

# Novel Coronavirus/COVID-19 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Guidance

4/9/2020 (Rev 0.0)

## Introduction:

- Measures for protecting employees from the novel coronavirus/COVID-19 depend on the type of work being performed, including the potential for interaction with infectious people and the contamination of the work environment.
- Since at this time there is no definitive PPE guidance from NIOSH, OSHA, the CDC, or any other organization, this guide has been developed for use by FMIT members.
- This guide is applicable for most municipal operations in non-healthcare settings. Healthcare workers, including EMS staff should seek additional guidance based on the additional risks they face when working with patients.

## Hygiene Practices:

- Frequently wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- When soap and water are unavailable, use an alcohol-based hand rub with at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid eating, or touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

### CLEAN HANDS ARE SAFER HANDS

FOLLOW THESE 4 STEPS TO MAKE SURE YOUR HANDS ARE SAFE.



**WET**  
Use warm or cold running water.



**LATHER & SCRUB**  
Get the backs of your hands, between fingers and under nails. (Scrub long enough to hum "Happy Birthday" twice)



**RINSE**  
Use clean water, warm or cold.



**DRY**  
Use a clean towel or air dry.

\*Information taken from the CDC. <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html>

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## Gloves:

### When to use disposable gloves:

- Use disposable gloves when you may contact another person, or a potentially contaminated surface.

### Before using disposable gloves:

- Make sure your gloves fit properly. Extend your fingers until they are straight. You will know your gloves are too small if they are stretching.
- Some people are allergic to the natural rubber latex, so choose gloves made from other synthetic materials (such as polyvinyl chloride-PVC, nitrile, or polyurethane).
- Sharp or abrasive objects can puncture or damage disposable gloves. Always change your gloves if they show signs of damage.



### Using disposable gloves:

- Wash your hands well with soap and water, then dry them well.
- Hold the glove in one hand and put your other hand into the glove.
- Repeat with your other hand.

### Removing disposable gloves:

- Remember that the outside of the gloves may be soiled.
- Be sure to take them off so that the soiled material stays away from your hands.
  1. Grab the outer cuff of one the glove with your other gloved hand and pull it down so that the glove comes off your hand inside out.
  2. Place the fingers of your non-gloved hand under the cuff, then peel off the second glove with the first glove inside the palm.



- Never reuse, wash or disinfect disposable gloves.
- Dispose of the gloves in a plastic lined trash can.
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub.

Source: <https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/personal-protective-equipment-infection-control/medical-gloves>

## Eye Protection:

### Why eye protection?

- Infectious diseases can be transmitted through mucous membranes of the eye.
- Prescription glasses and sunglasses offer minimal protection from droplets.
- Safety glasses offer better droplet protection since they cover the exposed sides and the area around your eyes.
- The World Health Organization (WHO) specifically recommends safety glasses for people who will be providing regular care for people with COVID-19.



### What about contact lenses?

- The American Academy of Ophthalmology recommends contact lens wearers switch to glasses temporarily to reduce their risk of infection. Wearing glasses instead of contacts can prevent you from inadvertently contacting your eyes.

### Removing eye protection:

- Always remove potentially contaminated eyewear with a gloved hand.
- Only handle the glasses by the plastic temples. Be careful to NOT contact the skin near your face or temples

### Cleaning eye protection:

- While wearing gloves, carefully wipe the inside, followed by the outside of the glasses using a cloth or wipe saturated with soap and water or other suitable disinfectant style cleaner.
- Rinse or wipe the glasses with clean water or alcohol to remove any residue.
- Remove gloves and perform hand hygiene.
- Air dry, or use clean absorbent towel, to dry the glasses before reuse.

### Sources:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/eye-protection.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/eye/eye-infectious.html>
- <https://www.allaboutvision.com/conditions/coronavirus-and-your-eyes/>

# Surgical Masks:

## What is a surgical mask?

- A surgical mask is a loose-fitting, disposable device that creates a physical barrier between the mouth and nose of the wearer and potential contaminants.



## What you should know before use?

- If worn properly, a surgical mask is meant to keep large-particle droplets, splashes, sprays, or splatter from reaching your mouth and nose.
- Surgical masks may also help reduce exposure of YOUR saliva and respiratory secretions to others.
- Surgical masks do not provide complete protection from airborne hazards because of the loose fit between the mask and your face.
- Surgical masks are not intended to be used more than once.
- If your mask is damaged or soiled, remove it and replace it with a new one.

## How to put on a surgical mask?

- Clean your hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer.
- Remove a mask from the box and make sure there are no obvious tears or holes in either side.
- Determine which side of the mask is the top. The side of the mask that has a stiff bendable edge is the top and is meant to mold to the shape of your nose.
- Determine which side of the mask is the front. The colored side of the mask is usually the front and should face away from you, while the white side touches your face.
  1. **Face mask with ear loops:** Hold the mask by the ear loops. Place a loop around each ear.
  2. **Face mask with head bands:** Bring the mask to your nose level and pull the top strap over your head so that it rests over the crown of your head. Pull the bottom strap over your head so that it rests at the nape of your neck.
- Mold or pinch the stiff edge to the shape of your nose.
- Pull the bottom of the mask over your mouth and chin.

