



## HOMES AND SENIORS SERVICES

**POLICY & PROCEDURE NUMBER:** 3.17

**DEPARTMENT:** Administration

**SUBJECT:** N-95 Fit Testing

**APPROVAL DATE:** November 2019

**REVISION DATE:**

**Page 1 of 4**

---

### **PREAMBLE:**

The home has N-95 masks available for use when airborne transmission is possible; to limit the spread of small droplets between residents and staff.

### **POLICY:**

- N-95 masks are recommended by Health Canada and the CDC for workers in contact with infections transmitted via airborne droplets such as tuberculosis, pandemic influenza and SARS as they block at least 95% of small airborne particles.
- N-95 masks should be used if staff are at risk of being exposed to known substances such as a contagious resident (including those infected by SARS and the avian flu, or other health risks).
- Respirators are thicker masks that are designed to fit tightly to the face. They must be specially fitted for the wearer.
- The N95 mask has filter efficiency level of 95% or greater against particulate aerosols free of oil when tested.
- Public Health may recommend the use of an N-95 mask under other circumstances not listed above.
- The Ontario Health Plan for an influenza pandemic emphasized the need for healthcare workers to use N95 masks.

### **PURPOSE:**

To protect staff and prevent the transmission of small airborne particles between residents and staff.

### **Glossary of Terms:**

**Airborne transmission** - Spread of infectious organisms (germs) through the air. These germs can survive in the air for long periods of time and travel far from the infected person.

**Fit-testing**- A method for testing N-95 masks to determine whether the mask provides an acceptable fit to a wearer.

**N-95 mask**- A mask that filters particles of one-micron size or smaller. N-95 masks have a 95% filter efficiency and provides a tight facial seal with less than a 10% leak.



## HOMES AND SENIORS SERVICES

**POLICY & PROCEDURE NUMBER:** 3.17

**DEPARTMENT:** Administration

**SUBJECT:** N-95 Fit Testing

**APPROVAL DATE:** November 2019

**REVISION DATE:**

**Page 2 of 4**

---

### **PROCEDURE:**

1. Certified Fit Testers will be responsible for onsite qualitative “Fit testing”. A qualitative fit test relies on the user’s subjective response to taste, odor or irritation. Fit testing is the usual method for assuring proper fit in workplaces where respirators are used.
2. The home will offer fit testing yearly for new staff and any employee that has gained or lost a large amount of weight. Fit-testing is required every 2 years for all employees that have been fit-tested within the home on an ongoing basis.
3. Only those certified to perform fit-testing will be allowed to perform fit testing.
4. Those certified to conduct mask fit testing will check all equipment and supplies prior to beginning to fit test employees.
5. The supplies must include:
  - Fit Test Kit
  - Selection of respirators (masks) to be tested
  - Solution for cleaning/disinfecting hoods
  - Paper towels
  - Waterless hand sanitizer
  - Pens
  - Fit testing cards
  - Consent forms
  - Sign in sheet
6. Staff are required to sign a consent form and answer a brief questionnaire prior to fit-testing for N-95 masks.
7. Male employees should be clean shaven. Any facial hair, such as beards or long side burns may prevent the N-95 mask from fitting properly.
8. Staff should not have anything to eat or drink for 30 mins., prior to fit testing as this will interfere with the test.
9. N-95 masks do not provide protection from odors.



## HOMES AND SENIORS SERVICES

**POLICY & PROCEDURE NUMBER:** 3.17

**DEPARTMENT:** Administration

**SUBJECT:** N-95 Fit Testing

**APPROVAL DATE:** November 2019

**REVISION DATE:**

**Page 3 of 4**

---

10. N-95 masks should be removed and discarded as soon as the task is done and not allowed to dangle around the neck.
11. There is no set length of time the mask is effective however Health Canada recommends masks should be changed if they become wet, interfere with breathing, are damaged or visibly soiled.
12. Fit-testing will be conducted in an environment with adequate ventilation.
13. Employees will be required to breath normally, talk, turn head side to side and up and down.
14. If an employee passes the fit-testing procedure they will receive a card indicating the date and type of mask they were fit-tested for. If an employee fails the fit-testing procedure, they will be given an opportunity to select a different N-95 mask to try.
15. If an employee fails the fit-testing procedure using a second or third type of available N-95 mask; they will be sent for quantitative testing (if available) or will be re-assigned to a different area of the home where N-95 masks are not required.
16. N-95 masks should be stored in a clean, dry, non-contaminated area. The home will keep on hand various sizes and styles to meet the needs of the employees.

### How to apply an N-95 mask:

1. Users must follow instructions each time an N-95 mask is worn.
2. Perform hand hygiene (with soap and water or alcohol hand sanitizer).
3. Hold N-95 mask in hand with molded nose contour at fingertips, allowing the head straps to fall below the hand.
4. Place N-95 mask under chin with molded nose contour up. Raise top strap to top back of head. Pull shorter bottom strap over head, below ears, to around neck.
5. Adjust mask for comfortable fit. Mold the metal piece to your nose bridge to secure a tight seal.
6. Cover front of N-95 mask by cupping both hands. Inhale sharply. A negative pressure should be felt. If you feel leakage, you do not have a good seal, repeat above steps.



## HOMES AND SENIORS SERVICES

**POLICY & PROCEDURE NUMBER:** 3.17

**DEPARTMENT:** Administration

**SUBJECT:** N-95 Fit Testing

**APPROVAL DATE:** November 2019

**REVISION DATE:**

**Page 4 of 4**

- 
7. All masks should be replaced if they become soaked through, and disposed of after each use. They should never be re-used. Wash your hands after handling a mask.

How to remove an N-95 mask:

1. Perform hand hygiene
2. Grab elastic head straps and remove by bending forward to allow mask to fall away from face.
3. Discard in regular garbage.
4. Perform hand hygiene.

### REFERENCES:

Canadian Standards Association. (2004). <http://www.csa.ca/Default.asp?language=English>

Health Canada. (2003). Infection Control Precautions for Respiratory Infections Transmitted by Large Droplet and Contact

Occupational Health and Safety Administration. (2007). Guidance on preparing workplaces for an influenza pandemic <http://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3327pandemic.pdf>