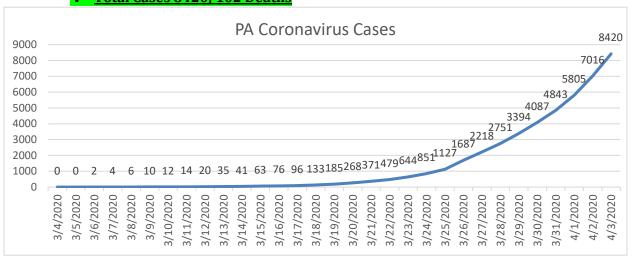


Situation Report	Incident	Operational Period	Reporting Unit	Form
External	COVID-19	04/03/2020	SAEMS	ICS-209 Short

Current Situation:

- There are currently seventeen (17) confirmed COVID-19 cases within the Region; four (4) in Cambria County, four (4) in Blair County, three (3) in Somerset County, three (3) in Bedford County and three (3) in Huntingdon County.
- The entire state of Pennsylvania is now under an indefinite "Stay at Home" order effective 20:00 on April 1, 2020.
- Pennsylvania Department of Health Daily Situation Report can be found here.
- **♣** Bedford County reported first two (2) confirmed cases of COVID-19.
- Somerset County is now under a "Stay at Home" order.
- SAEMS continues to monitor the rapidly developing situation and review and respond to questions and concerns, distribute new and updated information as it becomes available and communicate with the Pennsylvania Department of Health, Bureau of EMS (BEMS), Keystone Health Care Coalition (HCC) South West Health Care Coalition (SWHCC) and regional emergency management agency (EMA) coordinators.
- Daily situation reports will be distributed to all agencies, facilities, and county EMA Coordinators on weekdays, on weekends as the situation requires, and additional updates as needed.
- Counties impacted as of Midnight last night:

* Total Cases 8420; 102 Deaths



Current Testing Status

Negative	Positive	Deaths
53.695	8,420	102

Current Case Status:

County	Number of Cases	Deaths
Adams	19	
Allegheny	476	2
Armstrong	11	
Beaver	65	2
Bedford	3	
Berks	201	1
Blair	4	
Bradford	9	
Bucks	446	8
Butler	75	2
Cambria	4	
Cameron	1	
Carbon	34	1
Centre	32	
Chester	226	2
Clarion	4	
Clearfield	5	
Clinton	1	
Columbia	15	
Crawford	5	
Cumberland	45	2
Dauphin	79	1
Delaware	542	10
Erie	17	
Fayette	20	1

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Forest	1	
Franklin	26	
Greene	11	
Huntingdon	3	
Indiana	7	
Juniata	5	
Lackawanna	119	4
Lancaster	232	5
Lawrence	19	2
Lebanon	54	
Lehigh	584	5
Luzerne	484	5
Lycoming	8	
Mckean	1	
Mercer	10	
Mifflin	2	
Monroe	397	10
Montgomery	875	11
Montour	16	
Northampton	466	10
Northumberland	8	
Perry	4	1
Philadelphia	2284	14
Pike	83	1
Potter	2	
Schuylkill	63	
Snyder	4	1

Somerset	3	
Susquehanna	4	
Tioga	3	
Union	3	
Venango	3	
Warren	1	
Washington	40	
Wayne	23	
Westmoreland	110	
Wyoming	2	
York	121	1

