Pandemic Response Staffing

342.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Agency Content

The purpose of this policy is to establish operational guideposts for decision making related the management of personnel during a pandemic. The Department recognizes the need for such a policy, but equally understands that during a pandemic, relevant information, guidance and protocols are often provided rapidly from the Federal, State and Local level. The management of personnel during a pandemic should consider the unprecedented nature of a pandemic and in the absence of clear guidance, decisions should be made after collaboration with relevant partners at the Local, State, and Federal level.

342.2 POLICY

Agency Content

The policy of the Department during a pandemic is to ensure the continuity of vital law enforcement services to the community and protecting the community and the department's members from undue exposures. In the absence of a vaccine for the pandemic, the Department will – to the best of its ability – take reasonable steps to protect the operational effectiveness of the Department in the event of a widespread contamination of its members.

342.3 EMERGENCY OPERATION CENTER RESPONSIBILITIES

Agency Content

342.3.1 PROTECTION OF PERSONNEL AND DEPARTMENT RESOURCES

Agency Content

A pandemic can cause significant reductions in a law enforcement department's workforce. Recognizing this, the planning team will need to take several steps to identify the law enforcement department's most critical activities that must continue despite the losses in staffing. The planning team would also initiate activities to safeguard employees' health and safety, including but not limited to:

- Recommending safety protocols for the Department, including relevant health mitigation measures, such as social distancing, use of personnel protective equipment (PPE), and health monitoring during working hours.

- Recommending safety protocols for individual members

- Establishing a notification hotline for employees who become symptomatic

- Establishing appropriate response protocols for:
    - Isolation for symptomatic employees
    - Quarantine for contacts of symptomatic individuals
    - Contract tracing, testing and return to work

- Dissemination of safety information

342.3.2 COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

Agency Content

It is the Department's default position when responding to a pandemic to utilize the National Incident Command System model, to effectively coordinate and communicate with other Emergency Operation Centers. Communication and coordination includes:

- Regular briefings with relevant partners

- Liaising with County Health Department and EOC

- Reviewing protocols from local, state, and federal policy makers

- Providing updates regarding the "state" of the pandemic to the Chief of Police and his/her designee as needed

- Data collection and if needed sharing with the County Health Department to protect health of staff and community

342.3.3 STAFFING

Agency Content

Most agencies are experienced in addressing minimum staffing requirements and "ramping up" staffing for significant short-term events. However, fewer departments are familiar with downsizing and insulating staffing to ensure longer-term sustainability or with reassigning staff (sworn and non-sworn) to ensure that critical functions are maintained.

"Some experts suggest that planners should establish mechanisms to cover essential tasks with an estimated 10–40% reduction in staff."

"Experts predict that a pandemic influenza will come in waves, each lasting approximately eight weeks. The planning team should prepare for sustaining law enforcement operations with minimum staffing for long periods of time."

The Department will utilize the following factors as a guideline to determine staffing requirements e.g. on-call and tele-work:

- State of work force

- Calls for service and staffing need

- Availability of PPE

- Characteristics of the virus – transmission mode, incubation period, infectious period, recovery period, and lethality

- Availability and capacity of testing

- Community spread and workforce spread, including contact tracing

- Education regarding pandemic, its impact, progress and possible mitigation measures

- Availability of a vaccine and time allowance to receive the vaccine

342.4 PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT AND SOCIAL DISTANCING

Agency Content

The use, dissemination and purchasing of PPE should follow the guidelines established by the Center for Disease Control, State and County Health Department, and State, County and Local Executive Orders. All decisions regarding PPE and Social Distancing will be made by the Chief of Police or his/her designee after consultation with the EOC.

342.5 SCHEDULING

Agency Content

A modification of the Department's staffing and deployment of personnel may be an effective method to prevent or reduce the amount of inter-departmental transmission of the virus. Moreover, adjusting the Department's response for service protocols or procedures should be considered to reduce the transmission of the virus between the Department's personnel and the public.

342.5.1 ON-CALL

Agency Content

Under the authority of the Department's Emergency Mobilization policy and to ensure a viable work force that is capable of sustaining critical department operation the Chief may place personnel in an on-call status. Depending on the circumstances and availability, the Department may consult with County, State or Federal health officials before deciding about re-assigning personnel to an on-call status.

- All sworn personnel, regardless of rank are subject to temporary reassignment to mission critical components as the available workforce declines.

- Work schedules and shift hours beyond the normal shifts are subject to change with little or no advance notice to meet needs and maintain operational effectiveness.

- Assign officers to be "on call" and immediately available should other on-duty officers become ill or be forced to self-quarantine.

- Where possible, employees should be cross-trained to step into another function to ensure that basic critical functions are maintained.

342.5.2 ON-CALL MANDATES

Agency Content

- Officers will check in with supervisors at the beginning and end of each shift

- Be available for immediate contact via cell phone

- Respond to the Department for deployment within a reasonable period of time

- When called back to work officers shall go through the department's pandemic screening process as described at that time. (i.e. – temperature taking)

- Accurate timekeeping records will be maintained regarding the number of officers on call and the number of times officers are recalled.

Pandemic Response Staffing

- Officers may be required to complete trainings while assigned to an on-call status. Trainings can include but are not limited to event specific trainings, required annual updates, access and functional needs, diversity training.All trainings will be tracked to ensure completion.

342.5.3   ON-CALL PROHIBITIONS
Agency Content

- Work overtime while on call

- Consume alcohol or be unfit for duty when called

- Officers that are on call should not be used for other details so that they are available for patrol when needed and to avoid cross bureau contamination

- Command officers should ensure that overtime is not used to backfill positions on the same shift on call is taking place.

342.5.4   WORK FROM HOME (TELE-WORK)
Agency Content

To ensure the operational effectiveness of the agency, the Department may consider implementing a Work from Home protocol. The protocol will be created in consultation with the EOC and the City Hall Administration. A request to work remotely during the pandemic period must have prior written approval from the employee's Department Head.

342.6   TEMPORARY OPERATING PROCEDURES
Agency Content

Temporary Operating Procedures will be used as the primary modality to communicate with the Department's members.