

COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus) Public Health Guidance of PPE Use in Non-Clinical Settings

Personal Protective Equipment Use in Non-Clinical Settings

May 4, 2020

Simple steps to help STOP the spread of COVID-19

- Stay home when you are sick.
- Wash your hands with soap and warm water often, for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with your sleeve.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Clean and disinfect high-touch objects and surfaces frequently.
- Stay 6 feet/2 m away from others.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) use in non-clinical settings has increased due to the COVID-19 outbreak. It is important to understand the purpose and proper use of PPE to ensure public and individual safety, while preserving the limited PPE supplies that are available. PPE includes, but is not limited to, eye protection, masks, gloves and gowns.

It is important to follow the policies and procedures of your setting if PPE is to be worn.

Group Homes and Co-Living Settings¹

Ministry of Health COVID-19 Guidance: Group Homes and Co-Living Settings statement:

- All caregivers should perform regular hand hygiene and wear appropriate personal protective equipment as required.
- If close contact (less than 2 metres or 6 feet) with the person with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 is required for direct care (e.g., bathing, toileting), use Droplet and Contact Precautions using the following PPE:

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- surgical/procedure masks provide a physical barrier that helps prevent the transmission of the virus by blocking respiratory droplets propelled by coughing, sneezing and talking and should be used when in close contact (less than 2metres) with the ill person;
 - disposable single use gloves should be worn when in direct contact with the ill person, cleaning contaminated surfaces, and handling items soiled with body fluids. If disposable gloves are not available, reusable utility gloves may be used; however, they must be cleaned with soap and water and decontaminated after each use with a disinfectant;
 - isolation gown when skin or clothing may become contaminated. Reusable gowns may be used; however, they must be laundered with soap and warmwater (60-90°C) after each use;
 - eye protection such as goggles or a face shield for care or activities likely to generate splashes or sprays of body fluids.
- Before using PPE, staff should be familiar with how to safely put it on and take it off.
 - Tasks that do not involve close contact and direct care with the person with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 do not require PPE.
 - Tasks that require close contact and direct care with individuals who are otherwise healthy and displaying no symptoms of COVID-19 do not require additional PPE than what is normally used.

Personal Care Settings²

Guide to Infection Prevention and Control in Personal Service Settings statement:

Gloves

Workers are to wear gloves to protect their hands when it is anticipated that hands will be in contact with blood and/or other body fluids; non-intact skin; mucous membranes; contaminated surfaces, equipment or instruments; and chemicals used in cleaning and reprocessing.

- Gloves are single-use only.
- Select gloves appropriate to the task.
- Non-sterile disposable examination gloves can be used for most procedures or services.
- For personal services of long duration, nitrile gloves are recommended.
- Sterile gloves are to be worn for procedures requiring sterile technique.

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- Gloves worn for cleaning and equipment reprocessing are to be compatible with the chemicals
- being used for the task (i.e., surgical or exam gloves are not appropriate); nitrile is not compatible
- with some solvent-based disinfectants (check safety data sheet for compatibility).
- Gloves are to be fitted to the hands (i.e., not too large or small).
- Vinyl “sandwich” gloves are not appropriate.

Workers are to:

- perform hand hygiene before putting on gloves for a clean/aseptic procedure;
- wear gloves if they have non-intact skin on their hands (e.g., rashes, cuts, sores, cracked/splitting skin);
- change gloves (if worn) between each separate service for a client and between clients;
- take care when removing gloves to avoid touching the outer surfaces of gloves with bare hands;
- remove gloves after the activity for which they were used;
- not reuse or wash disposable single-use gloves, and not use alcohol based hand sanitizer on gloved hands;
- discard used gloves into the nearest waste container; and
- perform hand hygiene after gloves are removed due to possible contamination of hands during
- glove removal.
- Wearing gloves is not a substitute for hand hygiene

Disposable gloves are recommended for reprocessing equipment. However, if reusable rubber gloves (e.g., household utility gloves) are required, they are to be used only for reprocessing (cleaning, disinfection, or sterilization of equipment and instruments) and are to be cleaned, disinfected, and hung to dry after each use.

