

COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Central Dispatch Red Flag Procedures for COVID19 Notification

During the period of the COVID19 pandemic, the [County] Department of Public Health will notify [County] Central Dispatch of the address of a confirmed positive case of COVID 19, based on the following procedures:

1. Upon notification of a confirmed POSITIVE case, the [County Department of Public Health] Emergency Preparedness Coordinator will obtain the address of the patient from the Communicable Disease Team.
2. The [County Public Health] Emergency Preparedness Coordinator will initiate a [State] HAN Alert to notify the [County] Central Dispatch Director and Deputy Director of the address of the positive case. Only the address may be provided.
3. The [County] Central Dispatch Director or Deputy Director will add a “red flag” to the address within the 911 system.
4. The [County] Central Dispatch will ensure that this information is only viewed by and/or provided to emergency responders on a defined “need to know” basis. “Need to know” in this case, is defined as those emergency responders who are called to the address in response to a 911 dispatch. All Emergency responders must comply with the mandates associated with the security of protected patient information.
5. Upon release of the patient from isolation by [County Department of Public Health] the PH Emergency Preparedness Coordinator will initiate a second [State] HAN Alert and send the alert to ONLY the Director and Deputy Director of Central Dispatch, who then REMOVE the flag from the address within the system.

The process will only last through the current pandemic (COVID-19). However, if or when we get widespread POSITIVE cases, this process may lose the intended effectiveness and may then be cancelled.

The following legal advice is critical in the communication of this highly confidential information:

- Dispatchers may not openly share the information over the radio to first responders. Assuming a mobile data unit can be used. If that is not possible, then as a last resort, a code.
- Dispatchers and all emergency responders should be advised in advance (and perhaps reminded through actual transmission) that this information is highly confidential and to be treated as such and shared ONLY on a need to know basis so that this information does not become public.

- First responders should be reminded that there is community spread in [this] County and they should always assume a person with whom they are contacting is infected. However, precautions should be employed with extra vigilance and rigor at a red flag address.
- Legal advice states that names will not be shared, only addresses.