



State of Connecticut
Department of Developmental Services

DDS

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Cornavirus (COVID-19)

Understanding When to Use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Simplified Guidance

April 20, 2020

PPE refers to masks, gloves, and any other equipment to protect a person from getting or spreading COVID-19.

When should PPE be used?

1. When providing close contact support as a Direct Support Professional (DSP). Close contact support is less than 6 feet for a prolonged time – more than a few minutes.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (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.
3. CDC and DPH recommend that all DSPs/staff providing services to individuals in residential settings or in the person's own home should wear a face mask at all times. Due to shortages, it is also recommended to store face mask in a paper bag and reuse until mask is compromised (this applies to caring for someone who is not COVID-19 positive or under investigation). If surgical face masks are not available a face covering may be used as a substitute.

Any PPE requested and/or provided by DDS are only for use by DSPs/support staff and Health Care Coordination qualified registered nurses providing DDS funded services to individuals.

What is PUI?

PUI is a Person Under Investigation. This means 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 People testing positive for COVID-19 or someone identified as a PUI – Can DSP/staff still provide support?

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Only if it is absolutely necessary for DSP/staff or nurses to enter the individual's home to provide care, the recommendation from the CDC and DPH is that a face mask, face shield or eye protection (i.e., eye goggles or safety glasses), gown, and gloves be put on 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 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>