

St. John Fire Department

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Fred Willman
Fire Chief

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On behalf of all of our active members, St. John Fire/EMS would like to thank the residents of the St. John protection area for their awareness, commitment, and genuine concern regarding the magnitude of the risks that are present when we are called to respond.

St. John Fire has established protocols and procedures for our entire staff that provide guidelines for safe, successful, and appropriate actions as prescribed by Franciscan Health Crown Point (our local Medical Director). We have also been in contact with representatives from the Indiana Department of Homeland Security, the Indiana State Board of Health, FEMA, Lake County Emergency Management Commission, and the Lake County Emergency Operations Center for assistance with obtaining Personal Protective Equipment for our responders.

During this critical time, our facilities are not open to the general public. This restriction is designed for the protection of the public and the staff as well. Our “paid-on-call” volunteers are directed only to respond to “out-of-doors” issues; only to calls that require more personnel such as structure fires, motor-vehicle crashes, storms, etc.

SJFD is currently scheduling additional full-time & part-time staff when it is available. We have some members that were scheduled to be away on vacations during these weeks. Their trips were cancelled so we kept them “on board” in case we experienced other members that became unable to work for whatever the reason might be. We are using

everyone for extra cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting after every transport.

As of this date, St. John Fire/EMS **has not transported any patients** that showed symptoms of the **COVID-19 pandemic**. We have had contact with patients that had complaints of some *characteristic signs*, however they decided to **refuse actual transport** to an extended care facility. Instead they chose to quarantine at home as has been publicly and professionally advised.

Immediately following that decision, SJFD personnel returned to the fire station for a *total decontamination process* of the medic, his uniform, the medical equipment, and the vehicle. Finally, all of the required documentation was recorded and protected for future reference; the same as every incident involving patient contact.

Fortunately we have experienced **only two** similar incidents to report at this time.

St. John Fire/EMS is an active department with highly-trained personnel, who we feel are definitely among the *best of the best*; regarding disciplined, patient care.

Once again we want to thank our residents for the support that we receive and feel when we respond; especially in a time of *crisis* like our current situation.

Chief Willman

March 25, 2020