15-07 - Ebola

Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

NEWSLETTER

Field Operations Support Services, (323) 890-5411

EBOLA

With the recent Ebola case reported across the country, many questions have come to the forefront. Ebola is a rare disease that has caused an outbreak in Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia in West Africa. Recently there have been several reported cases in the United States.

How does the Ebola virus spread?

Ebola spreads by direct person-to-person contact with an infected person's:

- Mucous membrane (nose, mouth, and broken skin)
- The eyes in direct contact with the infected person's bodily fluids
  - Sweat
  - Saliva
  - Blood
  - Vomit
  - Urine
  - Feces
  - Breast milk
  - Semen

What are the symptoms of Ebola?

- Severe headaches, fever (101.5 F of higher)
- Weakness or muscle pain
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Stomach or muscle pain
- Lack of appetite
- Unexplained blood loss or bleeding
- Delirium (confusion)
- Erratic behavior (flailing, staggering)

Once a person is exposed to the Ebola virus, it takes 8 to 10 days for most people to show symptoms. The incubation period can range from 2-21 days.

When and What Personal Protective Equipment can Law Enforcement use?

Whenever potential contact is made with a person suspected of carrying the Ebola virus, law enforcement is reminded to protect themselves by utilizing the following:

- Gloves
- N95 respirator
- Eye protection (goggles and/or face shield)
- Gown, coverall, or clothing that is fluid resistant or impermeable
- Double gloving, disposable shoe covers, disposable clothing or covers

When can an arrest or detention take place?

Department personnel can act on the direction of the Director of Public Health. Per Government Code section 26602, the Sheriff may execute orders of the local health officer issued for preventing the spread of any contagious or communicable disease. Until the Director of Public Health (DPH) executes an order to the Sheriff, **we have no legal standing to detain anyone under the auspice of 26602 GC without reasonable suspicion or probable cause to arrest.**

NOTE: Medical professionals and Fire/Paramedics are not DPH officers and do not have the authority to execute an order to detain or quarantine. "Medical Holds" do not give us the authority to detain.

If confronted with a person who is in custody and possibly infected with the Ebola virus, personnel should notify the Inmate Reception Center Watch Commander for instruction. If confronted with a person who is not in custody and possibly infected with the Ebola virus, ask the person if they need or want medical assistance. If the person requests medical assistance, advise SCC, request 902R, and follow the person at a safe distance until medical help arrives. If the person does not request medical assistance, allow the individual to leave and terminate your contact with the person. Document in detail all contacts per the MPP.

What to do if you are exposed to a person carrying the Ebola virus or their bodily fluids?

- Stop working right away and wash the affected skin surfaces with soap and water. Mucous membranes should be irrigated with a large amount of water or eyewash solution.
- Contact occupational health for assessment and access to post-exposure services.
- Get medical evaluation and follow-up care, including fever monitoring twice daily for 21 days, after the last known exposure.

Information regarding the content of this newsletter may be directed to Field Operations Support Services.

References:

Los Angeles County, Department of Public Health

http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/ ebola.htm

California Department of Public Health

http://cdph.ca.gov/programs/cder/Pages/ Ebola.aspx

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/outbreaks/ guinea/qa.html?mobile=no content