To: Eagle County Fire Service and Law Enforcement Agencies

Fm: Karl Bauer, ESF 4/10

Re: COVID-19 Cases Involving First-Responders

Date: March 20, 2020 – This Version Supersedes All Previous Versions

**INTENT**

The intent of this memo is to provide local Fire Service and Law Enforcement agencies with guidance for the initial care of first-responders who may have contracted COVID-19.

**SYMPTOMOLOGY**

The following constitutes Eagle County Public Health and Environment’s (ECPHE) latest understanding of COVID-19’s symptomology. Please note that while the symptoms of a COVID-19 infection tend to present in the manner described below, individual cases may vary.

1. Initially, patients may experience a sore throat that lasts for a couple of days. The sore throat may be accompanied by a persistent headache.
2. Illness tends to then include a dry, perhaps sporadic cough.
3. Individuals may then develop a fever, typically accompanied by upper body aches. However, individuals may initially suffer from the chills, instead of a fever, also accompanied by body aches.
4. Lastly, patients may begin to experience shortness of breath

**PROCEDURE**

* Upon onset of symptoms, First-Responders should call Jackie Hammel at ECPHE using the following number: 970-471-9277 (may also send a text to this number). First-Responders may also call ECPHE at 970-235-0187.
  + First-Responders are considered priority patients; therefore, ECPHE will determine the need, time and location of possible testing. As community transmission continues and labs are overwhelmed, testing may not be possible.
  + First-Responders who begin to experience COVID-19 symptoms should call Jackie Hammel or ECPHE when they begin to experience COVID-19 symptoms whether while on – or off-duty; regardless of where they live.
* First-Responders should follow their agency’s policies for notifying supervisors.
* Symptomatic First-Responders will be required to self-isolate and should not return to work until:

At least 3 days (72 hours) after their fever has resolved

AND

They experience significant improvement in respiratory symptoms

AND

**7-10** days have passed since symptoms first appeared

NOTE: 10 days is ideal but 7 days could be considered in cases of first responder shortage or based on lack of any symptoms by day 7; preliminary data suggest most shedding of live virus ends around 7 days. Persons with more severe illness may have prolonged viral shedding.

* + Self-isolation should include a private room and bathroom, away from other household members. First-responder’s whose home cannot provide a separate bedroom or bathroom may seek advice from ECPHE.
  + Once the return-to-work criteria has been met, person’s recovering from COVID-19 should wear a facemask for 14 days from the start of symptoms. Agencies may determine the ability of the first-responder to fulfill their regular duties while wearing a facemask, and make adjustments accordingly.
* If test results come back negative, the first responder may return to work as soon as symptoms allow, based on agency policy.