



Guidelines

prepared by

**INDIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
KERALA**

**Committee for
POLICE COVID SAFETY**

**“SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICE
PERSONNEL DURING
COVID PANDEMIC”**

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POLICE COVID SAFETY GUIDELINES

Introduction

The human race throughout the world is fighting a common invisible enemy Covid-19, a pandemic of epic proportions. With the world reporting 4,926,566 cases and 3,20,947 deaths, India's cases have now crossed the 1 lakh mark with 3169 deaths as of today. Kerala has its own share of covid cases totaling up to 630 with 4 deaths. This low incidence, break of transmission and low mortality was achieved due to the early lock down suggested by Kerala State IMA and the State Government being the first state to announce lockdown in the country on March 21st even before the National lockdown. The success of lockdown effects, curve flattening and effective disease control in Kerala has become a role model for the whole world and can be mainly attributed to a committed state administration, effective public health care system, dedicated doctors and healthcare professionals and the Kerala Police with its 24 hour selfless service in maintenance of effective lockdown, contact tracing, quarantine control in addition to their daily routine of law and order enforcement. IMA Kerala State Branch salutes the police officers for their commitment and service in this covid pandemic putting their own lives at risk.

Risk Stratification of Police

With the fourth phase of lockdown and easing of restrictions in the state of Kerala along with the daily inflow of Covid positive cases from other states and abroad there is a possibility of an increased risk of community spread.

This new development has put into risk, the lives of police officer's on duty with increased chances of covid infection as they are doing pandemic prevention along with accident victim care, crowd control, vehicle checking...etc as well as law enforcement

It is at this juncture, IMA Kerala State President Dr. Abraham Varghese and State Secretary Dr.P.Gopikumar decided to constitute a 5 member committee to identify effective ways to prevent covid infection among the Kerala police officers. Already a police station at Mananthavady is facing shutdown with nearly 70 policemen sent on quarantine and two testing positive.

The Committee

The 5 member committee includes

- Chairman - Dr.A.V.Babu
- Convener - Dr.E.K.Ummer
- Member - Dr.Srikumar Vasudevan
- Member - Dr.R.C.Sreekumar
- Member - Dr.Ajit Bhaskar

The committee would like to thank the State IMA for entrusting us this job and after several rounds of discussion and inputs from police personnel and other sources, we are submitting the report on

“SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICE PERSONNEL DURING COVID PANDEMIC”

Need For Recommendations

Covid-19 pandemic sweeping across the world is a major threat to the society. If the police officers on covid control duty or otherwise are affected with Covid the disastrous effects are multifactorial.

- It could affect the morale of the force
- It could result in the reduction of effective police personnel.
- It could affect the covid control activities.
- It could reduce the effectiveness of quarantine.
- It could in, addition lead to a compromised law and order situation which in effect could lead to poor disease control and community spread which will be a vicious cycle.
- Entry of infected people from other states and abroad and opening of educational institutions in the near future will increase workload of the police force.

TEN POINT POLICE SAFETY RECCOMENDATIONS OF IMA KERALA STATE BRANCH

Taking into account the 24 x 7 duties undertaken by the Kerala Police, IMA KSB suggests the following safety guidelines for Police officers under ten different headings.

- 1. General Guidelines For Personnel and Family Protection**
- 2. Police Station and Camp Safety measures**
- 3. Work force division and Safety Backup Reserve force**
- 4. Safety Protection Measures during Airport, Railway, Bus bay and Border Screening.**
- 5. Safety measures for Vehicle and equipment disinfection and transportation**
- 6. Safety precautions during Road Vehicle Checking and house visits**
- 7. Safety Precautions during Road Accident site visit and patient transport**
- 8. Safety Precautions during Market visit or Crowd control.**
- 9. Safety Precautions during arrest of offenders or lockup cases or transport of such people.**
- 10. Safety Quarantine seal for all quarantine cases for easy identification by public and police.**

1. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR PERSONNEL AND FAMILY PROTECTION

- Practice proper hand hygiene by promptly washing or sanitizing hands after coughing, sneezing, or physically interacting with others.
- Wash your hands for at least 20-40 seconds with soap and water.
- Avoid touching your face (eyes, nose, and mouth) without washing hands.
- Cover your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue while coughing or sneezing and dispose the tissue immediately.
- Avoid close physical contact with others as much as possible including shaking hands.

- Maintain at least 6 feet distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing, whenever possible.
- Keep disinfectant wipes and hand sanitizer in an easily accessible place while on-duty.
- Wear mask while going out. Do not take off mask while speaking.
- Avoid using AC and crowding at any place.
- Wash uniform in soap and water.
- On reaching home they should preferably enter through a separate entrance. Directly enter wash room, take a soap bath and then only mingle with family members. Ensure social distancing with high risk members in the family.

Seek medical care early if you have a fever, sore throat, cough and difficulty in breathing.

2. POLICE STATION AND CAMP SAFETY MEASURES

- Social distancing, masks and sanitizers are to be ensured in police station, vehicles and camps.
- Not to use watch, purse while on duty.
- Articles like pen, spectacles, belt, cap etc used during duty should not be taken home. Should be kept in safe custody in the police station itself.
- All furniture, door handles and floor of police stations and camps should be sanitized with 1% hypochlorite solution at least 3 or 4 times a day.
- Police vehicles should be sanitized with 1% hypochlorite solution after duty hours of one batch of officers. Special care to be taken to sanitise steering wheels, gear shafts & radio equipments.
- Lady police officers should avoid wearing jewelry especially bangles and rings.
- Mobile phones should preferably be put in plastic covers during duty hours.

