

# County of Santa Clara Emergency Medical Services System



**Emergency Medical Services Agency**  
700 Empey Way  
San Jose, CA 95126  
408.794.0600 voice | [www.sccemsagency.org](http://www.sccemsagency.org)  
[www.facebook.com/SantaClaraCountyEMS](https://www.facebook.com/SantaClaraCountyEMS)

**Date:** January 30, 2020

**To:** All Santa Clara County EMS System Providers

**From:** Ken Miller, MD, PhD, EMS Medical Director

**Copy:** Jackie Lowther, RN, MSN, MBA, EMS Director

**Subject:** 2019 Novel Coronavirus Update

2019 Novel Coronavirus causes febrile respiratory illness that in some cases can progress to pneumonia. It is believed to be transmitted by respiratory droplets with an incubation period is reported to be up to 14 days. Until more is known about the biology, infectivity, and the clinical course of the viral disease, the CDC is recommending both droplet and contact precautions when caring for a symptomatic patient with a relevant travel or exposure history.

From an EMS perspective a **suspicious case** would be a person with fever and respiratory symptoms (e.g. cough, shortness of breath) who has traveled from China in the previous 14 days. Report the finding of travel history and symptoms on ringdown to a hospital during transport and in your ePCR narrative.

Infectious disease control measures are described in Santa Clara County EMS Policy 700-S09. Respiratory **droplet precautions** include wearing eye protection, an N-95 or P-100 fit-tested respirator and gloves when within 6 feet of the patient. **Contact precautions** adds a disposable gown to droplet precautions when within 6 feet of the patient. Placing a surgical or procedure mask on the patient can also be considered as a barrier to respiratory droplets if the patient can tolerate it.

There is one direct flight from Beijing, China, to Mineta-San Jose International Airport. Encountering a febrile person with respiratory symptoms arriving on that flight would prompt donning PPE.

The EMS Agency is working with the six EMD Centers to initiate 911 caller travel screening when presenting symptoms are being evaluated by MPDS Protocol 26 (Sick Person) or Protocol 6 (Breathing Problems). Patient symptoms and travel history could prompt enroute EMS personnel to don PPE prior to patient contact.

If you should have any questions or concerns, please direct those to [kenneth.miller@ems.sccgov.org](mailto:kenneth.miller@ems.sccgov.org).