

# COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA

## Office of the Sheriff

55 West Younger Avenue  
San Jose, California 95110-1721  
(408) 808-4605



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Laurie Smith  
Sheriff

### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** All Staff

**FROM:** COVID-19 Incident Command Center

**SUBJECT:** ICC Directive 20-23 (Continued Efforts to Stay Safe)

**DATE:** 05/25/2020

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Sheriff's Office Personnel,

In early March, the County of Santa Clara and the Office of the Sheriff took extraordinary steps to prevent our employees' exposure to the COVID-19 virus. Many employees were placed on administrative leave or allowed to work from home in an attempt to avoid the virus from spreading within our Office. Some of these employees have been off for an extended amount of time and they are unaware of the steps and events that have taken place in their absence to help mitigate exposure and keep our department safe and healthy. As our Office moves into the early stages of returning back to a, "new normal," the purpose of this directive is to provide information to our returning employees so they can better understand what to expect upon their return to work, highlight our efforts of preventing and investigating exposures, and continue our efforts to communicate with staff. This Directive is also a reminder to all staff of what they can do to keep themselves and each other safe while at work.

As the term, "social distancing," took hold worldwide, the Office of the Sheriff encouraged staggering start and end times to prevent unnecessary gatherings. We also suspended the use of the Kronos time keeping system because it created a high touch surface that could aid in the spread the virus. We mandated fever screening at the beginning of every employee's shift. All deputies, staff, and essential visitors are checked prior to starting their shifts in an effort to safeguard our employees from potential exposures to COVID-19. Any employee displaying a fever above 99.9 degrees is sent home for the day on paid administrative leave and the Health and Injury Prevention (HIP) coordinator is notified.

On March 16, 2020, the Office of the Sheriff initiated the Incident Command Center (ICC) with the primary goals of coordinating staffing and supply needs throughout the department and communicating its efforts and Public Health Orders through the use of Directives. The ICC was tasked with creating various exposure mitigation units in response to the pandemic. Units such as the Virus Response Team (VRT) for the Enforcement Bureau and Covid Exposure Team (CET) for the Correctional Bureau were developed to prevent unnecessary exposures through training and preventative measures as well as decontaminating personnel, vehicles, and holding cells if an exposure occurred. These exposure mitigation teams were the first of their kind. Agencies throughout the state and country started requesting our help in developing their own units. VRT and CET established boot washing stations at each work location. They trained staff on how to properly don a face mask and wash their hands. They researched and procured ozone decontamination machines for vehicles and cells.

The Sheriff's Office established a partnership with a local business to procure a substantial quantity of alcohol based hand sanitizer and this created the Sheriff's Office Sanitizer (SOS) distribution center located behind the Richey Training center. Sheriff Smith is allowing employees to bring reasonable, personal containers to the SOS center so they can be filled and brought home in an effort to protect your families.

The ICC developed a COVID Investigation Unit (CIU) with the main objective of contact tracing confirmed COVID-19 cases amongst staff and inmates. Contact tracing units are a key element in identifying and preventing future exposures. Working under the supervision of the Personnel Division, CIU consists of criminal analysts and detectives who utilize video footage and/or interviews to investigate and identify potential exposures. All information is shared with HIP due to confidentiality concerns.

The ICC placed all Covid-19 Information, Staff Resources, FAQ's, COVID-19 Management in the Jails, Informative Media Videos, Public Health Shelter-in-Place Orders and all Incident Command Center Directives on our public website so staff has access to the information from home. Please go to the following address to access the site: <https://www.sccgov.org/sites/sheriff/COVID19/Pages/home.aspx>

In accordance with Santa Clara County Department of Public Health guidelines, the ICC wants to remind everyone of what they can do to remain safe and healthy while at home and work. Practice social distancing. Refrain from hugging, hand shaking and high-fiving your co-workers. We cannot emphasize enough that by participating in these acts and ignoring the guidelines set in place, you are putting everyone in this agency at risk by potentially spreading the virus. We understand this is a hard social norm to break for some, but it is imperative that everyone does their part. Wash your hands, at least 20 seconds with soap and water or use hand sanitizer. Clean your work area with OxyCide daily disinfectant that was distributed throughout the department in red topped spray bottles. \*\* Reminder not to mix OxyCide with bleach wipes as they may cause a chemical reaction if the two are combined (Directive 20-12).\*\*

Wear a face covering. The department issued two black cloth face coverings to every employee throughout the department. If you have not received yours, please notify your immediate supervisor so they can be issued. Both Directives 20-14 and 20-19 explain information and requirements for face coverings. Directive 20-19 specifically addresses the court order requiring face coverings to work or enter the State Courthouses to maintain consistency with our Public Health Officer and State and Federal directives. There are a few exceptions, so please read the entire directive and Court Order for the exact verbiage.

We ask that you review all previous Directives and information posted on our website. All divisions have been asked to work with their employees to adjust employee schedules where necessary (even if it incurs a differential) and continue to be attentive to their needs during this time. Lastly, we recommend you reach out to HIP, EAP and peer support if you need guidance or help in dealing with the effects the pandemic has on you or your family.

Remember to stay safe and stay healthy and we will get through this together.