KEY POINTS AND UPDATES

- Governor Wolf announced that all Pennsylvanians should wear a cloth mask when going out in public. Surgical and N95 masks should be reserved for health care workers and first responders in health care environments.
- FDA changes course and allows KN95 masks meeting certain criteria to be used in US healthcare organizations
- PPE remains difficult to procure, especially N95 or comparable masks and gloves. Actively searching for alternate sources and other alternatives to standard PPE.
- Agencies beginning to report critical needs of PPE
- EMS Information Bulletin 2020-13-Alternatives to Nebulized Bronchodilators During COVID-2019 addressing modifications to protocols for use of alternate medications to nebulized bronchodilators was distributed
- EMS Information Bulletin 2020-12 PCR Data Collection for Exemptions Outlined in EMSIB 2020-11 related to documentation practices when utilizing staffing exemptions was distributed
- The Bureau of EMS has been in preparations to host a statewide EMS call for the last week. It is our hope to be able to convene a webinar like call next week to discuss the current situation related to COVID-19. We are currently investigating a variety of different options and platforms to be able to do a call of this scale this so additional information on meeting details will be forthcoming. In the meantime I would ask that for questions that you would like addressed in the call to please send them to the general PA EMS mailbox at PAEMSOffice@pa.gov
- Agencies with personnel considered exposed to a COVID-19 patient or employee directed to self-isolate for 14 day period should contact our office.
- Any EMS agency willing to utilize full face respirators for COVID-19 response, please notify our office.
- Governor Wolf and Secretary of Health Dr. Levine issued a statewide "Stay at Home" order effective April 1, 2020 at 20:00 (8:00 p.m.).

- Bureau of EMS distributed EMS Information Bulletin 2020-11 Level 1 Staffing Exceptions for Licensed EMS Agencies addressing staffing exemptions that are available related to COVID-19. Agencies are required to provide notification to the regional council and their agency medical director within 24 hours of the first utilization of these exceptions. Patient care reports (PCR's) of incidents under which these exceptions are used are subject to 100% quality improvement review.
- PPE survey distributed to all EMS agencies in the region to determine current availability and critical needs. Agencies should continue to request PPE through their county EMA unmet needs process.
- Governor Tom Wolf and Secretary of Health Dr. Rachel Levine revised their "Stay at Home" orders to include Cameron, Crawford, Forest, Franklin, Lawrence, Lebanon and Somerset counties, The order now includes these 33 counties: Allegheny, Beaver, Berks, Bucks, Butler, Cameron, Carbon, Centre, Chester, Crawford, Cumberland, Dauphin, Delaware, Erie, Forest, Franklin, Lackawanna, Lancaster, Lawrence, Lebanon, Lehigh, Luzerne, Monroe, Montgomery, Northampton, Philadelphia, Pike, Schuylkill, Somerset, Washington, Wayne, Westmoreland and York counties.
- First two (2) cases identified in Bedford County
- Agencies and organizations are recommended to increase security at their facilities to deter theft of equipment and personal protective equipment (PPE). Cases of theft of PPE have been reported, including at an EMS agency in Clearfield County. Report any theft of PPE to your local law enforcement and notify our office.
- Initiated distribution of hand sanitizer donated by Guy Chemicals in Somerset for use by emergency responders within the region.
- CMS Flexibility to Fight COVID-19 (Including Alternate Destinations) information
- EMS Information Bulletin 2020-10: EMS Providers Obtaining Nasopharyngeal Swabs was distributed by the Bureau of EMS, which indicates that it is within the scope of practice of providers at or above the level of AEMT to perform nasopharyngeal swab testing related to COVID-19, and requirements to be included in any such program..
- Gastro-intestinal symptoms such as abdominal pain, nausea and diarrhea as well as loss of taste and smell are being identified as common symptoms of COVID-19 infection, EMS providers should consider these symptoms in assessment of patients to evaluate risk of COVID-19 infection.
- After discussion with Dr. Karduck, Regional Medical Director, and incidents where providers were exposed to COVID-19 patients without PPE due to the nature of the call, it is recommended that all EMS agencies consider using at least minimal personal protective equipment (PPE) of a surgical/procedure mask, gloves and eye protection on every response if available.
- Agencies with personnel directed to self-isolate due to exposure to confirmed COVID-19 patient should notify our office when that occurs to allow us to track the impact to EMS as well as to ensure that personnel are appropriately identified, tracked and reported through DOH channels
- Agencies are encouraged to utilize the CDC Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Burn Rate Calculator <u>available here</u> to evaluate their current PPE stocks and the expected time to exhaustion of those supplies. Please forward completed spreadsheets to our office for evaluation and prioritization of PPE needs within the region.
- Receiving facilities should be notifying EMS agencies of ambulance transported patients that test positive for COVID-19. NIOSH and CDC have issued additional guidance indicating that COVID-19 is a reportable disease under the Ryan White Act as an airborne disease that requires notification as soon as possible, but no later than 48 hours after the determination. Request will be made to all agencies to update Designated Infection Control Officer and contact information.

