



Arkansas Department of Health

4815 West Markham Street • Little Rock, Arkansas 72205-3867 • Telephone (501) 661-2000
Governor Asa Hutchinson
Nathaniel Smith, MD, MPH, Secretary of Health

To: All Licensed Emergency Medical Service (EMS) Agencies, Providers and Medical Directors

From: Dr. Nate Smith, Secretary of Health

Date: March 19, 2020

Regarding: Quarantine Guidance for EMS Providers Exposed to Positive COVID-19 Patients

The Arkansas Department of Health understands that the current COVID-19 response is a dynamic and fluid situation that changes very quickly and requires flexibility in the guidance provided to EMS agencies and providers.

Effective immediately and until guidance changes, EMS providers who are exposed to a suspected or positive COVID-19 patient while wearing personal protective equipment or not, unless the provider becomes symptomatic, will no longer need to be quarantined.

EMS providers exposed to positive COVID-19 patients will be required to wear surgical masks while on duty and be closely monitored by the EMS agency and themselves for any potential symptoms. This includes the service or provider taking and recording their temperature twice a day, even when off duty. Temperature screenings should be communicated to the provider's EMS agency and medical director, using the approved screening tool located on the ADH website. As with previous directives, all EMS workers will be required to be screened before every shift.

Providers who become symptomatic should immediately be taken off duty, screened by a healthcare provider and tested for COVID-19. If the provider tests positive, they should follow the CDC and Arkansas Department of Health's quarantine guidelines.

EMS agencies should work to limit provider exposure to COVID-19 as much as possible, wearing appropriate PPE, conducting proper 911 screenings, and following all CDC and ADH guidance for patient care.