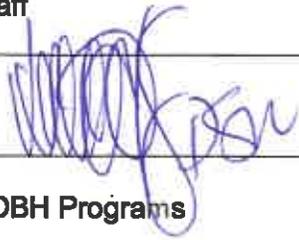




INFORMATION NOTICE 20-06

Date July 14, 2020

To Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) Staff

From Veronica Kelley, DSW, LCSW, Director 

Subject Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for DBH Programs

Purpose To provide information to DBH workforce regarding the issuance, use, disposal and need for appropriate PPE use, while performing work activities.

Background This Information Notice (IN) is intended to provide guidance, in response to the need of PPE for staff use while performing work activities in an office, field and/or clinic setting, in the midst of SARS-CoV-2, also known as COVID-19 and Coronavirus, pandemic.

The DBH Office of Disaster and Safety (Disaster and Safety) began preparation for the COVID-19 response in early March 2020. Disaster and Safety collaborated with DBH's Executive Team to develop and implement a comprehensive PPE Plan with information provided by the U.S. Center for Disease Control (CDC), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the San Bernardino County (County) Department of Human Resources (HR). DBH collaborated with County Risk Management (RM) to conduct fit testing of N95 respirators, to assure the expected level of protection is provided by minimizing the total amount of contaminant leakage into the face piece. Two-hundred and ten (210) members of the DBH workforce were certified to use N95 respirators over a two-day period.

Current CDC guidance recommends that critical supplies, such as surgical masks and N95 respirators be reserved for healthcare workers and other medical first responders. These respirators are not to be used outside of healthcare settings. Given the global supply shortage, surgical N95 respirators are currently only recommended for use by healthcare personnel (HCP). It is recommended for DBH staff members who provide direct client services, field services or who transport clients to wear higher-grade face coverings, but will vary based on staff member's duties.

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Background, continued

Disaster and Safety continues to monitor the response during this pandemic. As circumstances evolve, Disaster and Safety will collaborate with Executive Management, and internal and external programs, to identify and implement any relevant changes to the implementation of the PPE Plan.

Definitions

Face covering refers to a piece of material used to **cover both** the nose and mouth; usually made of cloth.

Face shield refers to a full mask, made of clear plastic that protects the eyes, nose, and mouth – made to protect the wearer’s entire face.

Gloves refer to a covering for the hands offering some basic protection against infectious materials and surface contamination.

Goggles are glasses set in a flexible frame (as of rubber or plastic) that protect the eyes.

Isolation gown refers to protective apparel used to protect the wearer from the spread of infection or illness if the wearer comes in contact with potentially infectious liquid and solid material.

N95 respirator is a particulate-filtering face piece respirator that meets the U.S. National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) N95 classification of air filtration, meaning that it filters at least 95% of airborne particles. Must be fit-tested to wearer.

Surgical mask is a fluid resistant face mask that provides the wearer protection against large droplets, splashes, or sprays of bodily or other hazardous fluids.

PPE Considerations

DBH Disaster and Safety will determine appropriate PPE based on DBH program evaluation and the daily work assignments and responsibilities of individual staff. Not all staff require the use of the same types of PPE; appropriateness will be evaluated and approved by management prior to distribution.

- **Clients/consumers or persons** entering a DBH facility or when being evaluated medically by DBH staff.
 - **DBH personnel/staff** are required to wear a facial covering upon entering all DBH facilities or field-based sites. The use of additional PPE in the performance of work activities will be determined by Disaster and Safety and program management based on the nature of unit and employee’s work.
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Appropriate PPE for Staff

The method of wear and type of PPE provided/used will be determined by the daily work conducted in the respective program each individual is assigned and is subject to change as the circumstances surrounding the pandemic response evolve. When and if appropriate, the table below provides a general guide for the appropriate PPE and for general categories of staff. **PPE is limited and will be assigned on a case-by-case basis.**

Position Type/ PPE Needed	Common Types of PPE				
	Face Covering	Goggles or Face Shield	Gloves	N95 and/or Surgical Mask	Isolation Gown
Clinicians		x	x	x	
Medical Staff		x	x	x	x
Transporter of Clients	x	x	x		
General Deliveries	x		x		
Field Based	x	x			x
General Staff	x				

Note: If a client requires an ADA accommodation wherein the staff member is unable to wear a mask, don a face shield for protection.

Reusing PPE

In some circumstances, PPE may and should be reused by staff. The following table outlines items that may be re-used based on specified criteria:

- **Facemasks and N95 respirators** can be reused provided they are not wet, dirty, soiled, or contaminated with spew. Further guidance regarding extended use of N95 respirators can be found in the *Reference* section of this IN.
- **Face shields and goggles** are reusable so long as they are decontaminated with an alcohol wipe after **each** use.
- **Isolation gowns and gloves** are **NOT** reusable when working with different clients. Staff will need to change out of these items between each client.

Note: Isolation gowns and gloves may not be re-used must be disposed of in the appropriate hazardous waste receptacles.

PPE Placement/ Removal Sequence

Staff are required to follow the outlined sequences for donning (putting-on) and doffing (taking-off) PPE. It is imperative that donning and doffing sequences be followed as to avoid any cross contamination.

