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### **RE: Orange County Statement on COVID-19 Mitigation Strategy for First Responders**

To minimize adverse health consequences and resource impact from COVID-19, the Orange County Public Health Officer recommends a more effective mitigation strategy to address the virus county-wide. The new approach is important because it shifts the focus from labor-intensive contact tracing, the process of identifying every person a known COVID-19 case has potentially exposed, to protecting the most vulnerable populations by minimizing their exposure to the virus.

This shift in strategy ends 14-day quarantines simply based on contact exposure; this change applies to first responders. Orange County's mitigation strategy now hinges on presentation of symptoms.

- If a person does not have symptoms, they do not need to be excluded from work.
- If a person is showing symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath) they should be excluded from work until:
  - At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed *since recovery* defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and** improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); **and**,
  - At least 7 days have passed *since symptoms first appeared*
- Those who are high-risk with symptoms should contact their doctor.
- Return to work should be coordinated through the employee's appropriate occupational health provider.

This shift to a mitigation strategy is consistent with current Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance.

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