

Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) Update

Given the unprecedented rapid increase in COVID-19 cases due to the Omicron variant, **effective January 6, 2022** we have updated our PPE guidelines in the inpatient and outpatient settings for healthcare personnel. This guidance is an update from the preliminary guidance presented at the Manager Forum on January 3, 2021.

Updated guidance

- Healthcare personnel (HCP) are **required** to wear eye protection for direct patient care
- HCP are **strongly recommended** to wear an N95 for all direct patient care
- PPE re-use and extended use will be reinstated as noted in the table below

Continued guidance

- HCP are **required** to wear an N95 that they have been fit-tested to wear (or PAPR) for Novel Respiratory (in addition to eye protection, gloves, and gown) and Airborne Isolation
- Under all other circumstances, employees can use an N95 if preferred

Why are we making this change now?

Because of a tighter fit around the face, N95s may theoretically offer better source control, reducing the risk of transmission of COVID-19. **Source control** refers to the use of a mouth/nose covering to contain respiratory secretions. Also, the N95 will enhance your protection if you are in close contact with a patient, caretaker, or employee who has COVID-19 that is not yet diagnosed.

	Updated recommendations	PPE Extended and Re-use Review this updated guidance for more details
Universal masking	-A medical mask is <i>required</i> at all times. -An N95 can be used, if preferred. A PAPR is NOT an acceptable alternative.	- Change the medical mask daily or when it is wet/soiled/damaged -If you use an N95, you can wear the same N95, including across shifts and days, until it is wet/soiled/ damaged
Direct patient care	-Eye protection is <i>required</i> . -N95 is <i>strongly recommended</i> . - Fit-testing optimizes the performance of the N95 and is <i>required</i> (or a PAPR) for patients on Novel Respiratory Isolation or Airborne Isolation and other scenarios . Otherwise, a <i>non-fit-tested</i> N95 can be used.	You can wear the same N95 across patients, shifts, and days except: - for patients on Novel Respiratory Isolation, discard the N95 on room exit every time ¹ -if it is wet/soiled/damaged

Medical mask = mask distributed at screening entrance/available within the unit, PAPR = powered air purifying respirator

1. Review this [guidance](#) for exception locations and more details

Can I wear the N95 between patients?

You can wear the same N95 except a) for patients on Novel Respiratory Isolation where you need to change the respirator on room exit, b) if it is wet/soiled/damaged. Review this updated [guidance](#) for more details.

Where will the N95s be distributed?

They will be distributed on the units, clinics, and other care areas. They will not be distributed at the entrances.

What if I have not been fit-tested or have failed fit testing to use an N95?

A fit-tested N95 or PAPR is required when caring for patients on Airborne Isolation or Novel Respiratory Isolation (in addition to eye protection, gloves, and gowns) and for other [purposes](#) noted in this guidance; fit testing optimizes the protection of the N95. To schedule fit-testing please review this [guidance](#). When N95s are used for source control (i.e., instead of a medical mask) or for the care of patients on Droplet, Contact, or Enteric Contact or no Isolation, the wearer does not require fit testing or it may be used by individuals who have failed fit testing.

Do I need to use an N95 in break or charting rooms or offices?

A medical mask is required. You may choose to wear an N95.

Should patients and caregivers be given N95s?

No. Patients and caregivers should be asked to mask if they are age eligible and there are no medical contraindications; inpatients and their caretakers should be reminded of this consistently when healthcare personnel enter their room. There are exceptions for visitors of COVID-19 exposed inpatients at Moffit Long and Mt. Zion as noted in this [guidance](#).

Where can I find additional guidance?

You can find additional guidance in this [document](#) and on the [UCSF Clinical COVID-19 Website](#).