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Donning PPE Gear

Training and practice of donning (putting-on) PPE gear is critical. The following outlines *one* acceptable sequence of donning PPE gear:

Step	Action						
1	Identify and gather the proper PPE to don. Select the appropriate sized gown, based on training.						
2	Sanitize hands with the use of hand sanitizer.						
3	Put on isolation gown and ensure it is secure by tying all of the ties. Assistance may need to be provided by other staff members.						
4	<p>Put on National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) approved N95 filtering face piece respirator or higher. Use a facemask if a respirator is not available. Respirators with nosepieces should be fitted to the nose with both hands, not bent or tented. Do not pinch the nosepiece with one hand. Respirator/facemask should be extended under chin and both mouth and nose should be protected.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>If ...</th> <th>Then ...</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Using a respirator</td> <td>Place top strap on crown of head and the bottom strap should be placed at the base of neck. Perform a user seal check each time you put on the respirator.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Using a facemask</td> <td>Place top strap on crown of head and the bottom strap should be placed at the base of neck. Masks with loops should be hooked appropriately around the ears.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Note: Do not wear respirator/facemask under your chin or store in scrubs pocket between patients</p>	If ...	Then ...	Using a respirator	Place top strap on crown of head and the bottom strap should be placed at the base of neck. Perform a user seal check each time you put on the respirator.	Using a facemask	Place top strap on crown of head and the bottom strap should be placed at the base of neck. Masks with loops should be hooked appropriately around the ears.
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Using a facemask	Place top strap on crown of head and the bottom strap should be placed at the base of neck. Masks with loops should be hooked appropriately around the ears.						
5	<p>Put on face shield or goggles. When wearing an N95 respirator or half face-piece elastomeric respirator, select the proper eye protection to ensure that the respirator does not interfere with the correct positioning of the eye protection, and the eye protection does not affect the fit or seal of the respirator.</p> <p>Note: Face shields provide full-face coverage. Goggles also provide excellent protection for eyes, but fogging is common.</p>						
6	Put on gloves. Gloves should cover the cuff (wrist) of the gown.						

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Donning PPE Gear, continued

Step	Action
7	Staff may now enter the client area and deliver appropriate services.

Note: See Demonstration of Donning (Putting On) and Doffing (Taking Off) Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) ([Video](#))

Doffing PPE Gear

Training and practice of doffing (taking-off) PPE gear is critical. The following outlines *one* acceptable sequence of donning PPE gear:

Step	Action
1	While in direct work area , remove gloves and ensure glove removal does not cause additional contamination of hands. Gloves can be removed using more than one technique (e.g., glove-in-glove or bird beak). Note: Gloves must be disposed of in the appropriate hazardous waste receptacle.
2	Remove gown by untying all ties or unsnapping all buttons. Some gown's ties can be broken rather than untied. Do so in gentle manner, avoiding a forceful movement. Reach up to the shoulders and carefully pull gown down and away from the body. Rolling the gown down is an acceptable approach. Note: Gowns must be disposed of in the appropriate hazardous waste receptacle.
3	Staff may now exit the direct work area (i.e., where client contact is made).
4	Staff should sanitize hands by washing with soap and water or with the use of hand sanitizer.
5	Remove face shield or goggles by carefully grabbing the strap and pulling upwards and away from head. Do not touch the front of face shield or goggles. Note: If contact is made with the front of face shield or goggles, re-sanitize hands before proceeding to the next step.

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Doffing PPE Gear, continued

Step	Action						
6	Remove respirator or facemask ensuring not to touch the front of the respirator or facemask.						
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Using a facemask	Carefully untie (or unhook from the ears) and pull away from face without touching the front.						
Note: In the event that the respirator or facemask is wet, dirty, soiled, or contaminated, dispose of in the appropriate hazardous waste receptacle.							
7	If appropriate to reuse respirator or facemask, store according to the <i>Storing PPE</i> section in this Information Notice.						
8	Perform hand sanitation by washing hands with soap and water or with the use of hand sanitizer.						

Note: See Demonstration of Donning (Putting On) and Doffing (Taking Off) Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) ([Video](#))

Storing PPE

The following outlines the proper steps for storing respirators and facemask when it is appropriate to reuse:

Step	Action
1	Place respirator or facemask in a breathable paper bag until the respirator or facemask will be used again.
2	Label the storage bag with users name and list every date that the respirator or mask is used to ensure proper tracking.
3	Ensure the paper bag with the respirator or facemask is stored securely to ensure it remains secure until the next time it will be used.

Note: In times of short and limited supply, disposable N95 respirators can be safely reused if done carefully and the condition allows the disposable N95 respirator to be reused. Recommended guidance for extended use of N95 respirators can be found in the *reference* section of this Information Notice.

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- Reference(s)**
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [Using Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\)](#)
 - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [Recommended Guidance for Extended Use of N95 Respirators in Healthcare Settings \(NIOSH\)](#)
 - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [How to Safely Remove Your Disposable Gloves](#)
 - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [Sequence for Putting On and Removing PPE](#)
 - Registered Nurse RN webpage: Demonstration of Donning (Putting On) and Doffing (Taking Off) Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) ([Video](#))
 - United States Army Department of Public Health: [COVID-19: Face Coverings, Masks, & Respirators: Know the Difference and When to Use Them](#)
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Questions For questions regarding this Information Notice, please contact DBH Disaster and Safety at Safety@dbh.sbcounty.gov.
