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TO: Funeral Home Partners

FROM: Keshia Singleton 
State Project Manager
Office of the Chief Medical Examiner

DATE: March 12, 2020

RE: PPE while handling remains

The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) is reaching out due to the questions and inquiries regarding appropriate precautions with handling decedents who are suspected of or have confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19).

The CDC provides guidance specifically for funeral home industries, which can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#funerals>

The OCME is following universal precautions and requiring N95 masks to be worn by OCME staff when handling all decedents, regardless of confirmed COVID-19. It is up to your office or organization to the extent of PPE that is required when handling remains. If you transport to the OCME or pick up a decedent from the OCME, please ensure that you are following your organization's policy on appropriate personal protective equipment. The OCME does not have personal protective equipment (N95 masks) that is available for your office or organization due to financial constraints.

If you should have any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Keshia Singleton at 804.786.3174 or keshia.singleton@vdh.virginia.gov.