



LEAST RESISTANCE TRAINING CONCEPTS
PROCEDURE GUIDE No. 20-98
COVID-19 TRAINING PROTOCOLS



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Supersedes: None

This Procedure Guide is temporary and has been issued to provide best safe practices for training activities for TLAR volunteers, response partners and stakeholders until a determination has been made that COVID-19 is no longer a public threat.

Discussion:

Training, particularly with respect to safety protocols, best practices and infrequent skills, is an important activity for achieving the objectives of safe, effective and reliable response activities in the field. Basic training and credentialing are requisite to bringing on new volunteers that are needed to replace those members who have aged out, moved away or are not physically able to continue in the service. Furthermore, joint training with our response partners helps maximize interoperability and incident safety.

Given the legitimate public health and disease transmission issues resulting from the presence of COVID-19 in Nevada, the need to provide needed training must be balanced against public health risks, and such risks must be mitigated to the greatest extent practicable.

1 Safety Policy:

- 1.1 Safety is the overarching priority in all activities. No procedure or protocol provided in any Procedure Guide shall supersede the use of sound judgment as may be appropriate to maximize safety, either operationally or with respect to public health.
- 1.2 Infection Control, the action taken to prevent the spread of communicable disease, is a critical safety policy element.

2 General Biosafety Responsibilities:

- 2.1 No person shall participate in any activity in the event he/she is experiencing breathing difficulties, has a fever, exhibits any other flu-like symptoms, or has come into close contact with an active COVID-19 carrier within the previous 10 days.
- 2.2 During all training activities, appropriate contact and social distancing protocols shall be followed to the greatest extent practicable. Facemasks, appropriate gloves and long sleeve garments shall be worn whenever engaged in skills sessions and group activities. Social distancing should be employed during briefings and post-evolution discussions.

- 2.3 Panels, rescue tools, supplies and other assets should only be handled by active participants and the Logistics Team.
- 2.3.1 Hard surface equipment such as portable corral panels should be sprayed with disinfectant and wiped with paper towels before being stowed.
- 2.3.2 Other equipment such as Rescue Glides should be cleaned by washing and scrubbing upon return to storage.
- 2.4 “Soft” equipment such as straps, webbing and ropes shall be soaked in water containing antibiotic soap, then rinsed and dried.
- 2.5 If on-line equipment is used for training, spare equipment from the Training Division shall be used if needed until on-line equipment can be properly decontaminated and returned to service.
- 2.6 Personal clothing that has potentially been contaminated should be separated, isolated and thoroughly washed before handling or wearing.
- 2.7 Students should thoroughly wash exposed skin surfaces (particularly hands) for a minimum of 20 seconds using antibacterial soap as may be practicable.

3 Training Modifications:

While we will still strive to address all training objectives, the following precautions shall be in effect during the COVID-19 threat.

- 3.1 All classroom instruction has been converted to distance learning via the Internet.
- 3.2 Participants in skills sessions shall have completed applicable distance learning modules and submitted quizzes with passing grades prior to participating in group skills exercises.
- 3.3 To reduce exposure, participation in group skills exercises shall be limited to ten (10) hands-on participants, instructors and Logistics Team members notwithstanding. ^(Note 1)
- 3.4 All persons participating in hands-on training shall complete health questionnaires and have temperatures taken upon arriving at the training event.
- 3.5 Social distancing is not always feasible during hands-on skills activities. Participants shall resume social distancing when not directly engaged in technical evolutions.
- 3.6 The training event Safety Officer shall be charged with enforcing COVID-19 compliance.

4 Participant Responsibilities:

- 4.1 All participants have a responsibility to exercise common sense and prudent infection control measures including the wearing of gloves, eye protection and to take other common precautions when operating in close proximity to other participants and when contacting commonly touched surfaces.
- 4.2 Participants are not expected act as infectious disease diagnosticians. However, they should be alert to conditions that could potentially warrant infection control measures and report objective observations to qualified persons who have the knowledge and training to

determine if an individual has likely been exposed to a notifiable disease and should remain isolated until formally examined.

- 4.3 Contact with any person who appears to potentially be infected should be followed by standard decontamination procedures; primarily involving, but not limited to, washing of exposed skin surfaces and disinfecting exposed clothing.

5 Personal Protective / Disinfectant Equipment

- 5.1 All participants shall utilize helmets, appropriate face coverings and appropriate gloves.
- 5.2 Brush Jackets are available for use in warmer weather to provide long sleeve protection and should be donned for infection control purposes as may be warranted.
- 5.3 Disinfectant, "Sani-Wipes," paper towels and disposal bags shall be available on-site, and are carried behind the driver's seats in vehicles based in Stagecoach, and in the center console of the Rescue-3 Jeep for use in back country activities.
- 5.4 ISU-1 will be present at training activities wherever access by the unit is practical to provide additional decontamination and biosecurity capabilities.

Notes:

1. This number is subject to change based on Health Department recommendations applicable at the time of the training event.