



HOMES AND SENIORS SERVICES

POLICY & PROCEDURE NUMBER: 2.21

DEPARTMENT: *Infection Control*

SUBJECT: *Face Shields/Protective Eyewear,
Masks, Respirators*

APPROVAL DATE: April 2004 **REVISION DATE:** Dec. 2020, November 2022

REVIEW DATE: March 2017; Nov. 2018; December 2019

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PURPOSE:

To prevent the spread of droplet and/or airborne microorganisms between staff members and residents, and to protect both when in close contact during high risk activities for transmission and/or splashes.

A point of care risk assessment must be completed prior to contact with any resident and resident environment.

Masks (procedural or surgical):

- A mask is used by a health care provider (HCP), in addition to eye protection, to protect the mucous membranes of the nose and mouth when it is anticipated that a procedure or care activity is likely to generate splashes or sprays of blood, body fluids, secretions or excretions or within 2 meters of a coughing resident.
- A mask should be placed on a coughing resident when outside his/her room, to limit dissemination of infectious respiratory secretions.
- A mask should be worn for wound irrigation procedures if there is any risk of sprays or splashes.
- Mask selection is based on a point of care risk assessment that includes: type of procedure/care activity; length of procedure/care activity; and likelihood of contact with droplets/aerosols generated by the procedure of interaction.
- A mask should be worn if there is a risk of splashes or sprays from cleaning solutions or the cleaning procedure
- Criteria for selecting masks include: mask should securely cover the nose and mouth; mask should be substantial enough to prevent droplet penetration

N95 Respirators

- An N95 respirator is used to prevent inhalation of small particles that may contain infectious agents transmitted via the airborne route.
- Provides protection from small particle aerosols
- Better face seal prevents leakage around mask



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- Requires fit-testing, training and seal-checking prior to use. Fit testing must be updated at least every two years. Or as indicated by changes in the staff member's facial structure (e.g. gaining/losing weight, significant dental work). Refer to Administration policy H&S3.17 N-95 Fit Testing

PROCEDURE: Appropriate Mask Use

- Perform hand hygiene prior to putting on facial protection
- Select a mask appropriate to the activity (according to the Point of Care Risk Assessment)
- Mask is well-fitted and snugly covers the nose and under the chin without gaps Secure ties/loops or straps
- Mould metal piece to your nose bridge
- For respirators, perform a seal-check
- Change mask if it becomes wet or soiled (from the wearer's breathing or due to an external splash).
- Do not touch external surface of mask during use and disposal (and immediately perform hand hygiene if this occurs to prevent self-contamination)
- Remove mask correctly immediately after completion of task and discard into an appropriate waste receptacle and perform hand hygiene.
- Do not allow mask to hang/dangle around the neck
- Perform hand hygiene after removing the mask
- Do not re-use mask

Other important mask tips:

- Double masking is not advised
- Remove mask immediately after the activity for which it is used.
- Bend forward to allow the mask to fall away from the face
- Remove facial protection carefully by the straps or ties
- Do not dangle a mask around the neck when not in use.
- Do not position on head or around the neck for later use.
- Change the mask if breathing becomes difficult.
- Do not fold or store mask in a pocket



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Eye Protection

- Eye protection is used in addition to a mask to protect the mucous membrane of the eyes.
- Eye protection should be used whenever there is a potential for splashes or sprays to the eyes; or within 2 metres of a coughing resident.
- Eye protection should also be worn for wound irrigation procedures if there is any risk of sprays or splashes.
- Prescription eye glasses are NOT acceptable as eye protection; they may be worn underneath face shields and some types of protective eyewear.
- Eye protection includes: safety glasses, safety goggles, face shields, visors attached to masks
- Eye protection may be disposable or, if reusable, should be cleaned prior to re-use.
- Eye protection should be comfortable, not interfere with visual acuity and fit securely.
- Eye protection must provide a barrier to splashes from the side.
- Criteria for selection of eye protection depends on:
 - The type of activity and risk of exposure;
 - Other PPE used;
 - Personal vision needs;
 - The circumstance of exposure (e.g. droplet exposure vs. sprays/splashes of fluid).
 - Wear disposable eye protection or face shields only once to avoid self-contamination.
 - Ensure eye protection fits snug and no gaps to prevent droplets from entering

