

**MEMORANDUM TO:** All Chiefs of Police and  
Commissioner Thomas Carrique  
Chairs, Police Services Boards

**FROM:** Richard Stubbings  
Assistant Deputy Minister  
Public Safety Division and Public Safety Training Division

**SUBJECT:** **Update on COVID-19 Preparations and Actions to  
Manage Disease Spread**

<b>DATE OF ISSUE:</b>	<b>April 14, 2020</b>
<b>CLASSIFICATION:</b>	<b>General Information</b>
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<b>PRIORITY:</b>	<b>High</b>

Further to All Chiefs Memo 20-0017, I am writing to advise you that as part of the response to stop the spread of COVID-19 and protect the health of Ontarians, the government is implementing an enhanced suite of public health measures based on recommendations from Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health.

Based on these recommendations, beginning immediately, the Ministry of Health (MOH) is implementing a new lab testing strategy to utilize testing capacity in the system, support further population testing and contain outbreaks.

As part of this work, the MOH has updated the COVID-19 Provincial Testing Guidance (see attached COVID-19 Testing Guidance Update) to focus on vulnerable populations, health care workers, caregivers, and first responders, in particular:

- All health care workers, caregivers and care providers, as well as **first responders (e.g., police, firefighters)**, should be tested as soon as is feasible, if they develop any symptom compatible with COVID-19, including atypical symptoms.
- All facilities conducting testing have also been advised that where there are shortages of testing supplies, symptomatic first responders including police are included in the group prioritized for testing within 24 hours.

These guidelines are attached and can also be found on the Ministry of Health's website accessible through the following link:

[http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/2019\\_covid\\_testing\\_guidance.pdf](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/2019_covid_testing_guidance.pdf)

Also based on these recommendations, Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health will be:

- Issuing new guidance on the use of cloth (non-medical) masks by members of the public where physical distancing is a challenge or not possible, and ensuring that the use of medical masks is reserved for health care workers, **emergency responders (e.g., police, firefighters)**, and individuals who need to leave their homes for essential reasons;

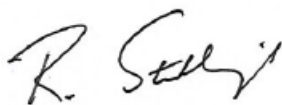
*Note: Please reference current guidance on PPE for first responders including that N95 Respirators are to be used for aerosol generating medical procedures.*

- <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/evidence-brief/eb-covid-19-first-responders.pdf?la=en>
- <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/ipac/report-covid-19-aerosol-generation-coughs-sneezes.pdf?la=en>
- Considering additional public health measures based on further advice from the Public Health Measures Table (e.g., public gatherings, enhanced protections for essential businesses, urban/rural travel).

We will continue to keep you apprised of actions taken in these key areas and work with you to ensure law enforcement personnel have the tools to do their jobs.

Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,



Richard Stubbings  
Assistant Deputy Minister  
Public Safety Division and Public Safety Training Division

Attachment