## How to remove a face mask?

- Clean your hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer before touching the mask.
- Avoid touching the front of the mask which is potentially contaminated.
- Only touch the ear loops or bands.
  - **Face mask with ear loops:** Hold both ear loops and gently lift and remove the mask.
  - **Face mask with bands:** Lift the bottom strap over your head first then pull the top strap over your head.
- Dispose of the mask in a plastic lined trash can.
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub.

### Sources:

- [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Finfection-control%2Findex.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Finfection-control%2Findex.html)
- <https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/personal-protective-equipment-infection-control/n95-respirators-and-surgical-masks-face-masks>

## Cloth Face Coverings:

### What is a cloth face covering?

- In early April 2020, the CDC issued new recommendations to the public, recommending the use of cloth face covering where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (such as grocery stores and pharmacies).
- Cloth face coverings can be commercially manufactured or made from t-shirt material and patterns found on the internet.



### What you should know before use?

- Currently, there is no guidance from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), or the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) as to the effectiveness of cloth face coverings.
- Cloth face coverings likely provide less protection than surgical masks since they do not include a fluid resistant layer.
- Like surgical masks, cloth face coverings do not provide complete protection from airborne hazards or other contaminants because of the loose fit and because the limitations of the cloth to stop particles. the face mask and your face.
- If your cloth face covering is damaged or soiled, remove it and replace it with a new one.

### Wearing a cloth face covering?

- Clean your hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer.
- Make sure the exterior side of the face covering is facing out, away from your face.
- Place the face covering on your face with the exterior side facing out. Try to use the ties and avoid touching the inside or outside of the cloth.
- Tie the upper ties near the crown of your head with a bow. Tie the lower ties behind the back of your head with a bow.
- Make sure it covers your nose and mouth so that the bottom edge is under your chin.
- Do NOT pull the cloth face covering down like one would a scarf on a ski slope.
- Use washed hands on the ties at the neck or on top of the head to adjust.
- Avoid touching your face even when the face covering is in place.

### Removing the cloth face covering:

- Wash your hands before removing the face covering.
- Do not touch the inside or outside of the face covering (the part over nose and mouth). Instead remove the face covering by the straps.
- Clean your hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer after removing.

### Cleaning the cloth face covering:

- Cloth face coverings are typically intended to be reused after laundering.
- Wearing gloved hands loosely knot the ties together, place the face covering in a laundry bag to keep the ties from getting tangled.
- Wash in a washing machine using laundry detergent, and hot water. Then completely dry on medium or high heat.
- Clean your hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer after touching the face covering.

# Disposable Filtering Facepiece Respirators:

## What you should know before use?

- If worn properly, a filtering facepiece respirator is meant to provide protection from airborne hazards in addition to helping block large-particle droplets, splashes, sprays, or splatter.
- There are nine particulate filter classifications, all of which are effective for coronavirus/COVID-19. These include N95, N99, N100, R95, R99, R100, P95, P99, P100.
- Since the NIOSH has deemed the filtering facepiece as a half-mask respirator, the OSHA respirator requirements normally apply including medical qualification and fit testing.
- Appendix D to Sec. 1910.134 provides information for employees using filtering facepiece respirators on a voluntary basis. This Appendix could be applied to our current situation for those employees who choose to wear a filtering facepiece when a surgical mask would be appropriate.
- Filtering facepiece respirators must not to be used with beard or other facial hair that will prevent a seal.
- Filtering facepiece respirators are not intended to be reused. Never remove then don the same respirator.
- If your mask is damaged or soiled, remove it and replace it with a new one.



## How to put on a filtering facepiece respirator?

- Clean your hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer.
- Remove a respirator from the box and make sure there are no obvious tears or holes.
- Determine which side of the respirator is the top. The side of the respirator that has a stiff bendable edge is the top and is meant to mold to the shape of your nose.
- Make certain the respirator is unfolded and completely opened (if applicable).
- Place the respirator on your face so that the foam rests on your nose and the bottom rests under your chin.
- Pull the top strap over your head and position it high on the back of your head.
- Pull the bottom strap over your head and position it around the nape of your neck and below the ears.
- Adjust the facepiece for comfort. Then using two hands mold the nose area to the shape of your nose by pushing inward while moving your fingertips down both sides of the nosepiece.
- Perform a user seal check:
  1. Cover the filtering facepiece with both hands being careful not to disturb the position of the respirator.
  2. Inhale and exhale slowly. If air leaks around the nose, readjust the nose piece, respirator edges, panels or straps.

## How to remove a filtering facepiece respirator?

- Clean your hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching the front of the respirator which is potentially contaminated.
- Only touch the bands. Lift the bottom strap over your head first then pull the top strap over your head.
- Dispose of the respirator in a plastic lined trash can.
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub.

### Sources:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2010-133/pdfs/2010-133.pdf>
- <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/standardinterpretations/2018-04-24>