PROCEDURE: Appropriate Eye Protection Use

- Perform hand hygiene
- Put on gown and mask
- Put on appropriate eye protection and adjust to fit
- Face shield should fit over brow
- To remove: remove gloves, remove gown, perform hand hygiene
- Remove eye protection – arms of goggles and headband of face shields are considered to be “clean” and may be touched with the hands
- The front of goggles/face shield is considered to be contaminated
- Remove eye protection by handling ear loops, sides or back only
- Discard into waste receptacle or if reusable, clean goggles using disinfectant wipes



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- Personally owned eyewear may be cleaned by the individual after each use

See COVID-19 Protective Eyewear Guidance fact sheet from Southwestern Public Health:

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COVID-19 Protective Eyewear Guidance



In response to the evolving situation related to COVID-19 variants of concern (VOCs), the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development (MLTSD) have added additional personal protective equipment (PPE) requirements within the workplace. Workers are now required to wear both an appropriate face covering (preferably surgical/medical mask) AND eye protection at all times when the worker comes within 2 metres of another individual (indoors and outdoors). This will reduce the high-risk exposure should they come in contact with a case of COVID-19 while at the workplace. Eye protection would not be required if other controls were in place, such as keeping a 2 metres distance or having an impermeable barrier (i.e., plexiglass) between the workers.

Visit Ontario's regulations under the Reopening Act for specific requirements; [O. Reg. 82/20](#) (Lockdown), [O. Reg. 263/20](#) (Red-Control), and [O. Reg. 364/20](#) (Green-Prevent, Yellow-Protect, and Orange-Restrict).

Options	Considerations in Selection
Goggles 	Goggles with a snug fit around the eyes that cover the front and sides provide the most reliable eye protection from splashes, sprays, and respiratory droplets. There must also be a barrier at the top that extends towards the face, leaving no gaps between the goggles and the face.
Face Shield 	Face shields must cover the front and sides of the face to reduce the possibility of splashes, sprays, and respiratory droplets from going around the face shield. A face shield can be re-used by the SAME user if they are cleaned/disinfected after each use or until they become cracked, or visibility compromised.
Safety Glasses* 	*Safety glasses will not reduce the risk of exposure to respiratory droplets and are therefore not considered appropriate eye protection for infection control. They are not recommended for close contact, especially if the client is unmasked. Safety glasses allow gaps close to your eyes between the glasses and your face. Only safety glasses that have a cover over the top and around the edges, eliminating all gaps, are considered appropriate for infection control purposes.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ If you wear prescription glasses, use a face shield or goggles that fit snugly, with no gaps between the protective equipment and your face. ❖ Eyeglasses including sunglasses or prescription eyeglasses are NOT an accepted form of eye protection as they may not fully cover the eye area and do not provide coverage from the side. 	
<p>Additional Guidance for the Use of Protective Eyewear</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eye protection may not be one brand fits all. What protects one person, might not fit the same for others. Ensure your eyes are fully protected when choosing your eye protection. • Make sure that the eye protection fits properly and does not interfere with the proper fit of the worker's mask. • Eye protection must be cleaned before changing face covering, before breaks/meals, and at the end of shift. • Eye protection should be replaced when soiled or damaged. • All eye protection must be cleaned and disinfected between uses – see below. <p>Cleaning and Disinfecting Protective Eyewear</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Perform proper hand hygiene prior to removing eye protection. 2. To remove, reach behind the head or side of the head; do not touch the front of contaminated eye protection. 3. Carefully wipe the inside, followed by the outside of the face shield or goggles using a clean cloth saturated with neutral detergent solution or cleaner wipe. 4. Carefully wipe the outside of the protective eyewear with a healthcare-grade disinfecting wipe. Follow the appropriate contact time as described in the manufacturer's instructions. Wipe the outside with clean water or alcohol to remove residue. 5. Allow eye protection to dry by air or use a clean absorbent towel. When dry, store in a labelled paper or plastic bag to prevent contamination. 6. Perform proper hand hygiene. <p>Sources: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html Champlain Health Region Incident Command. (2020.10.30) Recommendations for PPE Use, including universal mask and eye protection during the COVID-19 Pandemic.</p>	



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Provincial Infectious Diseases Advisory Committee (PIDAC) Routine Practices and Additional Precautions in All Health Care Settings, 3rd edition, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, November 2012

Covid-19 Guidance Document for Long-Term Care Home in Ontario; Ministry of Health; retrieved November 3 2022 https://www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-guidance-document-long-term-care-homes-ontario#_Masking