



**EMERGENCY MEDICAL  
SERVICES AGENCY**  
LOS ANGELES COUNTY

January 28, 2020

VIA E-MAIL

Los Angeles County  
Board of Supervisors

**MEMORANDUM**

**Hilda L. Solls**  
First District

TO: Distribution

**Mark Ridley-Thomas**  
Second District

FROM: **Marianne Gausche-Hill, MD**  
Medical Director, Los Angeles County EMS Agency

**Sheila Kuehl**  
Third District

**Janice Hahn**  
Fourth District

SUBJECT: **The Novel Coronavirus, Wuhan China**

**Kathryn Barger**  
Fifth District

**Cathy Chidester**  
Director

**Marianne Gausche-Hill, MD**  
Medical Director

As many of you are aware, there has been an outbreak of a novel coronavirus in the Hubei province, Wuhan City, China. Public Health officials and the Center for Disease Control (CDC) are working hard to track all persons coming from that area of the world to the United States and are actively screening at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX). In addition, 240 of the United States Embassy staff that had lived and worked in that province of China are being repatriated today at Ontario Airport.

The novel coronavirus is a virus similar to SARS and MERS. Most patients with the novel coronavirus have mild respiratory illness, fever and cough. However, there are patients, especially the elderly, and those with underlying medical illness that can present with severe respiratory symptoms. Currently there are 5 known cases of the virus in the United States, including one in Los Angeles, Orange County, and in states of Washington, Arizona and Illinois.

Persons who are identified in the screening process as persons under investigation (PUI) include those with fever, and symptoms of lower respiratory illness; for example, cough and difficulty breathing, and, in the last 14 days before symptom onset, had a history of travel from Hubei province, Wuhan City, China or in the last 14 days before symptom onset had close contact with a person who was under investigation for the novel coronavirus while that person was ill. PUI identified at LAX who are symptomatic may be transported to local emergency departments by our current protocols, or if identified as having severe respiratory distress will be transported to Ronald Reagan/UCLA Medical Center for treatment. All others who have a positive screen and require transport by EMS will be transported to local emergency departments by our current protocols.

The CDC is also assisting our local Public Health departments and hospital personnel to understand the process of collecting specimens from PUI for testing at the CDC. This process may change in the future as the CDC gains a greater experience with testing for this virus and then transfers the responsibility to local public health laboratories.

10100 Pioneer Blvd, Suite 200  
Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670

Tel: (562) 378-1500  
Fax: (562) 941-5835

*To ensure timely,  
compassionate and quality  
emergency and disaster  
medical services.*



**Health Services**  
<http://ems.dhs.lacounty.gov>

We will be asking our dispatch centers to screen patients with complaints of “sick persons” or those with “breathing problems” for travel and exposure to PUI and communicate this information to the EMS providers dispatched. In addition to this screening, it is prudent for EMS providers to perform a secondary travel and exposure screen for Provider Impressions of Respiratory Distress-Other, Fever, and Sepsis.

EMS personnel treating those patients with a positive screen at dispatch or on presentation in the field, should use standard precautions; contact precautions and airborne precautions which include gowns, goggles or face shield, gloves and an N-95 mask. In addition, the patient should be asked to wear a surgical mask as soon as they are identified.

For questions, you can contact the Los Angeles Department of Public Health at 213-974-1234.

We've attached two links which may be quite useful to you and your staff moving forward to gain information about this outbreak as it is a dynamic process.

<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/>

<http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/novel-coronavirus-2019/html>

The CDC does have an emergency operations center if there is additional information needed and that's at (770) 488-7100.

We will provide important updates as we know them.

- c. Each Supervisorial District  
Director, Department of Health Services  
Hospital Association of Southern California

**Distribution:**

CEOs, 9-1-1 Receiving Hospitals  
ED Medical Directors, 9-1-1 Receiving Hospitals  
Prehospital Care Coordinators, Base Hospitals  
Fire Chiefs, Fire Departments  
CEOs, Ambulance Operators  
Paramedic Coordinators, EMS Providers  
Nurse Educators, EMS Providers