



# State of Connecticut Department of Developmental Services

# DDS

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**To:** Employers of Record  
**From:** DDS Emergency Operations Center  
**Date:** June 17, 2020  
**RE:** Updated PPE Guidance

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The Department of Developmental Services is sharing this memo to outline updated guidance for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for your self-hired staff. As a special note – this memo is a bit longer than usual, but is full of important information, so PLEASE read through!

### *PPE Use Guidance*

DDS continues to follow guidance from the CDC and DPH. Here are some important things to understand:

#### **1. Individual does NOT have COVID-19**

Your staff should:



- Wear a cloth face covering at work.
- Surgical masks may be used if available.
  - o If masks are in short supply, “crisis capacity strategies” say that you may reuse the mask, storing with the outside surface facing in, in a paper bag or breathable container, between uses.
- Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds: when entering and leaving the home; when touching facemasks or cloth face coverings; or before putting on and after taking off disposable gloves. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Wear disposable gloves when touching an individual (e.g., dressing, bathing/showering, transferring, toileting, feeding), handling tissues, when changing linens or doing laundry.
  - o If gloves are unavailable, wash hands immediately after touching an individual or handling their belongings.

#### **2. Individual DOES have COVID-19**

Your staff should:

- Wear a surgical mask at work.



- If masks are in short supply, “crisis capacity strategies” say that you may reuse the mask, storing with the outside surface facing in, in a paper bag or breathable container, between uses.
- Wash hands with soap and water: when entering and leaving the home; when touching facemasks; or before putting on and after taking off disposable gloves. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Wear disposable gloves.
  - If gloves are unavailable, wash hands immediately after touching an individual or handling their belongings.
- Wear eye protection (e.g. face shield).
- Wear a disposable gown.

**3. Individual DOES require a staff person’s help or presence during aerosol generating procedures, regardless of whether they have COVID-19**

Aerosol generating procedures (AGPs) are Treatments that cause tiny droplets of saliva to be released into the air. AGPs include:



- Treatment for an individual with a tracheotomy (this should only be done by a licensed nurse or a family member)
- Treatment for an individual receiving suctioning (this should only be done by a licensed nurse or a family member)
- Nebulizer treatment
- Constant use of CPAP or BiPAP machine (only if the staff is in the room when the individual is using the machine – not if the individual uses the machine overnight with no staff present)

Your staff should:

- Wear an N95 respirator when conducting the AGP.
  - **PLEASE NOTE:** if N95 respirators are to be used, the employer must create a respiratory protection plan, and the staff must have a medical evaluation and fit test, for the mask to be used safely and effectively. EORs will be asked to sign assurances through the online request system before N95s are distributed. See the attached for more guidance.
  - If N95 respirators cannot be safely used, or are not available, a KN95 or surgical mask may be used with the other PPE elements as a replacement.
- Wash hands with soap and water: when entering and leaving the home; when touching facemasks or cloth face coverings; or before putting on and after taking off disposable gloves. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Wear disposable gloves.
  - If gloves are unavailable, wash hands immediately after touching an individual or handling their belongings.
- Wear eye protection (e.g. face shield).
- Wear a disposable gown.

***Cloth Mask Distribution***

Due to universal masking guidance for community activities, DDS will be providing each self-directed staff person with a direct shipment of cloth masks. Shipments will be targeted for self-directed staff who have worked between 4/1/20 and 6/12/20. This will be a one time shipment, as cloth masks are washable/reusable.

### ***Basic PPE Distribution***

DDS will continue to make available kits including basic PPE (surgical masks and gloves). Kits are primarily available through biweekly pickup sites in East Hartford, Norwich, Stratford, and Southbury. Dates and times will be confirmed the week prior for each distribution. Kits contain a two week supply; contents may vary depending upon inventory. If an EOR develops an emergency need for basic PPE between distribution dates, the EOR, or the staff person on behalf of the EOR, may submit a request through the [online request system](#).

### ***Specialty PPE Distribution***

DDS will make available specialty PPE as appropriate, as described in the PPE Use Guidance section. This PPE must be requested through the [online request system](#). Distribution of these materials may be folded into the biweekly pickup sites, or otherwise coordinated. Kits will contain a two week supply, as appropriate; contents may vary depending upon inventory.

All requests for specialty PPE should be submitted every other week. If you have submitted an unanswered request before last week, please resubmit.

*encl: Attachment A – N95 Use Guidance*

## **Attachment A N95 Use Guidance**

If a staff person is going to use an N95 respirator, there are certain OSHA requirements that must be met. In particular, there are three items:

1. Respiratory Protection Plan – to be created by the employer.
2. Medical Evaluation – for the staff person, to be sure an N95 respirator is safe for them.
3. Fit Testing – for the staff person and to be done with the specific type of N95 that is given to them.

The EOR will be asked to certify that these items have been completed, or in the case of fit testing, will be completed, in order to receive N95 respirators.

See [OSHA guidance](#) for details. See this example for [small entity compliance](#).

The following is a list of fit test resources known to DDS. There are others and this list is not a recommendation, just a list of known resources:

- Concentra Occupational Health
- PRO's Medical, Brookfield CT
- CT Fire Academy, Windsor Locks CT