

MASKS

Q: When do I need to wear a mask?

A: Commercial masks must be worn upon entering the home and will be always worn* unless it is necessary to remove them (e.g. to eat). Remove masks following the instructions on the “**What Mask to Wear, When (Poster)**” on [covid19.chconnect.org](https://www.chconnect.org/covid19).

Q: Can I use my own homemade sewn mask?

A: No, based on updated recommendations from public health employees are to only wear commercial masks which will be provided at the beginning of shift.

Q. How many commercial masks can I use?

A: Generally, you will only need one commercial mask per shift. If it becomes wet/soiled, or otherwise compromised, you should dispose of it and replace it with another commercial mask.

Q: Besides commercial masks, are there any other types of masks that I may be required to wear at work?

A: Yes, if you are performing a procedure that produces aerosols (ex. nebulizer, suctioning, CPAP) with someone who has a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19, you must wear an N95 respirator. **Additionally it is now recommended by Public Health Ontario that N95 masks be used during outbreaks when people supported in the home are displaying symptoms of COVID-19.** Please note that N95 respirators should not be used unless you have been fit tested by someone certified to perform a fit test on the particular respirator that you are looking to wear. More information specific to N95 use is located at the bottom of this document.

Q: How will I know if my commercial mask is faulty and defective?

A: A properly designed commercial mask should cover from near the bridge of your nose to down under your chin and stretch about halfway or more toward your ears. When both elastic loops are placed behind your ears, the mask should fit snugly against your face (there should be no gap between your face and the mask) so that droplets cannot enter inside the mask. If your commercial mask has pleats (the accordion looking part of the mask), the folded side should be down. Don't forget to complete your LMS training so that you can learn how to put on a commercial mask properly and continue to wear it well; the training video shows you how to put on and take off PPE, including masks. The **What Mask to Wear, When** poster on [covid19.chconnect.org](https://www.chconnect.org/covid19) specifies how to put on a mask.

EYE PROTECTION

Q: What classifies as eye protection

A: Eye protection is classified as either a face shield, goggles or safety glasses with side shields that have been provided by Christian Horizons. Employees are not to provide their own eye protection.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Frequently Asked Questions



Q: Who needs to use eye protection?

A: The use of eye protection is no longer required when providing supports within 2 metres of a person using services.

- Eye protection is still an important and required component of PPE when your eyes are exposed to hazards such as dust or chemicals, or to the risk of impact with tools, materials, or flying debris. Some examples include when using a lawn mower, mixing/diluting cleaning agents, when there is high likelihood of exposure to bodily fluids, during outbreaks etc.
- Employees may choose to continue using eye protection as a universal (constant) precaution if they would like to.
- Visitors providing direct support within 2 metres (6 feet) of a person using services may choose to wear eye protection as a universal (constant) precaution if they would like to.
- People who use our services have the option of wearing eye protection within their homes.

Q: Is Eye Protection Reusable

A: Eye protection will be designated for each employee to be reused. Be sure to follow proper cleaning procedures as discussed below.

A: In the case of visitors, disposable eye protection can be considered. Alternatively with regular visitors consider designating a reusable eye protection for their use and insuring it is properly cleaned after each visit following the guidelines within this document.

- For non recurring visitors reusable properly cleaned/sterilized eye protection is appropriate for use.

Q: Do my Personal Glasses count as Eye Protection

A: For the purposes of PPE personal glasses DO NOT classify, only the eye protection provided. If an employee wears glasses, preference for face shields should be considered for comfort and convenience when possible.

ACTIVE SCREENING PPE

Q: When I am actively screening someone else entering the location, what PPE do I need?

A: A commercial mask must be worn when performing screening on others as per the **COVID-19 Screening Protocol**. The person completing the screening may choose to wear eye protection. The person being screened must wear a commercial mask.

ENHANCED PPE

Q: When do I switch to enhanced PPE?

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A: Be sure to follow the flowcharts. When you are within two meters of a confirmed/suspected person or in a quarantine zone, you must don *enhanced PPE* (N95 mask, gowns, eye protection). If the person supported will not self-isolate in their room or all people in the home show symptoms of COVID-19, enhanced PPE must be worn upon entering the home.

Q: What PPE do I wear if a staff member has tested positive for COVID-19, but no person supported is showing symptoms?

A: Commercial masks and eye protection must be worn by employees, at all times. Masks, eye protection, and a lined garbage can (that opens without the use of your hands) will need to be stored at the entrance of the house for this purpose.

- **Gloves** must be changed after providing personal care, when performing a different procedure with the same individual (i.e. moving from administering medication to providing hygiene support), and after cleaning. NEVER reuse gloves.
- **Masks** are changed only when they become soiled, wet, or torn.
- Dispose of used masks and gloves in a lined garbage bin that opens without the use of your hands.
- Always use gloves to remove garbage.

WHERE TO DON AND DOFF PPE

Q: When someone is under quarantine, where can I put on and take off PPE?

