Management of Persons Under Investigation (PUI) for COVID-19

Definition of persons under investigation (PUI) – one or more of the following:

- Fever OR cough/shortness of breath in any person with known exposure to a confirmed case of COVID-19 within the last 14 days.
- Fever AND cough/shortness of breath in any person with a history of travel to one of the following countries with high COVID-19 activity:
  - China
  - Iran
  - Italy
  - Japan
  - South Korea
- Fever AND severe lower respiratory infection (i.e., pneumonia) requiring hospitalization with no known, confirmed cause (i.e., influenza).

Contact the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (DPH) for suspected COVID-19 patients.

DPH Acute Communicable Disease Control Hotline Numbers:
(213) 240-7941 (M-F, 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.) • (213) 974-1234 (after hours)
Ask to speak to the on-call physician.

Personal protective equipment (PPE):

- Surgical mask for the patient to reduce airborne transmission.
- N95 mask for the rescuer
- Gown
- Gloves
- Eye protection
- Large biohazard/trash bags and Purple Top wipes.
- Personnel not accompanying the patient will need to dispose of PPE prior to getting back in their apparatus.
- When possible, avoid using turnouts, as they are harder to decontaminate compared with washing uniforms.

KEEP A PRINTED COPY OF THIS FIELD RESOURCE GUIDE ON ALL APPARATUS
If you encounter a PUI:

- If the patient is stable, stay on scene and make notification to DPH.
- If the patient is unstable and requires immediate transport:
  - Notify the base hospital as early as possible to allow them to establish a respiratory isolation space.
  - Do not bring the patient into the ER until that space is prepared and ready.
- After any suspected case, doff and dispose of all PPE. Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water. It is not yet clear whether hand sanitizers kill the virus. Decontaminate all equipment with appropriate sanitizing wipes.

Recommendations for managing a PUI (adapted from Fire Station 101 after a case):

- When possible, only ONE person should enter the house with minimal equipment to assess the situation.
- If possible, ask the patient to move near the front door (still staying inside the house). This will make it easier for the one member to monitor and assess the patient while still being able to make verbal communication with the crew just outside the house.
- Have a second person in PPE ready to enter the house, if extra help is needed.
- Take minimum equipment: blood pressure cuff, stethoscope, and a radio or squad phone. If possible, leave your wallet, cell phone, etc., in a secure location in the apparatus.
- Consider using a three-way cell phone call when contacting DPH. That way, you can have the patient, the rescuer, and DPH on the call at the same time.
- Consider notifying the 9-1-1 Los Angeles Communications Center (LACC) to start a move-up company as this type of call may take an extended period of time to complete.
- Provide the 9-1-1 LACC with a telephone number they can forward to anyone who needs to contact you.
- When you arrive at the hospital, park outside and send a representative into the ER to notify them that you have arrived. They may want to come out and question the patient and speak with DPH before bringing the patient inside. Have the direct call-back number of the DPH doctor to give to the ER physician.
- If you need to speak with the Medical Director (MD), contact the 9-1-1 LACC to have the MD paged.