

# COVID-19 Suggested Safe Practices

## Removal and Transfer

**DISCLAIMER:** At this early stage in the COVID-19 pandemic, Dodge believes this document provides procedures and techniques which detail the best-known protection for funeral service personnel who may encounter and/or embalm a COVID-19 positive case. Ongoing scientific study may prove this information to be insufficient or incorrect.

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### Suggested Safe Practices When Treating a COVID-19 Positive Case

- Standard Precautions (Universal Precautions) and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) should always be used, regardless of the situation.
- The Center for Disease Control (CDC) has released a guide to be utilized for postmortem care:
  - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-postmortem-specimens.html>
- COVID-19 is an envelope virus and can be inactivated by using an EPA registered disinfectant.
  - The virus is fragile because of its thin outer layer of fat.
- Be aware that all disinfectants/chemicals have minimum contact times to be effective.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds.
  - *Suggested soaps: Dodge Prep Soap, Forest Fresh*

Transfer/removal of a COVID-19 positive case is a concern because the viral droplets become airborne. An important concept to realize is that every time an un-embalmed or untreated body is moved, aerosol droplets may be forced out of the mouth and nose.

Always protect yourself with the appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Prior to moving the deceased, at minimum, place a Dis-Spray saturated towel over the face. This technique should be used on every case, not just COVID-19 positive cases.

If cremation has been selected, the above procedure should still be employed. A body pouch and rigid cardboard container is recommended for the crematory facility. Protective barriers are essential.

### Mitigating Exposure

COVID-19 is an “envelope virus”, meaning it has an outer wrapping or envelope made from a small piece of the cell’s plasma membrane. This outer membrane is deactivated by using a high-level disinfectant such as Dis-Spray.

**To be proven effective, Dis-Spray should be utilized and left undisrupted for a minimum of 10 minutes.**

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When employed as recommended in this document, Dis-Spray will provide protection against possible droplet exposure and contamination.

Use Dis-Spray as a topical disinfectant to treat the entire skin surface of the deceased as well as all facial orifices; cover the face with a Dis-Spray saturated towel.

The deceased should be treated prior to transfer unless they have already been placed in a sealed body pouch at the place of death. In that instance, the body pouch should always be sprayed and disinfected as an added precaution.

### Residential or Nursing Home Transfer

- Spray Dis-Spray into the nasal passage and mouth; be sure to get deep saturation and use a barrier when applying.
  - Dis-Spray can also be injected into the nasal passage and mouth using a needleless syringe.
- Place Dis-Spray soaked cotton into nasal passage and mouth.
- Use Dis-Spray saturated cotton over the rectal area as a temporary barrier.
  - Fecal matter is showing signs of harboring the virus.
- Place Dis-Spray saturated cotton over the face.
- Place deceased into body pouch.
  - Reapply Dis-Spray through the small opening in the zipper to create an aerosol effect and close the pouch.

### Hospital Transfer

- Place a disposable plastic cover on the cot, such as a plastic body and casket cover.
  - These covers can be discarded and help prevent cross-contamination.
- Spray the exterior of the body pouch with Dis-Spray before transferring deceased to cot.

### Once at the Funeral Home

- Slightly open body pouch and generously spray Dis-Spray inside.
  - Close the pouch and allow chemicals to work for a minimum of 10 minutes.
- After 10 minutes, open the pouch and re-spray the deceased with Dis-Spray.
- Before removing the deceased from pouch, spray or inject Dis-Spray into nasal passage and mouth.

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- Place Dis-Spray soaked cotton into nasal passage and mouth to create a temporary superficial barrier.
- Place Dis-Spray saturated cotton over the face.
- Spray the rectal area with Dis-Spray.
  - This area can be packed with Dis-Spray soaked cotton to control leakage.
  - Fecal matter is showing signs of harboring the virus.
- Spray entire body and body pouch again with Dis-Spray.
- Use Dis-Spray on the embalming table.
  - Transfer deceased to table.
- Properly disinfect cot after use.
  - *Suggested disinfectants: Dis-Spray, Solucide, Fresh Breeze TB.*

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