

MARINE OFFICER SAFETY

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES DURING COVID-19

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Coronavirus (COVID-19) creates special challenges for law enforcement officers, but marine enforcement officers may face additional challenges. This document provides marine officers specific suggestions to minimize COVID-19 exposure while performing marine enforcement duties. Additional suggestions are included to address logistical challenges for community-wide response.

This document assumes familiarity with basic Best Management Practices for general law enforcement officers in the course of doing their job. Links to important reference documents are listed below.

Marine Officer Safety

If you do become exposed to coronavirus, you risk exposing your agency staff, family and others, even if you feel no symptoms. Please be diligent. While conducting daily patrols:

Maintain minimum 6-foot distance

- If people approach you in your vehicle, direct them to the passenger window so you can maintain separation.
- While on foot patrol, ask people to stay six feet back.
- Patrol, and make public contact, from your patrol boat if possible. This leaves you in control of physical distancing.
- If documents must be exchanged, ask the person to place the documents on a surface and step back. Consider using gloves when touching these documents as coronavirus can remain viable for hours to days.

Use appropriate PPE

- Consider wearing a cloth mask during general patrol to prevent asymptomatic spread. While masks still have some stigma related to their use, many people will appreciate their use as a means of protecting the public.
- Carry gloves, goggles and face shield if you expect direct contact with the public.

Practice proper hygiene

- Aside from handwashing frequently, remember to clean duty belts, life jackets, FireCom headsets and other equipment after exposure.
- Carry and use as needed any NIOSH-approved particulate respirator for direct public contact.
- If possible, call in trained medical personnel when handling potentially exposed public.

Non-Patrol Tips

- Contact your port, county and municipal park managers and request they contact you directly regarding ramp closures or restrictions. Specifically discuss how emergency access to water can be maintained. Also, note that some blockages still allow non-motorized carry-down access which may defeat the restriction.
- For parking lot boat inspections, direct people to remain in their boat and hold up equipment to be inspected.
- Report problems to OSMB – (503) 378-2612.

Links and References

- [What law enforcement need to know about COVID-19](#)
- [Interim Guide for Public Safety Responders](#)
- [OSHA guide for investigators](#)