CSU CHANNEL ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTIVE #2021-003

Suspension of Presumptive Testing for Controlled Substances

Issued By: Christopher Jetton, Lieutenant

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Associated Policies / Directives: Policy 802- Property and Evidence

PURPOSE:
Fentanyl has become a serious threat to our community and to the law enforcement personnel who serve it. The department is taking steps to ensure the safety of our staff. These steps include additional training, policy changes and posting Fentanyl reminder posters in the briefing room and evidence room.

PROCEDURE:
Effective immediately, presumptive testing for all suspected controlled substances shall be discontinued until further notice. These changes are due to the recent incidents involving officers and the dangerous synthetic opiate, Fentanyl, and reported health related complications during field testing.

Fentanyl can be mixed with other substances, altering its appearance, and can be found in pill, liquid, tar, patch, and other forms. Fentanyl can be easily absorbed through the skin or eyes or inhaled through the nose or mouth. Officers shall make sure all patrol vehicles are stocked with personal protection equipment: gloves, eye protection, and masks, and don each while handling any suspected narcotic. Double bag (prior to transporting) all narcotics and other unknown substances.

For report writing: specifically describe the controlled substance seized including the locations, packaging, odor, etc. Document all evidence you considered in forming your opinion including, but not limited to, the presence of specific paraphernalia, writings, observations/statements of the suspect, evidence of recent use, etc. Describe your background, training, and experience, specifically related to the identification and use of controlled substances, including the specific substance seized.

The filing Deputy District Attorney will have the option to wait for the forensic analysis before filing the case, at which time they will request for it to be tested at Ventura County Forensic Services Bureau.
Other important points:

- Do not touch any narcotics with your bare skin.
- Fentanyl can be found in any form: powder, pills, aerosol, etc…. It may not be immediately recognizable.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, mouth or personal items like cell phones while you are exposed to areas containing narcotics.
- Seek immediate help if you suddenly start feeling ill while in the vicinity of narcotics.
- Naloxone will reverse the effects of Fentanyl.

In 2019, Calgary Police Service seized the below substance during an arrest. The substance tested positive for Fentanyl, Benzodiazepine and Caffeine. Although it has a similar appearance to marijuana, it did not test positive for Cannabis. The detectives in this case do not believe it was manufactured with the intent to deceive, but rather, its green appearance was likely the result of an error during the manufacturing process. This case demonstrates that narcotics can be manufactured with unusual appearances and you should not take for granted that any substance is what you think it is.

To better understand the dangers of Fentanyl, please review this video entitled Fentanyl: The Real Deal from U.S. Customs and Border Protection.
FENTANYL†

SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FIRST RESPONDERS

† For the purposes of this document, fentanyl, related substances, and synthetic opioids (herein after referred to as fentanyl†) include fentanyl analogues (e.g., acetylfentanyl, acrylfentanyl, carfentanil, fentanyl, nefentanyl, novel synthetic opioids (e.g., U-47700), and other drugs that may be laced with these substances.

- The abuse of drugs containing fentanyl† is killing Americans. Misinformation and inconsistent recommendations regarding fentanyl† have resulted in confusion in the first responder community.
- You are a first responder (law enforcement, fire, rescue, and emergency medical services (EMS) personnel) are increasingly likely to encounter fentanyl† in your daily activities (e.g., responding to overdose calls, conducting traffic stops, arrests, and searches).
- This document provides scientific, evidence-based recommendations to protect yourself from exposure.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Fentanyl† can be present in a variety of forms (e.g., powder, tablets, capsules, solutions, and rocks).
- Inhalation of airborne powder is MOST LIKELY to lead to harmful effects, but is less likely to occur than skin contact.
- Incidental skin contact may occur during daily activities but is not expected to lead to harmful effects if the contaminated skin is promptly washed off with water.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is effective in protecting you from exposure.
- Slow breathing or no breathing, drowsiness or unresponsiveness, and constricted or pinpoint pupils are the specific signs consistent with fentanyl† intoxication.
- Naloxone is an effective medication that rapidly reverses the effects of fentanyl†.

To protect yourself from exposure

- Wear gloves when the presence of fentanyl† is suspected.
- AVOID actions that may cause powder to become airborne.
- Use a properly-fitted, NIOSH-approved respirator (“mask”), wear eye protection, and minimize skin contact when responding to a situation where small amounts of suspected fentanyl† are visible and may become airborne.
- Follow your department guidelines if the scene involves large amounts of suspected fentanyl† (e.g., distribution/storage facility, pill milling operation, clandestine lab, gross contamination, spill or release).

When exposure occurs

- Prevent further contamination and notify other first responders and dispatch.
- Do not touch your eyes, mouth, nose or any skin after touching any potentially contaminated surface.
- Wash skin thoroughly with cool water, and soap if available. Do NOT use hand sanitizers as they may enhance absorption.
- Wash your hands thoroughly after the incident and before eating, drinking, smoking, or using the restroom.
- If you suspect your clothing, shoes, and PPE may be contaminated, follow your department guidelines for decontamination.

If you or other first responders exhibit

- Slow Breathing or No Breathing
- Drowsiness or Unresponsiveness
- Constricted or Pinpoint Pupils
- Move away from the source of exposure and call EMS.
- Administer naloxone according to your department protocols. Multiple doses may be required.
- If naloxone is not available, rescue breathing can be a lifesaving measure until EMS arrives. Use standard basic life support safety precautions (e.g., pocket mask, gloves) to address the exposure risk.
- If needed, initiate CPR until EMS arrives.

https://www.whitehouse.gov/ondcp/key-issues/fentanyl

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