- * Office of Civil Rights Provides <u>Guidance on Sharing COVID-19 Patient Information</u> with First Responders
- **★** PWW EMS Law provides <u>Guidance on Sharing COVID-19 Information and HIPPA</u>
- * Agencies and personnel that believe they may have been exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19 should contact 1-877-PA-Health for guidance on appropriate steps to manage possible exposures.
- All UPMC facilities are requiring that all employees, vendors and visitors to be screened and wear a minimum of a surgical type mask while in their facilities. Other facilities have initiated similar requirements for screening prior to entry into the facility. We have requested specific information from each facility in the region to provide a single summary.
- Any facility requiring EMS personnel to wear a mask to enter their facility is responsible to provide EMS personnel with a mask if the providers are not already wearing that level of PPE based on availability and the nature of the incident. This includes both hospitals and long-term care facilities.
- Agencies transporting confirmed or potential COVID-19 cases should continue to provide advanced notice of arrival to receiving emergency department ideally via phone for secure communications. If unable to utilize phone communication, agencies and facilities can utilize the phrase "Protocol 931" to identify these patients.
- Providers should use a high index of suspicion with all patients during this pandemic. There have been several incidents where EMS providers have responded to calls and not utilized full PPE (goggles, N95 mask, gown and gloves) due to the nature of dispatch or patients screening negative based on symptoms when asked by 911, yet the patient later tested positive for COVID-19. Providers with significant exposure that are not protected by full PPE are then being directed to self-isolate for 14 days.
- Agencies should consult with the Pennsylvania Department of Health and consider the CDC CDC Healthcare Personnel with Potential Exposure Guidance for determination of actions related to personnel potentially exposed to patients with confirmed or presumed COVID-19
- Agencies report receiving conflicting information from DOH and facility infection control practitioners when advised of positive COVID-19 test for providers that were not in full PPE. DOH advised providers should self-isolate for 14 days, facility indicated providers should continue to work, wear a surgical mask and monitor. Agency following DOH guidance
- Confirmed cases within Pennsylvania have passed 1,000
- National Highway and Transportation Safety Office of EMS resources available at their website.
- Pennsylvania Bureau of EMS distributed EMS Information Bulletin 2020-09 related to Out of State Licensed EMS Agencies (Copy Attached)
- Somerset County modified 911 Emerging Infectious Disease (EID) questions to remove questions related to travel due to identification of cases in Somerset County.
- DOH distributed 2020-PAHAN-490-3-24-UPD: Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Patients with Known or Patients Under Investigation for 2019 Novel Coronavirus in a Healthcare Setting (Copy Attached)
- Guidance for EMS agencies remains that EMS providers, in consultation with medical command physicians, may discuss with possible COVID-19 patients with no life threatening symptoms to remain at home or to accept transport to an alternate destination than a hospital, but if the patient or their legal representative requests transportation, the patient must be transported. At this time, no EMS provider or EMS agency may refuse to transport a patient requesting transportation.
- To support certification of additional EMS providers, Southern Alleghenies EMS Council will reopen our Pearson Vue testing center for candidates to take the NREMT cognitive exam for Pennsylvania certification. Site will be restricted to a single candidate at a time, and candidates will be required to utilize a filtering mask and gloves for the duration of the time they are in the building. All candidates will be screened for possible COVID 19 related

- symptoms and possible exposures, including temperature prior to entering the testing site. Site is subject to closure at any point as situation develops and changes
- First confirmed case of COVID-19 is identified in Somerset County which is reporting one (1) case.
- Effective at noon on March 24, 2020, following identification of the first COVID-19 case in the county, Somerset County 911 instituted modified dispatch plan for quick response agencies (QRS) limiting their dispatch to only "Echo" or the highest level of response.
- FEMA document "Information for First Responders on Maintaining Operational Capabilities

