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**REGULATORY/ MEDICAL HEALTH SERVICES**  
**EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES**

DATE: March 31, 2020

TO: All EMS Providers

REGARDING: AEROSOL GENERATING PROCEDURES

This memo provides guidance for EMS workers caring for patients who could potentially be infected with the COVID-19 virus. There has been concern about treating patients using aerosol generating procedures (AGPs) and the risks these procedures pose to healthcare workers. AGPs include bag-valve-mask (BVM), endotracheal intubation, I-gel usage, chest compressions, CPAP, airway suctioning, I-gel usage and even possibly nebulizer treatments and high flow oxygen.

At this time, Orange County Emergency Medical Services (OCEMS) does not support an outright ban on AGPs. Rather, at the discretion of the paramedic, some procedures may be foregone if it is deemed that the patient is relatively stable and the procedure may not be required. However, OCEMS would like to reiterate that risk of COVID-19 infection is adequately prevented by using proper personal protective equipment (PPE) recommended for airborne precautions (gown, gloves, eye protection, and N-95 respirator) while doing AGPs. As such, EMS personnel should continue to perform these procedures if necessary for appropriate care of the patient while wearing appropriate PPE.

The health and safety of our patients and providers is of utmost concern and we are striving to avoid undue burden on the system. The situation is fluid and changing rapidly and as more information becomes available, the guidance may need to be changed. Please review the CDC guidance for EMS personnel at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-for-ems.html> for more information.

Sincerely,

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Medical Director Emergency Medical Services  
Orange County Health Care Agency