The Department of Labor & Industries (L&I) requires employers to provide safe and healthy workplaces and to implement the Governor’s order to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

**Note:** Leadership in this summary refers to law enforcement leaders or elected or government officials, who are responsible for officer and employee safety.

### Educate Officers and Staff

Leadership must provide COVID-19 prevention education to officers in the language(s) they best understand. This includes information about:

- The signs, symptoms, and risk factors associated with COVID-19.
- How to prevent the spread of the coronavirus, including steps in the workplace to establish social distancing, wearing masks, frequent hand washing, and other safety practices.
- The importance of staying at least six feet away from other people.
- Instruction on why and how to wear cloth face coverings, respiratory protection, and personal protective equipment (PPE).
- The importance of washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, and not touching their eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands or gloves.
- Instruction on why, when, and how to clean frequently touched or shared items, such as tools, cell phones, and other equipment.

### Protecting Officers and Staff from Exposure to COVID-19

Leadership must:

- Ensure officers and staff stay at least six feet away from each other and the public, and practice social distancing as work duties permit.
  - When duties do not make social distancing possible, other prevention measures are required. Those could include physical barriers to block droplets from sneezes and coughs, negative-pressure ventilation, or other measures.
- Require officers and staff to wear a face mask inside and outside of the workplace.
- Provide PPE such as masks, goggles, face shields and gloves when required for specific activities. Leadership can issue face masks or approve worker-supplied cloth face coverings if shortages occurs.
  - If required, respirators must be used according to Chapter 296-842 WAC. See L&I’s *Which Mask for Which Task?* at [www.Lni.wa.gov/go/F414-168-000](http://www.Lni.wa.gov/go/F414-168-000).

*This summary of highlights is from COVID-19 Prevention in Law Enforcement: L&I Safety and Health Requirements and Guidance, F414-176-000. This summary was created on April 20, 2021. Check for updates at [www.Lni.wa.gov/CovidSafety](http://www.Lni.wa.gov/CovidSafety).*
Provide supplemental facilities or supplies, such as those below, to allow additional hand washing when workers handle objects touched by others.

- Hand sanitizer stations
- Wipes or towelettes
- Tepid water and soap in portable containers.

Ensure workstations are six feet apart or reduce the number of workstations used at the same time.

Ensure officer and staff meetings are limited by the maximum occupancy specified in the Roadmap to Recovery Proclamation 20-25.12 et seq. (www.coronavirus.wa.gov/what-you-need-know/safe-start) for Washington State.

Potential Exposure to COVID-19

When officers and other staff in essential activities are potentially exposed to a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case, leadership must:

- Prevent officers and staff who should be in isolation from entering common workplaces where other staff and officers work.
- Screen all officers and staff for COVID-19 symptoms, including taking their temperature, before each work shift and before potentially exposed employees enter the facility.

Ask all officers and staff to pre-screen themselves for COVID-19 symptoms before travelling to work.

Notify officers and staff who had close contact with any sick person (worker, person in custody, visitors) at work (without disclosing the identity of the sick person), and inform co-workers about cleaning, disinfecting and other efforts to respond to the possible exposure.

Resources

What Law Enforcement Personnel Need to Know about Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)  

COVID-19 Prevention in Law Enforcement:  
L&I Safety and Health Requirements and Guidance  
www.Lni.wa.gov/go/F414-176-000

Free safety and health assistance for employers from L&I's Consultation Program  
www.Lni.wa.gov/DOSHConsultation  
or DOSHConsultation@Lni.wa.gov

How to report a Safety Hazard  
www.Lni.wa.gov/SafetyComplaints

Upon request, foreign language support and formats for persons with disabilities are available. Call 1-800-547-8367. TDD users, call 711. L&I is an equal opportunity employer.