 <u>During a Pandemic</u>" available for download.
- Reference sheets for EMS and 911 from above document attached to this report for consideration and planning. Required Disclaimer: The potential action steps listed here are not all inclusive and do not represent the official position of the federal government. The user should understand that laws, rules, regulations, standard operating procedures and standard operating guidelines, as well as limited resources, may exist, precluding emergency service organizations and providers from implementing some of the following ideas. Each emergency service organization must reference its own pandemic response plan and needs accordingly and seek applicable workaround alternatives for their respective jurisdiction. The possible consequences of a pandemic warrant attention to the possibilities associated with workforce depletion.
- Opening restricted Pearson Vue testing for NREMT certification effective March 25, 2020 to support certification of students that have completed program, but not yet tested. Candidates will be required to answer screening questions and have temperature taken and wear PPE upon entering and during testing in building. Testing will be available five (5) days per week.
- All EMS related certifications expiring either March 31 or April 1, 2020 have been extended to July 1, 2020. All CPR certification cards meeting BEMS requirements that expire after January 1, 2020 will be considered to be current until July 1, 2020. (EMS Information Bulletin 2020-08: Issued Extension to EMS Certification Expiration Dates Attached)

 Providers with expiration dates of March 31 or April 1, 2020 will not receive new certification cards indicating the extended date. Cards will be considered current until July 1, 2020 and new cards will then be issued with recertification unless extended further.
- Governor Wolf directed all non-life sustaining businesses in Pennsylvania to close with enforcement beginning at 08:00 March 23, 2020
- Governor Wolf and Secretary Levine issue "Stay at Home" orders for Allegheny, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Monroe, Montgomery and Philadelphia counties. Northampton and Lehigh added on March 25, 2020
- Bureau of EMS issued EMS Information Bulletin 2020-07: Alternate Pathway for Psychomotor Testing that temporarily waives the requirement for completion of a psychomotor exam prior to certification. Candidates still need to successfully complete the cognitive exam. Additional information on the cognitive exam will be forthcoming. All psychomotor examinations are cancelled until further notice.
- Ambulance Association of Pennsylvania is collecting financial data related to COVID-19 emergency declaration at their site.
 - * Agencies should begin to record and track additional costs related to COVID-19 for any potential reimbursable expenses under disaster declarations. Any additional costs directly related to COVID-19 preparedness or response may potentially be eligible for reimbursement down the road. See attached spreadsheet for sample tracking mechanism.
 - There has been discussion on the impact of COVID-19 preparedness and response on EMS agency finances due to decreased non-emergency transport, cancelled fundraising or other issues. If your agency has financial projections indicating that the continued COVID-19 situation could have a significantly negative financial impact on your agency, please forward that information to our office for review and discussion with the Bureau of EMS.

- Continue to strongly recommend that agencies conserve N95 masks for only those situations where they are truly necessary and consider using surgical type mask in all other situations. Routine or excessive use of N95's will rapidly deplete availability and could have negative impacts as the situation worsens. See CDC guidance on use of N95's versus alternatives.
 - ➤ Distributed guidance to agencies regarding process for requesting personal protective equipment (PPE), hand sanitizer and cleaning agents if unmet need at their agency. All unmet needs requests to go to county EMA coordinator for processing. Local agencies are unlikely to be provided with additional PPE from stockpiles unless they are in an area where there are a significant number of cases and/or community spread until supply pipelines improve.
- All EMS agencies should begin to screen their personnel for fever, cough or other possible COVID-19 symptoms at the beginning and at least once more during their shift. Personnel that have fever or possible COVIID-19 symptoms should not report to work or be immediately removed from duty and advised to self-isolate. Fever is either measured temperature >100.0F or subjective fever. Note that fever may be intermittent or may not be present in some patients, such as those who are elderly, immunosuppressed, or taking certain medications (e.g., NSAIDs). Clinical judgement should be used to guide testing of patients in such situations. Respiratory symptoms consistent with COVID-19 are cough, shortness of breath, and sore throat. Medical evaluation may be recommended for lower temperatures (<100.0F) or other symptoms (e.g., muscle aches, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain headache, runny nose, fatigue) in consultation with your agency medical director.
- Recommend that all public safety answering points (PSAP's) consider modification of the response modes in their respective dispatch systems to minimize the dispatch of QRS agencies by dispatch only to high priority (ECHO) incidents, and that the QRS agencies limit exposure by use of as few personnel as possible to assess and provide treatment for the patient, and to utilize appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) and social distancing when responding and providing care.
- Southern Alleghenies EMS Council remains operational but has restricted access to our building to essential personnel. Please do not come to office. To contact us please call 814.201.2265 or email our regular emails or saems@saems.com.

