

April 27, 2020

Admiral Brett Giroir, M.D.  
Assistant Secretary for Health  
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue S.W.  
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Assistant Secretary Giroir,

I write today on behalf of the hundreds of American Ambulance Association (AAA) members who provide mobile healthcare in communities across the United States. Patients rely on us around the clock for an immediate response to every call for help regardless of their ability to pay for the often life-saving medical response.

The COVID-19 pandemic has stretched the resources of ground ambulance service providers nationwide as we face this unprecedented threat. Paramedics and emergency medical technicians (EMTs) are often the first medical professionals to treat COVID-positive patients and thus face an increased risk for contracting the virus.

At present, any first responder believed to have contracted COVID-19 needs to self-quarantine for an extended period, leaving our members with less staff and hampering their ability to provide care to Americans in need. It is vital that ground ambulance service providers and our paramedics in EMTs have priority access to COVID-19 test kits to reduce their quarantine period if they do not have the virus and return to helping others.

We ask that the U.S. Public Health Service reclassify “first responders with symptoms” as level “Priority 1” as to which groups should be a priority for COVID-19 testing. Without adequate testing for paramedics and EMTs, ground ambulance service providers risk not having the staff necessary to properly respond to the medical needs of our communities.

Thank you in advance for helping ensure that America’s ground ambulance service providers and personnel have priority access to testing.

Sincerely,



Aarron Reinert  
President  
American Ambulance Association