



COVID-19 Rescue Guidelines - NSOP

Section 1 – Patrol Operations

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Document Owner: National Lifesaving Manager

1.0 PURPOSE

To give guidance to surf lifeguards on patrol when engaging in rescue activities.

2.0 SCOPE

General use for all surf lifesaving activities during **Levels 4 & 3 and the COVID-19 Protection Framework traffic lights RED & ORANGE.**

3.0 REQUIREMENTS

Required PPE	Masks as per SLSNZ Facemask policy
Awards/Licenses	N/A
Training	N/A
Other	N/A
Equipment	N/A

4.0 INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged & will continue to challenge the way Surf Lifesaving Clubs and surf lifeguards organise and operate patrols, and how patients are rescued or given first aid or emergency care treatment.

The risk of Covid-19 transmission on beaches and other open outdoor spaces is extremely low. Evidence has shown that during a time of Covid community spread, health care workers are more likely to be exposed to Covid via their household and social contacts than from their patients. This is even more likely to be the case with lifeguards. Lifeguard-to-patient transmission remains a concern, as lifeguards may well have no symptoms but still be infectious to colleagues and patients.



5.0 PROCEDURES

5.1 Preventative Actions

While patrolling at Orange or Red there should be a high focus on preventative actions to minimise rescues and contact.

During preventative actions take the following precautions:

- Wear a face mask.
- Try to maintain 2m distancing where possible.

5.2 Tube Rescue - Conscious patient

- Individual rescue tube provided per lifeguard.
- Where possible use the rescue tube for keeping your distance between yourself and the patient. In some cases, social distancing will not be able to be achieved.
- Once on the beach, wear a face mask, maintain distance where possible, and follow post-rescue protocol (5.6).

5.3 Board Rescues - Conscious patient

- Where possible use the rescue board to maintain distance between yourself and the patient. In some cases, social distancing will not be able to be achieved.
- Once on the beach, wear a face mask, maintain distance, and follow post-rescue protocol (5.6).

5.4 IRB/RWC Rescues - Conscious patient

- Managed by senior lifeguards if possible.
- Once on the beach, wear a face mask, maintain distance, and follow post-rescue protocol (5.6).

5.5 For all unconscious patients

- Once on the beach, wear a face mask and maintain distance when possible.
- Use correct PPE for patient treatment.
- **Follow COVID-19 Emergency Care NSOP.**

5.6 Post-Rescue Protocol

Because Covid can be spread from individuals without symptoms, it is safest to wear a mask and other recommended PPE. When possible, place a [face mask \(Surgical mask/disposable\)](#) on the patient or ask the patient to put on a face mask, avoid indoor spaces, and maintain distance.

It may be helpful for ambulance services if you ask the following questions:

The answers should not impact your care at the scene: always act as if both you and the patient had Covid, but did not know it. Masks, ventilation, and distance are the key.

1. Have you, or someone you regularly interact with, tested positive for COVID-19?



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2. Are you, or someone you regularly interact with, experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms? These include:
 - Headaches
 - Nausea
 - Cough/runny nose
 - Flu-like symptoms
 - Loss of taste or smell

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