Activities:

- ♣ Participated in Blair County COVID-19 Task Force webinar (4/3/20)
- Contacted several sources of PPE or alternatives to PPE to determine availability, quantities and pricing and coordinated purchasing (4/3/20)
- ♣ Provided information to Huntingdon County EMA regarding use of cloth masks (4/3/20)
- Received equipment from BEMS
- Placed link and information related to Mental Health Warmline on CISM webpage
- Monitored daily DOH and Governor press briefing
- Participated in SCMTF EMS Committee conference call
- Participated in DOH/HAP acute care facility conference call
- Inventory of MSEC trailer for possible deployment
- Contacted multiple vendors and local organization regarding availability of PPE
- A Provided information to BEMS on agencies willing to utilize APR's for COVID-19 protection
- Developing inventory of sources and availability of PPE
- Participated in Region 13 hospital committee weekly COVID-19 conference call
- □ Connected to WHITE HOUSE COVID-19 BRIEFING WITH STATE conference call
- Assisted agency with critical PPE need. Anticipating distribution of APR to support agency

- Any EMS agency willing to utilize full face respirators for COVID-19 response, please notify our office.
- Distributed EMS PPE survey to determine current assets and needs. All EMS agencies should complete and return
- Agencies with personnel considered exposed to a COVID-19 patient or employee directed to self-isolate for 14 day period should contact our office.
- Participated in Bureau of EMS conference call.
- Participated in Blair County Healthcare Leadership conference call to discuss alternate care sites.
- Working to identify battery source for ILC Dover Sentinel XL PAPR. EMS agency has 15 units with single use non-rechargeable batteries that are expired. Looking for source for rechargeable batteries or alkaline adapter/battery pack.
- Continued distribution of donated hand sanitizer to emergency response agencies.
- Contacted alternate sources of PPE for availability and possible distributions/donations.
- ♣ Participated in Keystone HCC long term care facility conference call.
- Monitored daily briefing from PA Department of Health
- ♣ Participated in DOH/HAP weekly COVID-19 update conference call
- Received hand sanitizer for distribution to EMS agencies and emergency responders. Distribution information will be forthcoming.
- Contacted regional EMA coordinators for status of PPE requests for EMS agencies.
- Distributed information to regional EMA coordinators relative to possible federal activation of national ambulance contract through AMR.
- Received advanced warning notice of possible deployment of MSEC to support alternate care sites. No activation at this time. Readiness assessed and provided to Bureau of EMS
- Discussion with agency manager related to provider exposures, self-isolation and notification to EMS agencies of positive COVID-19 test results.
- Discussion with 911 center related to expanding emerging infectious disease questioning by PSAPS to all calls and possible additional questions.
- Participated in Blair County COVID-19 Task Force webinar.
- Discussion with Somerset County EMA regarding community support
- Received three calls from agencies with concerns about potential exposure to confirmed COVID-19 patients and required notification and potential isolation for personnel
- Requested COVID-19 screening procedures from all receiving facilities.
- Participated in conference call with UPMC Altoona and Blair County EMS agencies and county EMA director
- Participated in NHTSA Crisis Standards of Care for EMS webinar.
- Participated in acute care facility conference call with HAP and DOH
- Consulted with DOH and affected parties related to possible COVID-19 exposure.
- Participated in conference call with EMA agency related to possibility of PPE availability.
- Participated in CDC COCA webinar related to sustaining PPE utilization
- Participated in Bureau of EMS conference call related to COVID-19 pandemic.
- Monitoring daily EMS patient care report volumes and 911 provided EMS call volumes for trends and identification of increases related to COVID-19.
- Coordinated with county EMA's to ensure that appropriate and consistent messaging and information is distributed as appropriate and necessary.
- Discussed appropriate action with EMS agency for possible exposure and provided CDC quidance.
- Monitored daily DOH briefing for updates on current situation
- Updated website www.saems.com to add and maintain current COVID-19 information and guidance
- Participated in conference call with Regional Medical Director and Somerset County EMA regarding modification of dispatch protocols.
- Participated in discussion of possible hand sanitizer availability.

