



The recommendations in this document are not regulatory in nature, except when required by a regulatory agency such as Washington State Department of Labor & Industries (L&I), Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), DOH-Health Systems Quality Assurance (HSQA), and Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS). When creating policy and procedures, healthcare settings should ensure they meet regulatory requirements.

The Washington State Department of Health (DOH) has updated guidance based on recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) regarding the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) for healthcare personnel (HCP) when caring for a patient with suspected or confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infection (COVID-19).

HCP should continue to follow [CDC infection prevention and control recommendations to prevent transmission of COVID-19](#). These updated DOH recommendations build on CDC guidance and include alternative considerations for gown and glove use when caring for patients with COVID-19.

This guidance applies to all paid and unpaid individuals serving in healthcare settings and also applies to healthcare personnel providing healthcare services in other settings.

Refer to facility policies for visitor PPE use.

PPE for Transmission-Based Precautions of Patients with Suspected or Confirmed SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) Infection

HCP should adhere to [standard precautions](#) and follow PPE requirements according to Transmission-Based Precautions (TBP). When providing care to patients with confirmed or suspected COVID-19, HCP should wear the appropriate PPE, including:

- [National Institute of Occupational Health and Safety \(NIOSH\) approved respirator](#)
- Eye protection (for example, goggles or a face shield)

If there is a reasonable anticipation of contact with potentially infectious material, an isolation gown and gloves should also be used. Refer to CDC [standard precautions guidelines](#), and Washington State Bloodborne Pathogens Standard, [Chapter 296-823 WAC](#), for more information regarding occupational exposure to blood and other potentially infectious materials.

Respirators

- Ensure respirator use complies with Washington State Safety Standards for Respirators, [Chapter 296-842 WAC](#). This includes medical clearance, training, and fit-testing.
- When N95 respirators are used as part of transmission-based precautions, they should be discarded after doffing, during breaks, or before eating/drinking. If there is a supply shortage, follow [CDC recommendations for conserving supplies of PPE in healthcare during shortages](#).
- Respirators contaminated with blood, respiratory secretions, or bodily fluids should be discarded immediately.
- Reusable respirators, such as elastomeric respirators, should be cleaned and disinfected according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Eye Protection

- Eye protection should cover the front and sides of the face and protect from splash and spray.
- Disposable eye protection should be discarded after removal.
- Reusable eye protection should be cleaned and disinfected per the manufacturer's instructions for use after removal or when visibly soiled.
- Damaged eye protection should be discarded.
- HCP should avoid touching their eye protection while in use and perform hand hygiene after adjusting or removing it.

Isolation Gowns

- Wear a nonsterile isolation gown (disposable or reusable), that is appropriate to the task, to protect skin and prevent soiling or contamination of clothing during procedures and patient-care activities when contact with blood, body fluids, secretions, or excretions could occur.
- Reusable fabric gowns should be laundered per standard procedures.
- Reusable fabric gowns should be replaced when worn out/damaged, or per the manufacturer's recommendations.

Gloves

- Wear gloves when it can be reasonably anticipated that contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials, mucous membranes, nonintact skin, or potentially contaminated intact skin (e.g., of a patient incontinent of stool or urine) could occur.

Voluntary PPE Use

- HCP may voluntarily use PPE above the minimum guidelines and policies, as long as it does not introduce hazards or conflict with workplace requirements. For additional details, refer to [WAC 296-800-16080](#).

Resources

For the latest updates and guidance documents, please visit:

[Washington State Department of Health's COVID-19 Infection Prevention in Healthcare Settings.](#)

[Washington State Bloodborne Pathogens Standard, Chapter 296-823 WAC](#)

[Washington State Safety Standards for Respirators, Chapter 296-842 WAC](#)

[Washington State Voluntary use of PPE, WAC 296-800-16080](#)

[CDC | Conserving Supplies of PPE in Healthcare during Shortages](#)

[CDC | Infection Control Guidance: SARS-CoV-2](#)

[CDC | Interim Guidance for Managing Healthcare Personnel with SARS-CoV-2 Infection or Exposure to SARS-CoV-2](#)

[CDC | Isolation Precautions Guideline](#)

[CDC | NIOSH Personal Protective Equipment](#)

[CDC | Standard Precautions for All Patient Care](#)

References

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