

COVID-19 Protective Eyewear Guidance

In response to the evolving situation related to COVID-19 variants of concern (VOCs), the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development (MLTSD) have added additional personal protective equipment (PPE) requirements within the workplace. Workers are now required to wear both an appropriate face covering (preferably surgical/medical mask) AND eye protection at all times when the worker comes within 2 metres of another individual (indoors and outdoors). This will reduce the high-risk exposure should they come in contact with a case of COVID-19 while at the workplace. Eye protection would not be required if other controls were in place, such as keeping a 2 metres distance or having an impermeable barrier (i.e., plexiglass) between the workers.

Visit Ontario's regulations under the Reopening Act for specific requirements; [O. Reg. 82/20](#) (Lockdown), [O. Reg. 263/20](#) (Red-Control), and [O. Reg. 364/20](#) (Green-Prevent, Yellow-Protect, and Orange-Restrict).

Options	Considerations in Selection
<p>Goggles</p> 	<p>Goggles with a snug fit around the eyes that cover the front and sides provide the most reliable eye protection from splashes, sprays, and respiratory droplets. There must also be a barrier at the top that extends towards the face, leaving no gaps between the goggles and the face.</p>
<p>Face Shield</p> 	<p>Face shields must cover the front and sides of the face to reduce the possibility of splashes, sprays, and respiratory droplets from going around the face shield. A face shield can be re-used by the SAME user if they are cleaned/disinfected after each use or until they become cracked, or visibility compromised.</p>
<p>Safety Glasses*</p> 	<p>*Safety glasses will not reduce the risk of exposure to respiratory droplets and are therefore not considered appropriate eye protection for infection control. They are not recommended for close contact, especially if the client is unmasked. Safety glasses allow gaps close to your eyes between the glasses and your face. Only safety glasses that have a cover over the top and around the edges, eliminating all gaps, are considered appropriate for infection control purposes.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ If you wear prescription glasses, use a face shield or goggles that fit snugly, with no gaps between the protective equipment and your face. ❖ Eyeglasses including sunglasses or prescription eyeglasses are NOT an accepted form of eye protection as they may not fully cover the eye area and do not provide coverage from the side. 	

Additional Guidance for the Use of Protective Eyewear

- Eye protection may not be one brand fits all. What protects one person, might not fit the same for others. Ensure your eyes are fully protected when choosing your eye protection.
- Make sure that the eye protection fits properly and does not interfere with the proper fit of the worker's mask.
- Eye protection must be cleaned before changing face covering, before breaks/meals, and at the end of shift.
- Eye protection should be replaced when soiled or damaged.
- All eye protection must be **cleaned and disinfected** between uses – see below.

Cleaning and Disinfecting Protective Eyewear

1. Perform proper hand hygiene prior to removing eye protection.
2. To remove, reach behind the head or side of the head; do not touch the front of contaminated eye protection.
3. Carefully wipe the inside, followed by the outside of the face shield or goggles using a clean cloth saturated with neutral detergent solution or cleaner wipe.
4. Carefully wipe the outside of the protective eyewear with a healthcare-grade disinfecting wipe. Follow the appropriate contact time as described in the manufacturer's instructions. Wipe the outside with clean water or alcohol to remove residue.
5. Allow eye protection to dry by air or use a clean absorbent towel. When dry, store in a labelled paper or plastic bag to prevent contamination.
6. Perform proper hand hygiene.

Sources: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html>

Champlain Health Region Incident Command. (2020.10.30) Recommendations for PPE Use, including universal mask and eye protection during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

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Adapted from Ottawa Public Health