



ELK RAPIDS FIRE DEPARTMENT

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March 30, 2020

Subject: COVID-19 Initiatives

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO) the global outbreak of the COVID-19 or Coronavirus has been deemed as a pandemic as of March 11, 2020. The virus that causes COVID-19 is spreading easily from person-to-person. The virus has the most devastating effect on those with underlying health conditions.

On March 23, 2020 Michigan Governor, Gretchen Whitmer, issued the “Stay Home, Stay Safe” Executive Order (EO 2020-21) directing all Michigan businesses and operations to temporarily suspend in-person operations that are not necessary to sustain or protect life, to prevent the spread of COVID-19. This Order also describes the very limited circumstances that an individual may leave their home or place of residence. The employees of the Elk Rapids Fire Department are essential in protecting the lives and property of our residents and visitors and shall continue to report for duty unless otherwise specified, as described below.

The Elk Rapids Fire Department has worked together to develop the initiatives listed below. These initiatives will remain in effect until at least April 20, 2020 at 07:00 or for the duration of time that the CDC, WHO, State of Michigan and local Medical Control, or the Fire Chief deem necessary. This timeframe and items listed are subject to change with minimal notice.

Non-Essential Duties / Only Essential Services:

All non-essential duties will be removed from the schedule immediately and will remain off the schedule until the date(s) listed above. Non-essential activities include but are not limited to: Public Relations Events, Home Safety Surveys, Fire Station Tours, Outside Trainings, Scheduled Smoke Detector Installs, CPR Classes. Any scheduled meetings will be cancelled, re-scheduled or conducted via phone or video conference.

The station shall be closed to any outside visitors, and all deliveries shall be made outside of the station. Only essential service vendors are allowed in the Fire Station which includes, but is not limited to: Apparatus repair, Equipment repair, Computer repair or Facilities repair. Non-essential work shall be delayed during this time.



Signage has been placed on all exterior doors of both station and will remain to inform all visitors of the situation. Face to face contact between other departments shall be limited to duties or other assignments that are deemed absolutely necessary by the Fire Chief.

Employees are encouraged to engage in physical fitness sessions while on-duty, but not in “groups.” Fitness sessions shall be conducted with no more than two persons at a time, while practicing “social distancing.”

Training sessions shall still be conducted, but every effort shall be made to keep distance between employees. Mutual aid departments should not train in person together. Video conferencing, Target Solutions and other such trainings are encouraged. All trainings shall be approved by and under the supervision of the Fire Chief.

Exposures:

It has been determined by the CDC that any crew member who runs a call for a potential or confirmed COVID-19 case that is wearing the appropriate PPE as defined in General Order 2020-001 (COVID-19 Responses) is not considered an exposure.

All employees who have contact with a confirmed COVID-19 patient shall self-monitor their temperature twice daily for 14 days but are not necessarily under “quarantine.”

Employees that are on a call with a potential or confirmed case of COVID-19 should document it as such in the EMS and Fire Report and describe the PPE that was worn by each crew member.

The Fire Chief or his designee will keep a log of all potential COVID-19 cases.

Employee Travel:

All EFRD employees are strongly discouraged to travel during this COVID-19 pandemic. All employees are encouraged to follow the State Executive Order (2020-21) and stay home and should practice “social distancing” guidelines.

All employees are discouraged to travel internationally or domestically by airline, train, travel bus, cruise ship or any other means where you could be near others for an extended timeframe. This also includes staying in a rental home/condo that is rented by the night, hotel or motel while traveling domestically. Any employee that does travel as discouraged above, shall be required to self-quarantine for a minimum of 14 days.

All employees that are quarantined from work shall stay in their place of quarantine to limit exposure.

Any employee who plans to travel as discouraged above shall notify the Fire Chief with the dates of travel and when you return.



Positive COVID-19 Employee

All ERFD employees who test positive for the COVID-19 virus shall be quarantined for a minimum of 14 days and until they are symptom free without the assistance of medications for a minimum of 48 hours.

All employees that are quarantined from work shall stay in their place of quarantine to limit exposure.

Cleaning / Deconning

This information relates to recent CDC recommendations as well as NFPA 1851, Standard on Selection, Care, and Maintenance of Protective Ensembles for Structural Fire Fighting and Proximity Fire Fighting, 2020 Edition and EPA Registration 1839-166 or 1839-169.

General Station Cleaning:

Wear proper PPE (gloves minimum, consider eye and respiratory protection if using an aerosol cleaning solution).

Every morning, using proper cleaning solutions, clean high-touch areas such as chairs, all door knobs, computer key board and mouse, key pads, light switches, refrigerator handles, microwave handle, coffee pot handles, remote controls, telephones, recycling bins, tables, dishwasher, laundry washer/dryer, etc.

General station cleaning should be done daily by every shift.

Apparatus/Apparatus Bay Cleaning

Wearing proper PPE, clean all high-touch areas such as garage door openers, shore power/air connections, light switches, doorknobs, battery/ignition switches, steering wheels, keys, shifter knobs.

After Possible Exposure:

If you were possibly exposed to a patient with COVID-19, the following should be performed:

Cleaning and disinfecting the apparatus should happen as soon as possible after the call taking full PPE precautions (gloves, eye protection/face shield, gown) with all doors open.

All contaminated PPE should be properly disposed of at the station, all clothing worn on the call should be taken off and washed in the washer.

The Fire Chief should immediately be notified of potential exposure.



Other

During this time PPE shall be worn on ALL medical calls for service per memo from Dr. Robert Smith, NRMCA Medical Director dated March 20, 2020.

Proper hand-washing techniques should be performed regularly.

Travel to grocery and convenience stores shall be as limited as possible while on duty to limit the contact with other persons.

Make every effort to not carry the virus to your home and family. Personal hygiene requirements should be followed per department policy.

Stay home if you are sick. Monitor yourself and your family members for symptoms of COVID-19 and/or other illnesses.

For us to be successful during this time, we must all practice good hygiene and maintain “social distancing” both on and off duty. There are many firefighters across the country that have been removed from duty, and the need to remove personnel from duty could place the department at a critically low staffing level. We hope that all of this is precautionary but if we work together, we can lessen the impact to our healthcare system. We will continue to monitor this situation and update you as we move through this together. We will issue relevant guidelines as they become available and communicate with you as best, we can.

Thank you for your work and commitment to the community and your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Ken Williamson – Fire Chief
Elk Rapids Fire Department

Additional resources:

Guidance for Emergency Medical Services

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-for-ems.html>

State of Michigan – Coronavirus information

<https://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus/>

World Health Organization

<https://www.who.int/>

Benzie/Leelanau County Health Department

<http://www.bldhd.org/>

Grand Traverse County Health Department

<http://www.gtchd.org/2248/COVID-19>