Gowns, Arm Barriers, or Aprons

Workers are to wear a gown, arm barriers, or a plastic apron when performing procedures or providing services if the risk assessment indicates that the activity may contaminate their skin or clothing through contact with blood, other body fluids, or chemicals used in cleaning and reprocessing, or through contact with equipment or instruments contaminated with blood and/or other body fluids.

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Workers are to:

- put on a gown, arm barriers, or an apron immediately before the activity based on the risk assessment;
- wear the gown, arm barriers, or apron properly (e.g., appropriately tied at neck and waist or arms);
- remove the gown, arm barriers, or apron immediately after the activity for which they are used, taking care to not touch the outside of them;
- not reuse the gown, arm barriers, or apron unless they are intended for reuse and can be laundered;
- discard disposables into the nearest waste container or place reusable gowns or aprons into a soiled linen receptacle; and
- perform hand hygiene after removing a gown, arm barriers, or an apron due to potential contamination of hands during gown or apron removal.

Facial Protection

Facial protection includes masks/respirators and eye protection worn by the worker to protect the mucous membranes (e.g., eyes, mouth, nose) from splashes of blood and/or other body fluids during certain procedures (e.g., tattooing, body modifications) and from splashes of chemicals during equipment and instrument reprocessing or environmental cleaning.

MASKS/RESPIRATORS

Workers are to wear a disposable surgical/procedure mask (in addition to eye protection) when performing a sterile or invasive procedure, or when the risk assessment indicates that there is a potential for a splash or spray of blood, other body fluids, or chemicals to their mouth or nose. Mask and eye protection are recommended to be worn during nail filing due to the generation of nail dust. A fit-tested, seal-checked respirator (e.g., N95) is recommended to be worn when a rotary tool is used that does not include dust extraction or water spray. Note: The Ministry of Labour may be consulted regarding the application of the Occupational Health and Safety Act as it applies to the use of respirators.

Workers are to:

- put on a mask/respirator immediately before the activity based on the risk assessment result;
- secure the mask/respirator over the nose and mouth;
- remove the mask/respirator immediately after the activity for which it is used (if wearing multiple

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- items of PPE, the mask/respirator is to be the last piece removed);
- change the mask/respirator when it becomes wet;
- not touch the mask/respirator while it is being worn;
- not allow the mask/respirator to hang around the neck;
- not fold the mask/respirator or store in a pocket;
- not reuse the mask/respirator;
- remove the mask/respirator by grabbing the ties; do not touch the front of mask with their bare hands;
- discard the used mask/respirator directly into the nearest waste container; and
- perform hand hygiene after removing the mask/respirator.

EYE PROTECTION

Workers are to wear eye protection when performing a procedure where there is, or risk assessment indicates there could be, the potential for a splash of blood, other body fluids, or chemicals to their eyes. Eye protection may be disposable or, if reusable, is to be cleaned and low-level disinfected after each use. Prescription eyeglasses are not acceptable by themselves as eye protection because they do not provide coverage from the side and may not fully cover the eye area. Glasses may be worn underneath eye or facial protection.

- Eye protection includes:
 - safety glasses;
 - safety goggles;
 - face shields; and
 - visors attached to masks.

Workers are to:

- ensure eye protection is comfortable, fits securely, and does not interfere with vision;
- put on eye protection immediately before the activity based on the risk assessment;
- remove the eye protection immediately after the activity for which it is used;

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- remove the eye protection by grasping the side arms and pulling the eye protection forward without touching the front of the eyewear;
- discard disposable eye protection;
- place reusable eye protection into a receptacle for cleaning and disinfection at a later time or clean
- and disinfect reusable eye protection immediately after each use; and
- perform hand hygiene after removing eye protection

Shelters³

Ministry of Health -COVID-19 Guidance: Homeless Shelters statement:

- Shelter staff must be trained on the safe use, care and limitations of PPE, including the donning (putting on) and doffing (taking off) of PPE as well as proper disposal.
- Gloves should be removed first, and hand hygiene should be performed immediately after removing gloves. The mask should then be removed, and hand hygiene performed again.
- Administrative areas and administrative tasks that do not involve contact with a client with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 do not require the use of PPE.

