



State of Connecticut
Department of Developmental Services

DDS

Ned Lamont
Governor

Jordan A. Scheff
Commissioner

Peter Mason
Deputy Commissioner

To: Employers of Record, Individuals Who Self-Direct Services, DDS Public, Qualified Providers

From: Dr. Valencia Bagby-Young, Director of Health and Clinical Services

CC: Jordan Scheff, Commissioner; Peter Mason, Deputy Commissioner; Katie Rock-Burns, Chief of Staff; IFS Managers; Self Determination Directors; Regional Directors; Regional Health Services Directors

Date: April 17, 2020

Re: Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Guidance for Individual and Family Supports (IFS), Individualized Home Supports (IHS), and Self-Directed Supports

This memo is intended to offer clarification on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) required during close contact care (defined as a proximity of less than 6-feet for a prolonged period of time, which constitutes any exposure greater than a few minutes) for all individuals, including those diagnosed with Coronavirus (COVID-19) or identified as Person(s) Under Investigation (PUI), which means a person exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19.

Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance on COVID-19 is evolving/changing on a daily basis. The current CDC and Department of Public Health (DPH) guidelines recommend that everyone wear a face mask or face covering whenever in public or any place other than your own home, to help reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19. CDC and DPH recommend that all staff providing services to individuals in residential settings or in the person's own home should wear a face mask or, if surgical masks are unavailable, cloth face covering at all times. Any PPE requested and/or provided by DDS are **only** for use by support staff and Health Care Coordination qualified registered nurses providing DDS funded services to individuals.

For cases in which an individual has experienced COVID-19 related symptoms which may include fever, cough, vomiting, diarrhea, sudden loss of taste and/or smell, and the person's Healthcare Provider (Physician, Nurse Practitioner, Physician Assistant) has advised monitoring and/or COVID-19 testing this classifies the individual as a PUI. When someone is a PUI they should be treated as if they are positive for COVID-19, until test results have been received; this will assist with efforts to decrease transmission.

For persons positive for COVID-19 or a PUI, **if it is absolutely necessary** for staff or nurses to enter the individual's home to provide care, the recommendation from the CDC and DPH is that a surgical face mask, face shield or eye protection (i.e., eye goggles or safety glasses), gown, and gloves be worn prior to entering an area 6-feet from the COVID-19 positive individual or PUI. N95 masks are only recommended during aerosol producing treatments such as nurses providing care of a tracheostomy, suctioning an individual (this does not

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include toothbrushing with suction), providing nebulizer treatments, assisting or when in the room with a person using a CPAP (continuous positive airway pressure) or BiPAP (bilevel positive airway pressure) machine for sleep apnea or other medical condition, and/or when administering CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) utilizing bag-mask ventilation (BMV or ambu-bag). If there is a need for staff to administer CPR, the use of Hands Only or Compression Only CPR is recommended. This is outlined in a separate DDS Hands Only CPR memo.

Please take some time to review additional COVID-19 related recommendations and documents available on the DDS website: <https://portal.ct.gov/dds>. The COVID-19 Update for Individuals and Families, and COVID-19 Update for DDS Providers sections on the website include the latest information available from DDS (i.e., FAQs, optimizing PPE, etc.) and is updated frequently.

CDC Resources:

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/index.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fhcp%2Fguidance-prevent-spread.html

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-home-care.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>