



STATE OF MINNESOTA

Office of Governor Tim Walz

Office of Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan

75 Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. ♦ Suite 130 ♦ Saint Paul, MN 55155-1611

May 7, 2020

Andy Skoogman
Executive Director
Minnesota Chiefs of Police Association
803 Old Highway 8 NW
New Brighton, MN 55112

Dear Mr. Skoogman:

Thank you for contacting Governor Tim Walz and Commissioner John Harrington.

The Governor's office and the Minnesota Department of Public Safety (DPS) understand the concerns of Minnesota Chiefs of Police Association regarding information sharing with the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH). DPS continues to work tirelessly with MDH to address concerns of the public health community regarding patient privacy and data security. The measures put in place were intended to address the concerns and result in the flow of information from MDH to DPS in accordance with Executive Order 20-34.

As the protocol has been administered over the last few weeks, we are aware of the concerns of many first responders that the numbers of addresses being provided through Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP) do not rise near the higher numbers of the overall COVID-19 positive cases reported. There are several reasons for the differences that are inherent in the process and the nature of COVID-19, however we are also working hard to determine how to better provide the data needed to first responders. Over the past week, we have updated the required *Tennessee* warning and compiled a set of answers to frequently asked questions. That information is attached.

One issue that we have resolved is ensuring that the addresses of congregate care facilities that have ever had a positive and contagious COVID-19 case are included in the data sent to PSAPs. Those addresses were previously not included and make up a large amount of current and previous positive cases.

Another source of difference in the expected and received numbers provided to PSAPs relates to the fact that many actively COVID-positive individuals are located at in-patient facilities, like hospitals, and addresses are not provided while the individual is not at their home address. Finally, if an individual does not provide their address to MDH, after being informed of how it will be used as required by the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, there isn't an address to share.

The most significant fact to keep in mind when setting our expectations and doing the math is that most of those who have *tested* positive for COVID-19 have been released from isolation and are *recovering*

from COVID-19, often not long after the test result. The length of time that someone is recommended to isolate is currently ten days after the onset of symptoms, with three days of being fever-free and symptom improvement. Those ten or so days do not start with receiving the laboratory test result or the phone interview with MDH, but from the onset of symptoms. The time it takes from symptom onset, to the person going to get a test, to the lab producing the result, to the person having a phone interview with MDH, will consume – for many cases -- a lot of the time that the person is recommended to isolate.

We fully realize the lack of personal protective equipment (PPE) currently available places our peace officers at risk. We hope that having the addresses of those who have tested positive for COVID 19 will reduce the spread of the disease within law enforcement agencies and their communities. We also believe that this will help preserve the use of PPE, a commodity that is in such a limited supply.

We thank you for your partnership, your willingness to go into harm's way and for continuing to share your concerns and suggestions on the most effective process for the sharing this data.

Sincerely,

Office of Governor Tim Walz and Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Ste. 130
Saint Paul, MN 55155-1611
Office: 651-201-3400