



COVID-19 Emergency Care Guidelines - NSOP

Section 7 – FIRST AID OPERATIONS

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Document Owner: National Lifesaving Manager

1.0 PURPOSE

To give guidance to surf lifeguards on patrol when engaging in emergency care 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 Medical gloves as per normal first aid protocols
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 Life Saving 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

Administering first aid to patients will mean that social distancing will not be able to be achieved. Surf lifeguards/patrol support members must always be wearing medical gloves & a face mask following the SLSNZ Face Mask policy.

Emergency care/first aid should all be managed outside or in a well-ventilated area. If possible, only one patrol member on the patrol should be administering first aid.

5.1 Minor First Aid

- Follow Pre-First Aid Protocol (5.4)
- If possible, give the patient/caregiver self-management with guidance from a distance.
- Equipment cleaned after use.

5.2 Major First Aid

- Follow Pre-First Aid Protocol (5.4).
- Ambulance called ASAP.
- Managed by L3 refreshed First Aiders where possible.
- Equipment cleaned after use.

5.3 Providing CPR

- Follow Pre-First Aid Protocol (5.4).
- Ambulance called ASAP.
- Managed by L3 refreshed First Aiders where possible.
- Follow SLSNZ guidelines. https://www.surflifesaving.org.nz/media/989924/qa-covid-19-applying-lifeguard-asesment-response-skills_final_april-2020-pd-ce-final-edits.pdf
- Mouth-to-mouth resuscitation should not be performed.
- Where possible, avoid mouth-to-face shield and mouth-to-pocket mask ventilation. Use a bag-valve-mask (BVM) device with a viral filter attached instead.
- Avoid unnecessary proximity to the patient. Space and open ventilation decrease risk to the patient as well as the lifeguard.
- Place face masks on yourself and the patient as soon as practicable.
- Equipment cleaned after use.

5.4 Pre-First Aid 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 facemask, 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?
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

Further information and advice:

Applying lifeguard patient assessment/response skills in a possible Covid-19 environment?

https://www.surflifesaving.org.nz/media/989924/qa-covid-19-applying-lifeguard-asesment-response-skills_final_april-2020-pd-ce-final-edits.pdf

NZ Resuscitation Council - Adult Advanced Life Support for COVID-19 patients

<https://www.surflifesaving.org.nz/media/989691/2020-03-27-nz-resuscitation-council-adult-als-covid-19-final.pdf>

NZ Resuscitation Council - COVID-19 Modifications to Essential Life Support

<https://www.surflifesaving.org.nz/media/989692/2020-03-27-temporary-guideline-in-state-of-emergencyfinal.pdf>