- Requested regional 911 centers to provide daily report of EMS call volume for tracking and trending-Reports received from Bedford and Somerset Counties.
- Monitoring PCR data on daily basis for tracking and trending of response levels.
- Provided additional guidance to Huntingdon County QRS agency on dispatch of QRS agencies related to COVID-19.
- Contacted local sources for PPE to determine availability.

Challenges:

- Receiving anecdotal information from multiple agencies of dwindling PPE and possibly running out this weekend. Following up on that information to determine criticality of need and possible sources.
- Distribution of PPE to EMS agencies appears minimal. LTC's and hospitals have indicated that they have received push-packs, but agencies are indicating that many of their requests remain unfilled.
- Agencies beginning to receive requests for transports of COVID-19 positive patients to tertiary care centers, but are concerned on available PPE for long distance (3 hr) transports.
- Receiving several questions and concerns on potential shortages of hand sanitizer and PPE should the need for either dramatically increase
- Receiving concerns on the distribution of PPE, especially N95's to agencies and organization that do not need that level of protection, raising concerns of depletion of minimal available stock
- Reports that PPE and cleaning agents will be backordered for extended time
- Expect that restrictions and modifications may last an extended period of time and that additional cases are expected to be reported.
- Rapidity and fluidity of information.

Planned Activities:

- Develop and distribute simplified guidance on exposure risk and post exposure actions for EMS agencies and providers
- Distribute hand sanitizer expected to be available early next week.to EMS agencies within the region
- Develop and distribute guidance to assist agencies and providers to identify stable patients possibly infected with COVID-19 that can reasonably remain at home if and only if the patient agrees to that course of action.
- ♣ Update screening questions for 911 centers to include GI symptoms
- Continued monitoring of information updates at local, state and national level
- Continue distribution of guidance and information as available to support EMS and healthcare operations
- Distribution of daily status updates
- Continued coordination with DOH, BEMS EMS agencies, hospitals and EMA's

Additional Information:

CDC Guidance:

- CDC Guidance for EMS
- CDC Healthcare Personnel with Potential Exposure Guidance
- NEW-CDC Strategies for Optimizing the Supply of N95 Respirators: Crisis/Alternate Strategies
- CDC Interim Guidance for EMS Systems and 911 Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPS) for COVID-19

CDC What Healthcare Personnel Should Know about Caring for Patients with Confirmed or Possible COVID-19 Infection

PA Bureau of EMS Guidance and Information Bulletins:

- Pennsylvania BLS Protocols Protocol 931-Suspected Influenza Like Illness
- EMSIB 2020-01: Novel Coronavirus 2019-nCoV
- EMS Information Bulletin 2020-06: COVID -19 Policy and Protocol Updates
- EMS IB 2020-07: Alternate Pathway for Psychomotor Testing

Other Guidance:

- Information for First Responders on Maintaining Operational Capabilities During a Pandemic

Continuing Updates:

PA DOH Coronavirus Updates

CDC Coronavirus Updates

World Health Organization WHO Coronavirus Updates

Johns Hopkins COVID-19 Dashboard

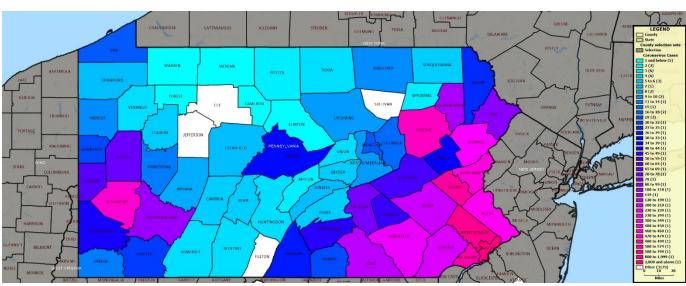


Figure 1 Coronavirus Cases 04-03-20

If you know of someone who should be receiving this report, please forward name and email address to ldriscoll@saems.com.

Current and historical status reports are posted on our website at www.saems.com.

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