- Mobile phones, laptops, clipboards, walkie-talkie and other equipments used during duty should be cleaned with surgical spirit at the end of duty time.
- All vehicles should contain adequate gloves, masks, sanitisers, face shields, raincoats, plastic gumboots, drinking water. Avoid dehydration.
- Tents and outdoor umbrellas to be installed along barricades to protect them from extreme hot temperatures, and to ensure sanitisation of barricades, chairs, and other items which are used by police force on front line duty.
- The used masks and gloves should not be littered but stored in designated places and should be disposed off scientifically.

3. WORK FORCE DIVISION AND SAFETY BACK UP RESERVE FORCE

- Personnel on field duty and office duty should be divided and their mutual contact should be avoided as much as possible.
- Telephonic or online duty exchange system can be done between these two groups.
- Police force has to be divided into two or three groups and each group can be put on 10 days duty. The other groups can be kept as reserves in the camps or at their home and can be called for duty if any emergency occurs or staff shortage in the event of more police officers going in for quarantine.
- All police officers above 55 years of age or having co-morbidity may be asked to take leave or should not be posted in active duty where they come in direct contact with general public during Covid Pandemic

4. SAFETY PROTECTION MEASURES DURING AIRPORT, RAILWAY, BUS BAY AND BORDER SCREENING DUTY

- A write up for safety measures can be distributed to all.
- They should wear mask, gloves, a good rain coat with gumboots (instead of PPE) which can be washed in soap water or 1% hypochlorite solution and reused. **Annexure 1 & 2**

- Minimize the number of force in high risk area like Railway station, Airport and crowded place and reserve force can be kept in a vehicle or safe place nearby.
- Front line officers should preferably use mask, gloves and face shield **(Annexure 3)** with modified PPE **(raincoats)**
- Announcements maybe done using megaphones rather than direct interaction.
- Police officers inside airport and railway station duty with chance of close exposure to passengers should use modified PPE **(raincoats)**

5. SAFETY MEASURES FOR VEHICLE AND EQUIPMENT DISINFECTION AND TRANSPORTATION

- Police vehicles should be sanitized with 1% hypochlorite solution after duty hours of one batch of officers.
- Special care to be taken to sanitize steering wheel, gear shaft & radio equipments.
- Every vehicle should have 2 sets of raincoats, face shields, masks, gloves, hand sanitizer and drinking water

6. SAFETY PRECAUTIONS DURING ROAD VEHICLE CHECKING AND HOUSE VISITS

- Keep a distance of 1-2 meter and do not touch any keys or documents without gloves.
- They should consider the possibility of every other person as a potential source of infection.
- In case of a vehicle custody the driver of the vehicle should transport it to the designated site.
- Police officer under no condition should handle a seized vehicle or person without requisite protective gear.
- During house visits wear 3 layered masks, face shield and gloves.

- During house visits it is preferable to use digital media to communicate rather than direct communication.

7. SAFETY PRECAUTIONS DURING ROAD ACCIDENT SITE VISIT AND PATIENT TRANSPORT

- During this covid pandemic, consider all accident victims as possible source of infection.
- Direct handling of accident victims as far as possible should be done by persons wearing modified PPE (**raincoats**), mask, goggles, gum boots, gloves etc.
- All precautions advised during vehicle check, vehicle seizure should be followed in accident scenario also.
- Transport of accident victims should preferably be in ambulance or such vehicles as available with personnel in protective gear.

8. SAFETY PRECAUTIONS DURING MARKET VISIT OR CROWD CONTROL

- With easing of restrictions in lockdown, crowding without social distancing is rampant in market places and shops. Police personnel should insist on social distancing and use of masks.
- Police on call should use masks and gloves and use megaphone announcements as far as possible.
- Public awareness videos or announcements in crowded areas while insisting on social distancing.

9. SAFETY PRECAUTIONS DURING DETAINING OF OFFENDERS OR LOCKUP CASES OR TRANSPORT OF SUCH PEOPLE

- All offenders in civil or criminal offenses should be considered as a potential source of infection during this season.
- Police should avoid direct physical contact with offenders as far as possible.
- When necessary, Police in close contact should wear modified PPE (**raincoat**).

- Even during routine screening or checking, mask and gloves are mandatory.

10.SAFETY QUARANTINE SEAL FOR ALL QUARANTINE CASES FOR EASY IDENTIFICATION BY PUBLIC AND POLICE

- .We suggest to mark a seal with date on an exposed area to all people under quarantine which will help the police as well as the public to easily identify quarantine offenders.
- Quarantine visits could be done by telephone or WhatsApp as far as possible.

CONCLUSION

The police force has been doing a tremendous job in the containment of this Covid pandemic. The members of IMA Kerala State have been in the forefront by providing treatment to the Covid patients under the most trying conditions. IMA has also played a very crucial role by providing necessary recommendations and advice to the government and the public from time to time. The need of the hour is for a coordinated fight against the pandemic by various wings of the society. IMA Kerala State is of the view that the health of police force, which is working round the clock has to be protected and has thus prepared these recommendations. We are of the firm belief that these health associated recommendations would further strengthen and safeguard the police, the doctor community and the public at large.

Annexures **Annexure 1**



Raincoat 1 as modified PPE

Annexure 2



Raincoat 2 as modified PPE

Annexure 3



Face shield

IMA Kerala consider the health of the Public and Police force who serve them, is of prime importance. Hence we are submitting this document to the people of Kerala and the whole Police force.

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