



Glassy Mountain Fire Department

COVID RESPONSE CHANGES EFFECTIVE JULY 1ST

Good morning;

As the frequency at which persons with confirmed or suspected COVID are on the rise and medical personnel should approach every patient with a high level of suspicion until the initial assessment is completed and the appropriate level of PPE is determined. Also, all residents of the district should be afforded the same level of care whenever possible. To that end, Greenville County EMS and the Greenville County Fire Chiefs' Association have determined that the criteria for determining a COVID Alert will change as of July 1.

If the patient has been diagnosed with COVID or in close contact with someone that has been determined to be COVID positive a COVID Alert will be announced over the radio and in the notes for the call. Previous signs and symptoms that could be COVID-related or associated with other illnesses (I.e. Shortness of breath, chest pain, nausea and vomiting, general malaise) without a COVID diagnosis or exposure to a known Coronavirus patient will no longer be identified as an alert patient.

Our personnel need to remain in a heightened state of awareness and evaluate each patient asking about the patient's COVID status and possible exposure to a COVID-19 positive person. Please see the attached memorandum from GCEMS for additional information.

As usual, please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Stay safe! and thanks for all you do.

Sincerely,

**Robert Staples, MS, CFO, EFO
Fire Chief
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MEMORANDUM

To: Greenville County Fire Chiefs
From: Tom Blackwell, MD
Interim Director, Greenville County EMS
RE: COVID-19 Response
Date: June 29, 2020

Thank you for your perseverance and endurance during the pandemic which will continue to impact this community. Greenville is now the leading County in South Carolina for positive cases (4741) and #2 in deaths (2nd to Richland). It is understood that COVID-19 is not going away anytime soon and as more citizens get tested, more positive results will be charted. Thus, we believe that all patients encountered by first responders and Greenville County EMS regardless of complaint should be afforded the same level of virus protection from our providers and that all agencies should strongly consider returning to normal response in your jurisdiction. This posture has been discussed with and approved by the EMS and Executive Committees of the Fire Association.

Starting at 0700 on July 1, the following changes will occur:

1. Calls received that require first responder fire department response will either be dispatched by MedCom or transferred to the secondary PSAP for dispatch depending on the agency. It is up to your department to determine if you respond. If you choose not to respond, please inform your dispatch center so information can then be communicated to MedCom and the responding EMS crew.
2. MedCom call-takers will inquire whether (1) the patient has been diagnosed with the COVID-19 virus or (2) has been in close contact with a known COVID positive patient. If yes to either, the call will be announced as a COVID ALERT in addition to the signal/call description. Thus, COVID ALERT will now refer to the patient who has the infection or has a high exposure risk and will not reflect just the symptoms that may suggest COVID infection.

Greenville County EMS appreciates all that you do and we hope this information will assist you with your internal planning. As always, these measures are being introduced to protect your staff and to better serve the community.

Thank you. Should you have questions or concerns, please be in touch.