



State of West Virginia  
**OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY**

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**JEFF S. SANDY CAMS, CFE**  
**CABINET SECRETARY**

**THOMAS L. KIRK, JD, CFE**  
**DEPUTY SECRETARY**

**Date:** Thursday, September 10, 2020  
**To:** West Virginia first responders  
**From:** Jeff S. Sandy, CFE, CAMS, Cabinet Secretary  
**Re:** Protection of our First Responder Family

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jeff S. Sandy".

I send this memorandum today to advise our first responders that state agencies like the Department of Homeland Security are receiving telephone calls, letters and emails advising us of first responders not wearing masks and not practicing social distancing. I respectfully ask all of you to remain vigilant and not get complacent. First responders provide a priceless public service to the people of West Virginia, but more important we are role models for our citizens.

Between March 1 and Aug. 31, 2020, 24 law enforcement officers, 22 firefighters, 46 emergency medical services personnel, and five 911 center employees contracted the virus. Thankfully, all have recovered: my office has not been advised of any first responder deaths.

As we enter our seventh month battling COVID-19, I am so proud of all our state's first responders. You have held the front lines while our scientists work to develop a vaccine. Our first responders are being tested by a virus that none of us has seen before, and all of us must continue to rise to meet the challenge of this war.

I think of all of you every day and thank you for your service! Be safe and let's survive the pandemic! Thank you.