



## SAFETY SERVICE PATROL IDEA SHARING NETWORK SESSION XV: COVID-19 OUTBREAK ROUNDTABLE **MEETING RECAP AND TAKEAWAYS**

On Wednesday, April 1<sup>st</sup>, SafeHighways.org hosted its fifteenth Safety Service Patrol Idea Sharing Network session. SSP professionals from across the country joined the session to discuss recent practices and procedures employed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This document provides a summary of the best practices shared for SSP and DOT professionals seeking to gain a better understanding of what precautions and processes have been implemented by SSPs.

### Equipment & Cleaning Directives

- Assign patrol drivers their own truck and/or equipment; eliminate “hot seating” whenever possible.
- Issue strict vehicle cleaning guidelines for drivers to follow before and after every shift.
- Use germicidal/bleach sprays or wipes to clean vehicles and tools after every use.
- Wear gloves to pump gas, then immediately discard the gloves after use.
- Provide each patrol driver with cleaning materials and hand sanitizer to carry with them.
- Park the trucks away from other departments, meeting areas, and gathering points.
- Wear N95 Face Masks, if available, and ensure proper training for wearing masks.

### Interacting with Motorists

- Limit the length of exposure with motorists.
- Maintain a minimum of 6-10 feet of distance at all times.
- Approach the vehicle from the passenger-side and instruct motorists to stay in their vehicle.
- Use a white board to instruct motorists to call dispatch to explain their problem in areas of high noise.

### Transporting Motorists

- Reduce motorist transports off road unless there is no other reasonable alternative.
- Provide traffic control while motorists wait for a ride.
- Call EMS/EMTs if the motorist exhibits symptoms.

Thank you to the 100+ participants representing the following 26 states for your contribution during the COVID-19 Roundtable Session:

- Alabama
- California
- Connecticut
- Delaware
- Florida
- Georgia
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Kentucky
- Michigan
- Maryland
- Minnesota
- Missouri
- North Carolina
- New Hampshire
- New Jersey
- New Mexico
- New York
- North Carolina
- Ohio
- Pennsylvania
- Rhode Island
- Tennessee
- Texas
- Utah
- Washington DC

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## Road Conditions and Daily Tasks

- Some states have experienced decreases in traffic by as much as 60%, leading to an increase in speeds by the traveling public.
- In slower areas, patrol drivers have been assigned to help with road maintenance.
- Meetings with patrol drivers are being held by phone rather than in-person.
- To reduce fuel stops, some states are staging SSP trucks along the highway.

## Shift Rotations

- Some patrol shifts have decreased by as much as half, splitting between morning and evening shifts.
- Some dispatchers are working from home.
- Some DOTs are limiting SSP activities to emergencies only, or suspended the patrol indefinitely (NHDOT).

## Relationship with Contractors

- Staying in constant communication with SSP contractors and towing companies leads to enhanced planning and knowledge of which precautions to take.
- In some states, tow contractors may choose to terminate a contract with 60 days notice for any reason. However, termination due to a force majeure clause is considered unlikely since the contractor's other business has likely decreased dramatically.

## Other Topics

- Training new employees has been put on hold as hands-on training cannot be conducted.
- One state (MD) is paying premium pay for nine days, until work process is considered stabilized.
- No states reported expecting to utilize hazard pay.
- No patrol has yet reported a confirmed case of an operator with the COVID-19 virus.

## HELPFUL RESOURCES

- For a recording of this session click [here](#) or visit [www.safehighways.org](http://www.safehighways.org).
- Email [ssp@safehighways.org](mailto:ssp@safehighways.org) to register for future sessions and join our mailing list.
- We would like to hear from you. Complete our short online survey to let us know your thoughts on these COVID-19 tips. Tell us if you think we should repeat this topic in May and/or create an online chat group to continue the SSP dialogue in real time. Please click [here](#) to complete our simple 5 minute survey:

[COMPLETE SURVEY](#)

- For more information, please contact:

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