



# Arkansas Department of Health

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**Governor Asa Hutchinson**  
**Nathaniel Smith, MD, MPH, Secretary of Health**

**TO: Emergency Medical Service Agencies and Medical Directors**

**FROM: Dr. Nate Smith, Secretary of Health**

**DATE: March 12, 2020**

**Regarding: Guidance for EMS Provider Screening**

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Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) adversely affects older adults and persons with underlying health conditions or compromised immune conditions. This population is at greater risk for severe illness from this virus.

Due to the vulnerability of residents in long-term care facilities and other vulnerable populations, it is of utmost importance to limit possible exposure to COVID-19.

Effective immediately, the Arkansas Department of Health directs all Emergency Medical Service (EMS) Agencies to screen all EMS providers at the beginning of every shift the provider works.

The purpose of these measures is that long-term care facilities shall restrict entry for visitors meeting any one of the screening criteria.

The following is the required screening criteria and shall be entered on the accompanying spreadsheet.

1. EMS agencies shall ask the question of all providers at the beginning of each shift regarding international travel within the last 14 days to countries with the sustained transmission of COVID-19. For updated information on restricted countries visit:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>

2. EMS agencies shall ask the question of all providers at the beginning of each shift if they have had contact with someone known to be infected with or under investigation for, COVID-19.

3. EMS agencies shall at the beginning of each shift screen each provider for signs or symptoms of a respiratory infection, such as cough, sore throat, and fever, by measuring their temperature. The temperature may not exceed 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit for any provider.

Each EMS agency is required to use the attached spreadsheet for all employee screenings. The worksheet shall be kept in paper format to allow for provider signatures, and all fields shall be completed for each provider.

Copies should not be sent to the Section of EMS unless requested. Agencies shall continue screening all employees every shift until instructed otherwise by the Department of Health.

Please contact the Section of EMS with any questions.