

A vital message from the Fire Department regarding COVID-19

We're in the middle of a pandemic. The fire department needs your help. By helping us, we can better serve you.

At all times, your fire department remains hard at work preparing for your emergency medical needs and responding to your service requests.

But with COVID-19 sweeping the region, our primary resources -- personnel and equipment -- must be utilized wisely and prudently. This is where you play a crucial role.

If you experience COVID-19 symptoms and think you need assistance, consider the following before calling:

- If your symptoms are for the “worried well” or mild in nature, like a low-grade fever or mild flu symptoms, don't call 9-1-1. Call your primary care physician.
- Or, call the Oakland County Health Department's **Nurse-on-Call, 1-800-848-5533**. The service pre-screens for COVID-19 symptoms. They'll ask a series of questions and if your responses indicate a potential positive, they'll provide direction. Nurse-on-Call hours are 8 a.m.-8 p.m. Monday-Friday; 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.
- However, if your symptoms are severe, such as respiratory difficulties, shortness of breath, or cardiac problems, among others, call 9-1-1 immediately.
- If you have underlying medical issues such as diabetes, respiratory or cardiac considerations, and you experience respiratory difficulties, shortness of breath, or cardiac problems, call 9-1-1 immediately. COVID-19 could exacerbate your existing condition.

When calling 9-1-1, assume your call will result in transport to a healthcare facility. Don't use 9-1-1 to perform “evaluations.” We're not physicians. Rather, we perform what we're legally able to under our medical control direction.

As always when calling 9-1-1, be clear and upfront about your symptoms. That information is crucial to the personnel that respond to your call. They can better protect themselves while serving you.

While the fire department is always ready for your call, we ask you to consider your options before we potentially expose our personnel and limited equipment to a response that may not have been necessary. We remain ready and able to support your needs.