

Caddo Sheriff requires all deputies to wear masks

Saturday, April 4, 2020

Caddo Parish Sheriff Steve Prator is requiring all deputies to wear protective masks while on duty, according to an order that goes into effect at 6 p.m. tonight.

"This goes beyond maintaining a healthy workforce," Prator said. "Every day we learn more and more about this virus and how it spreads. We want to make sure we are doing everything possible to protect our deputies."

The order to wear face coverings will apply to all Sheriff's employees as well as bondsmen and anyone else entering Caddo Correctional Center.

Twelve Caddo deputies - two of whom are administrative employees - have tested positive for COVID-19, and this morning, the Louisiana Department of Health reported that the number of cases reported in Caddo Parish had risen from 377 yesterday to 598 today. On Friday, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued a recommendation that the public wear cloth face coverings "in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies) especially in areas of significant community-based transmission."

The Sheriff said the CPSO has enough personal protective equipment or PPE to last a few days and then deputies should wear an improvised or homemade mask until an adequate supply can be secured. He's asking citizens or community groups who are sewing homemade masks to consider donating to the Sheriff's Office.

"We can't go home and wait this out," the Sheriff said. "We will continue to answer calls and be there when our citizens need us. So if you have extra masks, please think about us."

Late last week, the LA National Guard delivered several pallets of PPE to the area at the request of Prator, who also serves as the Director of Caddo Parish's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness. The order was just a fraction of what was requested. Over 20,000 units were requested for local first responders but less than 2,500 masks were received along with 5,000 Tyvek suits - all in size 5X. The supplies will be split between Shreveport Police and Fire, the Shreveport City Marshal, parish fire districts, municipal police departments, and the Sheriff's Office.

Prator said they will continue to ask for more PPE, but it's not known when - or if - it will ever arrive.

* Media Note: Please contact me if you would like an interview with the Sheriff regarding this release.

Attachments

