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*Executive Office of Public Safety and Security*  
*Department of Fire Services*



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PETER J. OSTROSKY  
STATE FIRE MARSHAL

To: Heads of All Fire Departments

From: Peter J. Ostroskey, State Fire Marshal

Date: March 27, 2020

Re: Coding COVID-19 Responses in MFIRS (Updated)

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The U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) has updated their guidelines on how to code COVID-19 calls. This is in addition to the guidelines distributed in the March 23, 2020 memo involving the Basic Module and reporting exposure of firefighters on the Fire Service Casualty Module.

The USFA's National Fire Data Center (NFDC) is implementing a national-level special study in the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS & MFIRS) which will assist fire departments in recording responses to the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) pandemic in a nationally consistent manner. The special study will document fire department calls to suspected or confirmed incidents involving the sudden and nationwide spread of COVID-19. The severity of the spread has resulted in a national emergency declaration and is impacting the nation's fire service.

This Special Study is being implemented on the national level beginning on 1/1/2020 and ending on 12/31/2022. All third party vendors have been notified by the USFA. Please contact your vendor if you are unable to use this field. We advise that you go back and enter this information on previous COVID-19 calls. Please resubmit these calls along with your next monthly submission.

The Special Study field can be found at the end of the Basic Module. It now refers to: 'COVID 19 was a factor in this incident'. **It should be completed for all calls.** The valid (single digit) Codes and their definitions are:

- 1 – Yes, COVID 19 was suspected.**
- 2 – Yes, COVID 19 was confirmed.**
- 3 – No, COVID 19 was not a factor.**
- 4 – Unknown.**

This special study is being implemented in NFIRS (& MFIRS) because of its use in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Native American Tribes, and the Department of Defense. The use of

this special study along with other data collected about the incident helps in the analysis of the fire department response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Questions regarding the contents of this memo may be directed to Derryl Dion, who is currently working remotely, at [Derryl.Dion@mass.gov](mailto:Derryl.Dion@mass.gov) or by leaving a message at (978) 567-3382.