



Interim Guidance for DCF Area Response Teams on the Use of Personal Protective equipment

March 24, 2020

DCF has provided Personal Protective Equipment, which includes items such as gloves, masks, gowns and goggles for Area Response Team staff to use in field work. The following guidance is based on COVID-19 specific advice from the US Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and details which items should be used in specific field work situations. Staff are expected to adhere strictly to these guidelines in order to ensure that supplies are used correctly, particularly since there is a nationwide shortage.

STEP ONE: **DETERMINE RISK OF COVID EXPSOURE**

Prior to conducting Field Work, DCF staff are to use the following rubric that was developed based on standards established by the United States Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration:

LOW: Does not apply to field work	Lower exposure risk (caution) jobs are those that do not require contact with people known to be, or suspected of being, infected with SARS-CoV-2 nor frequent close contact with (i.e., within 6 feet of) the general public. Workers in this category have minimal occupational contact with the public and other coworkers.
MODERATE: Household's COVID status unknown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium exposure risk jobs include those that require frequent and/or close contact with (i.e., within 6 feet of) people who may be infected with SARS-CoV-2, but who are not known or suspected COVID-19 patients. • In areas without ongoing community transmission, workers in this risk group may have frequent contact with travelers who may return from international locations with widespread COVID-19 transmission. In areas where there is ongoing community transmission, workers in this category may have contact be with the general public (e.g., in schools, high-population-density work environments, and some high-volume retail settings).

<p>HIGH: Household includes Person Under Investigation or person with confirmed COVID diagnosis, OR Community is placed under quarantine</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High exposure risk jobs are those with high potential for exposure to known or suspected sources of COVID-19. • Workers in this category include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Healthcare delivery and support staff (e.g., doctors, nurses, and other hospital staff who must enter patients’ rooms) exposed to known or suspected COVID-19 patients. (Note: when such workers perform aerosol-generating procedures, their exposure risk level becomes very high.) ■ Medical transport workers (e.g., ambulance vehicle operators) moving known or suspected COVID-19 patients in enclosed vehicles. ■ Mortuary workers involved in preparing (e.g., for burial or cremation) the bodies of people who are known to have, or suspected of having, COVID-19 at the time of their death.
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STEP TWO: USE THE PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT ASSOCIATED WITH THE RISK CATEGORY

<p>LOW</p>	<p>Does not apply to field work.</p>
<p>MODERATE</p>	<p>The worker should bring gloves into the field and follow the guidance in Step 3.</p>
<p>HIGH</p>	<p>Staff should bring gloves, a gown, a face shield or goggles, and a respirator.</p>

STEP THREE: FIELD PROCEDURES

<p>LOW</p>	<p>Does not apply to field work.</p>
<p>MODERATE Household’s COVID status unknown</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The worker should bring gloves with them into the field but put them on after exiting the vehicle. • The worker should approach the home wearing gloves to protect themselves against coming into direct contact with high touch surfaces¹, such as the front door of the house. • The CP&P worker should maintain a safe distance of 6 or more feet from the person answering the door, until an appropriate assessment of the situation can occur. • At this time the worker should conduct an Initial COVID-19 Screening Assessment of all household members by asking the questions outlined below for SCR screeners (Identifying Positive COVID-19 Household Members, Assessing Household Members for Possible Contact with COVID-19, Assessing Symptoms of Household Members).

¹ *High Touch Surfaces are defined as:* tables, hard-backed chairs, doorknobs, light switches, remotes, handles, desks, toilets, sinks. Also consider bedding, towels, clothing of the individual with COVID-19.

	<p>1. Identifying Positive COVID-19 Household Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Has any household member tested positive for COVID-19? ○ Is any household member being monitored for exposure to COVID-19? ○ Are there any Persons Under Investigation (PUI) for possible COVID-19 exposure? <p>2. Assessing Household Members for Possible Contact with COVID-19:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Has any household member been in close contact with anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19 or being monitored for exposure within the last 14 days? <p>3. Assessing Symptoms of Household Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Does any household member have a fever greater than 100.4 degrees and/or symptoms of a respiratory illness, such as coughing or difficulty breathing? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If any household member is confirmed positive for COVID-19 or has been exposed to a confirmed positive COVID-19 person, the worker should exit the home and call their supervisor to triage alternate response.
<p>HIGH: Household includes Person Under Investigation or person with confirmed COVID diagnosis, OR Community is placed under quarantine</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The CP&P worker should bring gloves, a gown, a N95 respirator mask and a face shield or goggles. ● The CP&P worker should put on the equipment after exiting the vehicle, prior to approaching the home. ● The CP&P worker should maintain a safe distance of 6 or more feet from the person answering the door.

PROPER USE AND HANDLING OF N95 RESPIRATORS

It is important that you minimize unnecessary contact with the respirator surface, adhere to hand hygiene practices, and proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) donning and doffing technique. Please watch the [YouTube instructional video](#) for techniques.

The masks are reusable as long as it is with the same user. They are not to be shared by multiple users.

It is important to note the following:

- Discard N95 respirators should they get contaminated with blood, respiratory or nasal secretions, or other bodily fluids from patients
- Discard N95 respirators following close contact with, or exit from, the care area of any patient co-infected with an infectious disease requiring contact precautions.
- Perform hand hygiene with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer before and after touching or adjusting the respirator (if necessary, for comfort or to maintain fit).
- Minimize unnecessary contact with the respirator surface, strict adherence to hand hygiene practices.
- Discard any respirator that is obviously damaged or becomes hard to breathe through.
- Avoid touching the inside of the respirator. If inadvertent contact is made with the inside of the respirator, perform hand hygiene as described above.
- Use a pair of clean (non-sterile) gloves when donning a used N95 respirator and performing a user seal check. Discard gloves after the N95 respirator is donned and any adjustments are made to ensure the respirator is sitting comfortably on your face with a good seal.
- Discard any respirator that is obviously damaged or becomes hard to breathe through.
- Pack or store respirators between uses so that they do not become damaged or deformed.
- If no manufacturer guidance is available, preliminary data suggests limiting the number of reuses to no more than five uses per device to ensure an adequate safety margin.
- Follow the manufacturer's user instructions, including conducting a user seal check.
- Important note: The most significant risk is of contact transmission is from touching the surface of the contaminated respirator and then touching face, mouth, eyes and nose, so please avoid doing so and make sure to wash your hands thoroughly both before and after use. If necessary, use new and clean gloves.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

United States Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration:
<https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf>

Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19:
<https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf>

From CDC Website:
<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/hcwcontrols/recommendedguidanceextuse.html>