



FIRST AID TECHNICAL BULLETIN 2020-01

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TO: All NSC First Aid Instructors

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RE: INSTRUCTOR GUIDANCE REGARDING NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

Cases of novel coronavirus, or COVID-19, have surpassed 125,000 worldwide, according to the Center for Systems Science and Engineering at Johns Hopkins University, with more than 1,200 cases in the United States. The National Safety Council is committed to sharing relevant resources to help keep our members, our instructors and the public informed about this rapidly developing situation.

In light of the current situation, NSC advises all first aid instructors to follow the recommendations issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the World Health Organization. NSC has created an online resource that contains links to these recommendations, as well as other important information on COVID-19. Please visit <https://www.nsc.org/coronavirus> for more information.

In addition, NSC advises chapters, training centers, and instructors to observe the following when teaching first aid and CPR classes, effective immediately:

- Instructors are urged to follow local guidelines and recommendations from health officials regarding public gatherings. In some situations, it may be best to postpone training. If training must be postponed, instructors should make reasonable accommodations for rescheduling the class.
- Prior to the class date, and immediately before beginning class, instructors should communicate with course participants and encourage them not to attend training if they have any known medical condition or illness, or signs or symptoms consistent with an illness. Instructors should offer students the opportunity to speak discreetly prior to the start of class, should they have any questions or concerns about their health status as it relates to class participation.
- Course attendees who are experiencing flu-like symptoms should not participate in class, and should be encouraged to seek the advice of their health care professional.
- Individuals who are immunocompromised should not attend first aid or CPR classes at this time.

- All training equipment, including CPR manikins and other first aid and resuscitation devices, should be thoroughly cleaned and decontaminated after each use in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations.
- All instructors and course participants should practice proper hygiene before and after classes, and before and after breaks in the class, including hand washing for at least 20 seconds.
- **CPR Instruction:**
 - Whenever possible, use a 1:1 student-to-manikin ratio.
 - Manikins should be placed at least 3 feet apart during CPR training in accordance with social distancing recommendations.
 - If possible, students should use a pocket mask with a one-way valve for providing ventilations during CPR skills practice.
 - If a pocket mask is not available, students should simulate breaths only. Mouth-to-mouth ventilations should not be performed on manikins at this time, even with face shields.
 - Students in Basic Life Support for Health Care and Professional Rescuer classes must use a pocket mask with one-way valve. Students should also be using bag masks during two-rescuer practice scenarios. Bag masks should be decontaminated after each use.
- **First Aid Instruction:**
 - As a reminder, preventing disease transmission is the first skill in the NSC first aid curriculum. Students should be practicing the application and removal of exam gloves as the first skill.
 - Personal protective equipment, such as examination gloves, should be used for all hands-on skills practices.

The above guidance should be followed at least until April 30, 2020. NSC will notify chapters, instructors, and training centers if this time frame must be extended.

Finally, in light of the current situation and its impact on the availability of training courses, NSC is recommending that regulatory agencies and employers consider extending the acceptance of NSC first aid and CPR cards up to 60 days past the expiration date. Ultimately, this decision is at the discretion of the individual employer or regulatory agency.

Chapters, training centers and instructors who have additional questions or concerns about teaching first aid courses with regard to COVID-19 are encouraged to contact the NSC First Aid Department at FirstAidTech@nsc.org.