

Ebola Quick-Reference for Law Enforcement

This quick reference is intended as a guide for law enforcement personnel who may respond to, or come in contact with, individuals potentially exposed to and/or infected with the Ebola virus.

History

Ebola outbreak in the western African countries of: Liberia, Guinea, and Sierra Leone

Transmission

Ebola is a viral illness and can only be transmitted person-to-person through direct contact with blood or body fluids (saliva, vomit, feces, urine, mucous, tears, and/or sweat) of a symptomatic individual. ***Individuals that are not symptomatic are not infectious.***

Symptoms

Symptoms are consistent with the flu

Fever, headaches, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, stomach pain, unexplained bleeding/bruising

Symptoms may appear 5-10 days after being infected and may take up to 21 days to present.

Illness can cause delirium, with erratic behavior that can place officers at risk of infection (e.g., flailing or staggering)

Rules of Thumb

Officer safety is the most important consideration

- Be smart, be careful
- Bodily secretions can infect you
- Fear and ignorance about Ebola is widespread

Basic Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Disposable Gloves
 - Wearing two pairs is recommended
- Disposable Face Mask
- Eye protection recommended

Response Considerations (WHAT TO DO)

- Most response situations will warrant only the usual level of precaution against blood borne pathogens. Follow department policy/protocol.
- If PSAP call takers advise that the individual is suspected of having Ebola law enforcement personnel should put on recommended personal protective equipment
- Avoid direct contact with the individual and body fluids and secretions. (*touching, stepping, standing, wiping, splashing, sitting and kneeling*)
 - *To minimize potential exposure, it may be prudent to perform the initial screening from at least 3 feet away from the individual*
- Limit who comes in contact with the individual.
- Contact PSAP (911)/Dispatch and relay any risk factors associated with the potential for Ebola exposure.
- If direct contact with a symptomatic individual or their body fluids is necessary, follow the department's First Responder Blood Borne Pathogen policy/protocol.
 - *Wear disposable gloves and face mask*
- Wash hands vigorously with soap and water (or hand sanitizer \geq 60% alcohol) after removing PPE or after close contact with an ill person and/or with body fluids or surfaces that may be contaminated.
- Report potential exposure following department policy/protocol.

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Risk Evaluation Questions

If PSAP (911/Dispatch) has not made an initial Ebola assessment, responding law enforcement personnel should attempt to determine the following, if you suspect the individual displays any of the symptoms of Ebola Viral Disease, while utilizing protective guidelines provided on the front of this quick reference.

- Have you travelled outside of the United States in the last 3-4 weeks?
 - Have you been to Liberia, Guinea or Sierra Leone?
 - Have you had contact with anyone that has traveled to these countries?
 - Have you had any contact with an Ebola patient?
- If the answer to any of these questions is YES, notify PSAP (911/Dispatch) secure the scene and minimize additional exposure pending EMS arrival.
- Are you feeling ill?
 - What are your symptoms?
 - How long have you been ill or had symptoms?

Officer safety is the most important consideration

- Emergency medical treatment should be provided through local EMS/911 services.
 - If an officer is confronted with a medical situation requiring immediate life-saving attention (i.e., CPR, trauma, etc.) follow the department's medical policy/protocol.
- If an officer's skin or mucous membranes come into direct contact with blood, body fluids, secretions, or excretions from an individual with suspected Ebola, the officer should immediately stop working. They should wash the affected skin surfaces with an alcohol based sanitizer and/or soap and water. Mucous membranes should be irrigated with a large amount of water or eyewash solution.
- Report exposure to on-scene EMS personnel and follow department policy/protocol as appropriate.

When is PPE recommended

- For lifesaving medical treatment
- Direct contact with an individual experiencing symptoms
 - Vomiting, diarrhea and unexplained bleeding
- Per department policy and protocol

For more information

CDC: <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/>

IDPH: <http://www.idph.state.il.us/ebola/index.htm>

ILLINOIS EBOLA HOTLINE: **800-889-3931**