



Government of the Netherlands

## Coronavirus measures for protection and deployability of police officers

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The coronavirus crisis is having an immediate impact on the daily activities, safety and deployability of police officers. To this end, Minister of Justice and Security Ferdinand Grapperhaus is taking measures to offer police officers better protection as well as to safeguard their deployability. For example, the Cabinet approved a legislative proposal on Friday, which allows the forced sampling of buccal mucous from coughing and spitting suspects to be tested for the coronavirus. As a result of this measure, it can be tested whether police officers or other emergency service providers are at risk when people deliberately spit or cough at them to infect them with the COVID-19 coronavirus.

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'The coronavirus has made the activities of police officers and other emergency service providers more urgent than ever. We have to cherish these people. Deliberately spitting or coughing in their face is indefensible. Not only is this behaviour disgusting and offensive, the coronavirus makes it potentially life-threatening as well. The Public Prosecution Service therefore applies a thoroughly deserved eye-for-an-eye policy, in which this offence is regarded as an attempt to inflict grievous bodily harm.'

said Minister Grapperhaus.

It has also been decided that suspects and mentally disturbed people may have their mouths covered during transport, reducing the risks for police officers to be stricken or threatened with deliberate infection. During transport, police officers are unable to avoid deliberate coughing or spitting. Covering the mouths of suspects or mentally disturbed people is added to the available instruments for the police. It is vital to guarantee the safety of police officers while at work.

### Temporary provisions

Minister Grapperhaus also wrote in a letter to the Lower House of Parliament today that temporary provisions are required in several other areas to ensure the deployability of the police and minimise their contact with the public in stations to what is required. Reports for which a physical presence is not needed are to take place electronically; for example, in case of property offences.

Other provisions include temporary alterations to training courses for the police and riot squad members, reducing the amount of physical contact. Certificates for combinations of police dogs and their police escorts will also be extended for the time being. The same applies to hunting and weapon permits as well as licences for security organisations. These affairs normally require desk contact and house visits.

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## See also

› [Coronavirus COVID-19](#)

Topic

› [Police](#)

Topic

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## Ministry responsible

› [Ministry of Justice and Security](#)