



**OREGON  
Fire Marshals  
ASSOCIATION**

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# OREGON FIRE SERVICE CORONAVIRUS TASKFORCE

## 12/15/2020 Information Bulletin 2020-11 Fire and EMS Training During COVID-19

The Oregon Fire Service Coronavirus Response Team – in consultation with the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (DPSST) – recommend that the Oregon Fire Service review the following training safety guidelines regarding Fire and EMS training conducted during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

### Training Pre-Planning Considerations for Fire Chiefs and Training Officers:

- Review current CDC, OHA, OSHA, and other pertinent local guidance to ensure the desired training will comply with current workplace restrictions and rules
- Evaluate the desired goal(s) and/or outcome(s) of the planned training and consider:
  - ✓ Is the training mandated, required, or a critical priority?
  - ✓ Must it be delivered prior to widespread availability of a treatment or vaccine for COVID-19?
  - ✓ Can all or part of the training be offered through distance, e-learning, or blended formats?
  - ✓ Can the training be organized around individual tasks, delivered in small numbers of participants and instructors, and offered over multiple days to limit risk of disease transmission?
- Establish a written training plan in accordance with current COVID-19 guidance and addresses:
  - How infection control and safety will be provided throughout the training
  - Who the designated infection control / safety officer will be during the HOT
  - How any special local public health requirements will be met
  - What self-screening procedures for participants and instructors will follow
  - How physical distancing – when feasible – will be employed by participants and instructors will
  - What, how, when, and where PPE will be worn during training
  - How many participants and instructors will be permitted to attend training in accordance with current guidance and in consideration reducing the risk of transmission (recommend participant groups of 10 or less)
  - How possible exposures will to be reported
  - How and when training rooms, grounds and equipment will be sanitized prior to and following training
- Review training plan with instructor(s) and participants at start of HOT session
- Identify who will be accountable for ensuring the plan is followed and has the authority to take mitigative steps if the plan is not followed (including terminating the training)

### For In-classroom Training:

- Prior to training:
  - o The classroom shall be arranged to maximize physical distancing and limit the number of participants (remove available chairs and tables, etc.)

- Consider engineering controls (arrows, signage, etc.) to direct participants and instructors into, thru, and out of the training space to ensure physical distancing
- If the training facility will be occupied by other responders, volunteers, or personnel, access points leading into the classroom should be closed and labeled as "training in progress"
- If the training facility will not be occupied by other responders, volunteers, or personnel, consider propping doors open to minimize touching of door knobs, etc.
- All high-use touchpoints leading into and surfaces within the training space shall have been sanitized
- All participants and instructors shall self-screen prior to starting training
- During training: All participants and instructor(s) shall wear face masks and remain physically distant
  - Appropriate PPE, hand sanitizer, and cleaning supplies should be readily available to participants and instructor(s)
  - If physical distancing is maintained, the instructor/presenter may need to remove their mask to ensure information is clearly understood only when speaking
- Following training: All high-use touchpoints leading into and surfaces within the training space will be re-sanitized

### **For Hands-on Training:**

- Prior to training:
  - The training spaces or grounds shall be arranged to maximize physical distancing and limit the number of participants (space out training aids, props, apparatus, etc.)
  - All training aids, props, apparatus, etc. in the training space or on the grounds shall be appropriately sanitized
  - All participants and instructors shall self-screen prior to starting training
- During training: All participants shall wear face masks or respirators (N95, SCBA, etc.) and remain physically distant to the extent possible
  - When participants are practicing skills as a team or teams, each participant should be wearing complete PPE – just as they would during an actual response – to limit disease transmission to one another
  - When practical, the tools being utilized for practice (hose lines, chainsaws, airway adjuncts, etc.) should be selected for their ability to be safely and completely sanitized or readily discarded; avoid using front-line equipment
- Following training: All training aids, props, apparatus, etc. in the training space or on the grounds shall be appropriately sanitized or properly disposed of

### **Resources:**

#### **CDC Coronavirus (COVID-19):**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

#### **OHA COVID-19 Updates:**

<https://govstatus.egov.com/OR-OHA-COVID-19>

#### **OSHA COVID-19 Pandemic Response:**

<https://osha.oregon.gov/covid19/Pages/default.aspx>

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