

April 3, 2020

Subject- IMPORTANT: PPE and PUI Guidance

Dear Providers,

Please find attached additional guidance on Persons Under Investigation (that is, those who are symptomatic but have not yet received positive test results) and new guidance on PPE. Of particular note, we wanted to share the following updated PPE protocols for DDS Public, based on information from DPH and the CDC, which you may also wish to implement.

UPDATED Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) GUIDANCE

Guidelines for reusing PPE are for the assigned employee and not to be shared with others. It is each employee's responsibility to maintain and care for their mask each week.

Face Masks

As of April 3, 2020, CDC and DPH guidance indicates that all staff in direct care settings should be wearing a mask. *Considering PPE shortages, employees may be advised to reuse traditionally disposable face masks.*

Fitted N95 respirator masks should ONLY be used when staff are working with individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 under the following circumstances:

- During treatment for an individual with a tracheotomy
- During treatment for an individual receiving suctioning (does not include toothbrushing with suction)
- During treatment for an individual using a nebulizer
- When in the room with an individual using a CPAP or BiPAP machine

In order to extend useable life, fitted N95 masks may be covered by a face shield or regular medical-grade mask and reused by employees until they no longer fit well (i.e., when eye goggles begin to fog, this indicates that the seal is no longer secure). Masks should be stored in a clearly labeled paper bag between uses.

Under all other circumstances, regular medical-grade masks should be used when available. Medical grade masks may be reused by the staff person for up to one week. Masks should be stored in a clearly labeled paper bag between uses.

If medical grade masks are not available, cloth masks, bandanas, or scarves may be used.

Gloves, Gowns, Eye Protection

Staff working with individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 or are symptomatic and being tested for COVID-19 should use gloves, gowns, and eye protection in addition to the appropriate mask.

Exposure Protocol

Employees who have worked in close proximity (6 feet or less) and for a prolonged period of time (more than 15 minutes) with an individual diagnosed with COVID-19 can continue to work as long as the employee is asymptomatic. Employees should contact their healthcare provider and continue to wear a mask when working.