



COVID-19: Information on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

What is PPE?

- PPE is equipment worn to minimize exposure to hazards that cause serious workplace injuries and illnesses.
- For COVID-19, PPE is used to help protect workers, such as healthcare providers, from exposures to the virus while they are at work.
- PPE appropriate to protect against COVID-19 includes National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)-approved N95 respirators (or facemasks, if respirators are not available), gowns, gloves, and face shield/eye protection.

Who does and does not need PPE?

- For the general public, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) does not recommend the use of facemasks or respirators. Instead, the CDC recommends following everyday preventive actions, such as washing your hands, covering your cough, and staying home when you are sick.
- Patients with confirmed or possible COVID-19 infection should wear a facemask when being evaluated medically.

Healthcare personnel should adhere to Standard, Contact, and Airborne Precautions, including the use of eye protection (for example, goggles or a face shield) when caring for patients with COVID-19 infection. These precautions include the use of PPE, including NIOSH-approved N95 respirators (or facemasks, if respirators are not available), gowns, gloves, face shield/eye protection, etc.

- DSHS recommends that agencies and businesses review the following guidance for public health workers and others who make home visits or provide other services to individuals in a home or community setting: [COVID-19: Guidance for Public Health Home Service Providers](#).
- Law enforcement who must make contact with individuals confirmed or

suspected to have COVID-19 should follow [CDC's Interim Guidance for Emergency Medical Services \(EMS\) Systems](#). Different styles of PPE may be necessary to perform operational duties.

- According to the CDC, for law enforcement personnel performing daily routine activities, the immediate health risk is considered low. Law enforcement leadership and personnel should follow the [CDC's Interim Guidance for Business and Employers](#).
- For interim guidance and other resources on protecting workers from coronavirus, visit the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) COVID-19 webpage <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/>

Because the novel coronavirus (the virus that causes COVID-19) response is rapidly changing, this is interim guidance.

Reliable Information Sources

Find up-to-date novel coronavirus information at dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus, and on DSHS's Facebook, Twitter and Instagram at @TexasDSHS. Also visit the CDC's website at cdc.gov/coronavirus.

Resources:

- OSHA COVID-19 Webpage <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/>
- What Law Enforcement Personnel Need to Know about Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-law-enforcement.html>
- Interim Guidance for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Systems and 911 Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) for COVID-19 in the United States <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-for-ems.html>
- CDC Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html>
- CDC Healthcare Supply of Personal Protective Equipment <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/healthcare-supply-ppe.html>