General Public⁴

Public Health Agency of Canada – information on non-medical masks statement:

Medical masks, including surgical, medical procedure face masks and respirators (like N95 masks), must be kept for health care workers and others providing direct care to COVID-19 patients.

If you are in a setting requiring the use of surgical, medical procedure mask and respirators please follow your settings policies and procedures for intended use and purpose.

Non-medical masks

When worn properly, a person wearing a non-medical mask or face covering can reduce the spread of his or her own infectious respiratory droplets. If you are using a mask, ALWAYS perform hand hygiene before and after putting on a mask EVERY time.

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Non-medical face masks or face coverings should:

- allow for easy breathing
- fit securely to the head with ties or ear loops
- maintain their shape after washing and drying
- be changed as soon as possible if damp or dirty
- be comfortable and not require frequent adjustment
- be made of at least 2 layers of tightly woven material fabric (such as cotton or linen)
- be large enough to completely and comfortably cover the nose and mouth without gaping
- Some masks also include a pocket to accommodate a paper towel or disposable coffee filter, for increased benefit.

Non-medical masks or face coverings should not:

- be shared with others
- impair vision or interfere with tasks
- be placed on children under the age of 2 years
- be made of plastic or other non-breathable materials
- be secured with tape or other inappropriate materials
- be made exclusively of materials that easily fall apart, such as tissues
- be placed on anyone unable to remove them without assistance or anyone who has trouble breathing

Homemade masks are not medical devices and are not regulated like medical masks and respirators. Their use poses a number of limitations:

- they have not been tested to recognized standards
- the fabrics are not the same as used in surgical masks or respirators
- the edges are not designed to form a seal around the nose and mouth
- they may not provide complete protection against virus-sized particles

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- they can be difficult to breathe through and can prevent you from getting the required amount of oxygen needed by your body
- there is an increased risk of self-contamination as the external surface may become contaminated by touching one's face and then touching your mouth, nose and eyes

These types of masks may not be effective in blocking virus particles that may be transmitted by coughing, sneezing or certain medical procedures. They do not provide complete protection from virus particles because of a potential loose fit and the materials used.

- How to care for your homemade mask
- Wash mask after every use.
- If you need to remove your mask ie. to eat, place mask face down on paper towel avoiding touching the outside surface when removing or re-applying
- On removal place in a bag if you are not washing immediately. Dispose of bag after use.
- Wash on sanitizing cycle (or hottest setting) with your regular detergent.
- Do NOT share your homemade mask with others

Gloves/gowns/eye protection

The use of gloves, gowns and eye protection is NOT recommended by the general public during daily activities. Please follow the simple steps to help STOP the spread of COVID-19 provided at the beginning of this document.

Proper Way to Put on (Donning) and Remove (Doffing) PPE

Donning [Video instructions for Putting on Full PPE](#)

1. Perform hand hygiene.
2. Put on gown (if necessary). Make sure you tie up the neck and waist securely.
3. Put on mask. Place mask over nose and under your chin.
4. Put on eyewear (if necessary).
5. Put on gloves

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Doffing [Video instructions for Taking off Full PPE](#)

1. Remove gloves. Carefully touch the outside edge near your wrist and peel away from yourself. Put gloves immediately into garbage.
2. Remove gown. Start with waist tie and then necktie. Pull gown away from yourself. Immediately put into garbage.
3. Perform hand hygiene
4. Remove eye protection. The front of the eye protection is considered to be contaminated, remove eye protection from the sides
5. Remove mask. Ties or ear loops are considered to be clean so remove your mask with those. Immediately put into garbage.
6. Perform hand hygiene.

[Southwestern Public Health's video on COVID-19: How to put on and take off a non-medical \(cloth\) mask](#)

Resources

1. [Ministry of Health COVID-19 Guidance: Group Homes and Co-Living Settings Version 1 – April 1, 2020](#)
2. [Guide to Infection Prevention and Control in Personal Service Settings, 3rd edition](#)
3. [Ministry of Health -COVID-19 Guidance: Homeless Shelters -Version 1 – April 1, 2020](#)
4. [Public Health Agency of Canada](#)

For official COVID-19 information visit: www.swpublichealth.ca