe illness, hospitalization and death if you contract COVID-19.



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 staff 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.

Stay home if you are feeling sick or have COVID-19 symptoms. Call your health care provider for further assistance and report this to your supervisor. Employees who test positive for COVID-19 and are symptomatic should inform their superiors, be isolated in line with the Department of Health guidelines and be placed on the appropriate sick leave.

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.

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**



COVID-19 Workplace Preparedness & Prevention
HEALTHY, SAFE & SUSTAINABLE WORKPLACES
Workplace Hotline: 0800 2121 75
Occupational Health Surveillance System [OHSS]
 General queries for data submission: 0723215503 | 0713981169 | OHSSWorkplace@nioh.ac.za
 OPERATING HOURS for the OHSS hotline: Mon-Fri: 08h00 - 17h00. Weekends and public holidays: Closed
www.nioh.ac.za | info@nioh.ac.za | [twitter: @nioh_sa](https://twitter.com/nioh_sa)

