

September 11, 2020

**Emergency Amendment to Legislative Rule 64 CSR 48: Emergency Medical Services
Requiring Use of Face Masks During Pre-Hospital Patient Encounters**

CHARLESTON, W.Va. – The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR) has filed an emergency amendment to Legislative Rule 64 CSR 48: Emergency Medical Services. The amendment requires emergency medical services personnel to wear face coverings at all times during patient encounters regardless of the patient’s symptoms.

“It is critically important that West Virginia’s emergency medical service personnel wear masks and practice social distancing,” said Bill J. Crouch, DHHR Cabinet Secretary. “These first responders are not only vital to everyday life but are also on the frontline of our state’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We must take every precaution to keep all of our healthcare heroes safe, as well as the citizens we serve.”

All pre-hospital emergency medical service providers must follow the face covering requirement. The rule has been amended to add the following requirements:

6.2.15. All personnel must limit bystander presence and maintain a distance of six feet from any member of the public other than the patient, and shall wear a face covering as follows:

6.2.15.a. Personnel shall wear a surgical mask on all calls or when closer than six feet from any member of the public, and personnel involved in direct patient care shall wear a surgical mask unless an aerosol generating procedure is anticipated, in which case an N-95 mask should be worn.

6.2.15.b. Personnel shall wear eye protection on calls, and when available, should wear a face shield to cover the eyes and mask.

6.2.15.c. Face coverings and reusable eye protection should be cleaned before reuse in accordance with guidelines published by the bureau.

These requirements are effective immediately. Written public comments will be accepted through October 5, 2020, and may be submitted to April.L.Robertson@wv.gov or by U.S. Mail to April L. Robertson, One Davis Square, Suite 100E, Charleston, West Virginia 25301.

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