A: All donning of PPE must be done before entering the quarantine area as per the [Quick Guide PPE Donning and Doffing Instructions](#). When leaving the quarantine area, all PPE must be taken off after leaving the quarantine area as per the [Quick Guide PPE Donning and Doffing Instructions, or as directed to do so by your local public health](#). Ensure that the “Quick Guide PPE Donning and Doffing Instructions” poster is posted outside the quarantine zones. Masks, gloves, and a lined garbage bin (that opens without the use of your hands) will also be stored at the entrance of the house. In addition, a sign should be posted communicating that the person under quarantine has a droplet contagious illness and full PPE is required when entering the room (see [covid19.chconnect.org](https://www.chconnect.org/covid19) for [Quarantine Zone PPE Caution](#) poster).

- **Gloves and masks** must be removed and replaced after leaving the quarantine area or between supporting people if more than one person is in quarantine in the same area. Follow donning and doffing instructions on [covid19.chconnect.org](https://www.chconnect.org/covid19).
- **Gowns and goggles** must be removed when leaving the quarantine area or replaced if they become soiled or wet. Follow donning and doffing instructions on [covid19.chconnect.org](https://www.chconnect.org/covid19).

STORING AND CLEANING PPE

Q: Where should we store and clean PPE?

A: All PPE will be set up either in the neutral zone or outside the room where the person is being quarantined as per Public Health’s guidelines. This area will contain hand sanitizer, antibacterial wipes, masks, gloves, goggles, and gowns. The area will also have a touchless garbage bin with large plastic bags.

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There should be a separate storage area for clean gowns and goggles and a laundry bin for used reusable gowns. Goggles/face shields should be thoroughly disinfected after each use (follow the disinfectant and cleaning instructions below). Used PPE should never come in contact with clean PPE or materials that store clean PPE. Masks, gloves, and a garbage can will also be stored at the entrance of the house.

Q: Where can I place my personal belongings when someone is under quarantine?

A: Employees must keep their cell phone and personal belongings in a plastic bag in the neutral area or in their car— no cell phones or devices are allowed in the quarantine zone since they cannot be properly sanitized.

Q: How do I clean my eye protection?

A: Always adhere to recommended manufacturer instructions for cleaning and disinfection. When cleaning a visitor's eye protection for reuse ensure that you are in proper PPE.

When manufacturer instructions for cleaning and disinfection are not available, consider the following:

Step 1	While wearing new gloves, carefully wipe the <i>inside</i> , followed by the <i>outside</i> of the eye protection using a clean cloth saturated with dish detergent or disinfectant wipe .
Step 2	Allow to dry. Note: If using dish detergent, rinse with water and remove excess water first before allowing to dry.
Step 3	Wipe the inside following the outside with alcohol.
Step 4	Allow to dry.
Step 5	Remove gloves and perform hand hygiene.

Source: Public Health Ontario

N95 RESPIRATORS

Q: What considerations do I need to know about N95 masks?

A: N95 masks are required when assisting with direct care and there is an aerosol generating medical procedure (AGMP) taking place. For example: CPAP.

Interim directions from Public Health Ontario as of December 16th, 2021 are now recommending the use of N95 masks when a person supported is confirmed or suspected of having COVID-19.

In the event of an outbreak at a support location where people supported are confirmed or suspected of having COVID-19 the preference for mask use is:

- Fit tested N95
- Non fit tested N95
- Well fitted medical mask

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Q: How Often Should N95 masks be changed during an outbreak?

A: Change the mask whenever it becomes visibly soiled or every 4 hours.

Some things to consider:

- If not, all people supported are suspected of having COVID-19 employees should, when possible be divided with only one employee working with those suspected of having COVID-19 and not interacting with those not suspected of COVID-19 to limit the risk of transmission.
- If working in a situation with a high likelihood of your N95 mask becoming soiled, it is possible to wear a medical mask on top of the N95 mask to extend its use.

Q: Is it possible to have a beard and safely use an N95 Mask?

A: For the N95 to properly conform to the face and allow for an airtight fit, people wearing an N95 need to be clean shaven.

Q: Where are N95 masks stored after use?

- Follow proper doffing guidelines
- If wanting to save the mask for sterilization:
 - If the N95 mask is not visibly soiled or structurally compromised (tears or rips) place all masks that are acceptable for reprocessing in a separate biohazard bag.
 - Biohazard bag should be in a touchless container (ex. Lid controlled by foot peddle)
 - Do not fill the biohazard bag over $\frac{3}{4}$ full.
 - If N95 masks are soiled and/or structurally compromised, they can be discarded with other used PPE.

Q: Is it safe to reuse N95 masks after they have been sterilized by our third-party?

A: The third-party sterilizer that has been secured by Christian Horizons has approval from Health Canada to sterilize N95 masks for reuse. Health Canada has also set standards that reprocessed masks must meet in order to ensure user safety.

Q: What do I need to know about cleaning and handling Biohazard Bags?

- Once the bag is $\frac{3}{4}$ full be sure to tie the top of the bag tight
- The bag can then be stored in a safe location such as a garage until it is picked up for sterilization
- Standard contact precaution PPE is to be worn when touching the bag, consider a gown if there is a chance the bag will encounter your clothing.
- Cleaning of the container the bag is stored in can be done with either soap and water if visibly soiled or with a disinfecting wipe/spray depending on your location's supplies.
- As per public health guidelines once the bag containing used N95 masks has been tied closed the bag is considered to be general waste so long as it is not opened.

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