

[Use of Cloth Face Masks to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19](#)

[DHEC](#) recommends wearing cloth face masks in public settings where physical distancing is difficult to maintain like grocery stores and pharmacies. Wearing a face mask can help to slow the spread of the virus and help people who may have the virus from transmitting it to others.

[How to Wear Cloth Face Masks](#) Remember to wash your hands before and after putting on a face mask. Don't touch your face or the mask after putting it on.

[Cloth face masks should:](#)

- fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face.
- be secured with ties or ear loops.
- include multiple layers of fabric.
- cover your nose and mouth and allow for breathing without restriction.
- be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape.

Continue to keep a 6 feet distance between yourself and others while wearing a mask. The mask is not a substitute for social distancing.

[Options to Improve your Face Mask](#)

- Wear a disposable mask under your cloth face mask for extra protection.
- When wearing two masks, tie knots in the ear loops of the disposable mask and tuck the cloth mask over the disposable mask to ensure a snug fit.
- Use a mask fitter or nylon mask cover.
- Use adhesive nose strips or masks with a nose wire to fit the mask snugly against your nose.
- Your best choice for a mask is one that fits you properly. Explore different options to find the mask that is the best fit for you.

[Remember:](#)

- Be careful not to touch your eyes, nose and mouth when removing your face mask.
- Cloth face masks should be washed regularly after each day worn.
- Clean a cloth face mask by adding it to your laundry in the washing machine and dry it in the dryer or air dry.

[Cloth face masks should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the cloth face mask without assistance.](#)

[References](#)

[DHEC \(Healthy People Healthy Communities\)](#)

[Visit \[scdhec.gov/COVID19\]\(https://www.scdhec.gov/COVID19\) for more information. CR-012688 3/21](https://www.scdhec.gov/COVID19)

What is the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)

The **Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)** is the codification of the general and permanent rules published in the **Federal Register** by the executive departments and agencies of the **Federal Government**. It is divided into **50 titles** that represent broad areas subject to **Federal regulation**.

About the Code of Federal Regulations

Online Availability: 1996 forward

Issued: Yearly

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- **Titles 1-16 are updated as of January 1st**
- **Titles 17-27 are updated as of April 1st**
- **Titles 28-41 are updated as of July 1st**
- **Titles 42-50 are updated as of October 1st**

Each title is divided into chapters, which usually bear the name of the issuing agency. Each chapter is further subdivided into parts that cover specific regulatory areas. Large parts may be subdivided into subparts. All parts are organized in sections, and most citations in the **CFR** are provided at the section level. A list of agencies and where they appear in the **CFR** may be found in **Appendix C of the U.S. Government Manual**.

The annual editions of the **CFR**, posted on GPO's Govinfo website as PDF files, are the official editions of the **CFR**, as sanctioned by the **Administrative Committee of the Federal Register (1 CFR part 8)**. The volumes of the **CFR** are jointly produced by the **National Archives and Records Administration's (NARA) Office of the Federal Register (OFR)**, and the **Government Publishing Office (GPO)** to provide the public with access to authentic government information.

CFR volumes are added to **Govinfo** concurrent with the release of the paper editions. When revised **CFR** volumes are added, the prior editions remain on **Govinfo** as a historical set. Some **CFR** records on **Govinfo** date back to **1996**; all titles are available from **1997** to the current year. Documents are available as **ASCII text** and **PDF** files.

NOTE: "[Reserved]" is a term used as a place holder within the **Code of Federal Regulations**. An agency uses "[Reserved]" to simply indicate that it may insert regulatory information into this location sometime in the future. Occasionally "[Reserved]" is used to indicate that a portion of the **CFR** was intentionally left empty and not accidentally dropped due to a printing or computer error.

Abbreviations

<u>APF</u>	assigned protection factor
<u>CFR</u>	Code of Federal Regulations
<u>DFM</u>	dust, fume, and mist
<u>DHHS</u>	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
<u>DM</u>	dust and mist
<u>DOP</u>	dioctyl phthalate
<u>HEPA filter</u>	high-efficiency particulate air filter
<u>HR</u>	hazard ratio
<u>IDLH</u>	immediately dangerous to life and health
<u>MMAD</u>	mass median aerodynamic diameter
<u>MSHA</u>	Mine Safety and Health Administration
<u>NaCl</u>	sodium chloride
<u>NIOSH</u>	National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health
<u>OSHA</u>	Occupational Safety and Health Administration
<u>PAPR</u>	powered air-purifying respirator
<u>PEL</u>	permissible exposure limit
<u>REL</u>	recommended exposure limit
<u>SCBA</u>	self-contained breathing apparatus
<u>TB</u>	tuberculosis

All respirators used in the workplace meet the standards of 42 CFR Part 84.

Safety data sheet

A **safety data sheet**, material safety data sheet, or product safety data sheet are documents that list information relating to occupational safety and health for the use of various substances and products. **SDSs** are a widely used system for cataloguing information on chemicals, chemical compounds, and chemical mixtures.

Below Content source: National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health

Select a type of respirator to see all approved models:

N95 – Filters at least **95%** of airborne particles. **Not resistant to oil.**

Surgical N95 – A NIOSH-approved **N95** respirator that has also been cleared by the **Food and Drug Administration (FDA)** as a **surgical mask**.

N99 – Filters at least **99%** of airborne particles. **Not resistant to oil.**

N100 – Filters at least **99.97%** of airborne particles. **Not resistant to oil.**

R95 – Filters at least **95%** of airborne particles. **Somewhat resistant to oil.**

P95 – Filters at least **95%** of airborne particles. **Strongly resistant to oil.**

P99 – Filters at least **99%** of airborne particles. **Strongly resistant to oil.**

P100 – Filters at least **99.97%** of airborne particles. **Strongly resistant to oil.**

The NIOSH Certified Equipment List

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (**NIOSH**), under authorization of the **Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970**, provides a testing, approval, and certification program assuring respirators used in the workplace meet the standards of **42 CFR Part 84**. **Since 1994**, **NIOSH** has maintained a searchable, online version of the **Certified Equipment List**.

<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/npptl/topics/respirators/cel/default.html>

Searching for a Product Using the Certified Equipment List

If you have a product that is not listed on the provided tables use the searchable certified equipment list.

Follow these steps to search for **NIOSH-approved disposable particulate respirators**:

In **For Protections Against section**, select **N95, N99, N100, R95, P95, or P100**.

In **Facepiece Type section**, select only **Filtering Facepiece**.

Select View Results.

If your product is not listed, you should scroll through the list of **“Private Label”** products.

Filtering Facepiece Respirator (FFR) Labels

Individual filtering facepiece respirators are required to have the following markings:

Name of approval holder/manufacturer business name, a registered trademark, or an easily understood abbreviation of the applicant/approval holder's business name as recognized by **NIOSH**. When applicable, the name of the entity to which the **FFR** has been private labeled by the approval holder may replace the approval holder business name, registered trademark, or abbreviation of the approval holder business name as recognized by **NIOSH**.

NIOSH in block letters or the **NIOSH logo**.

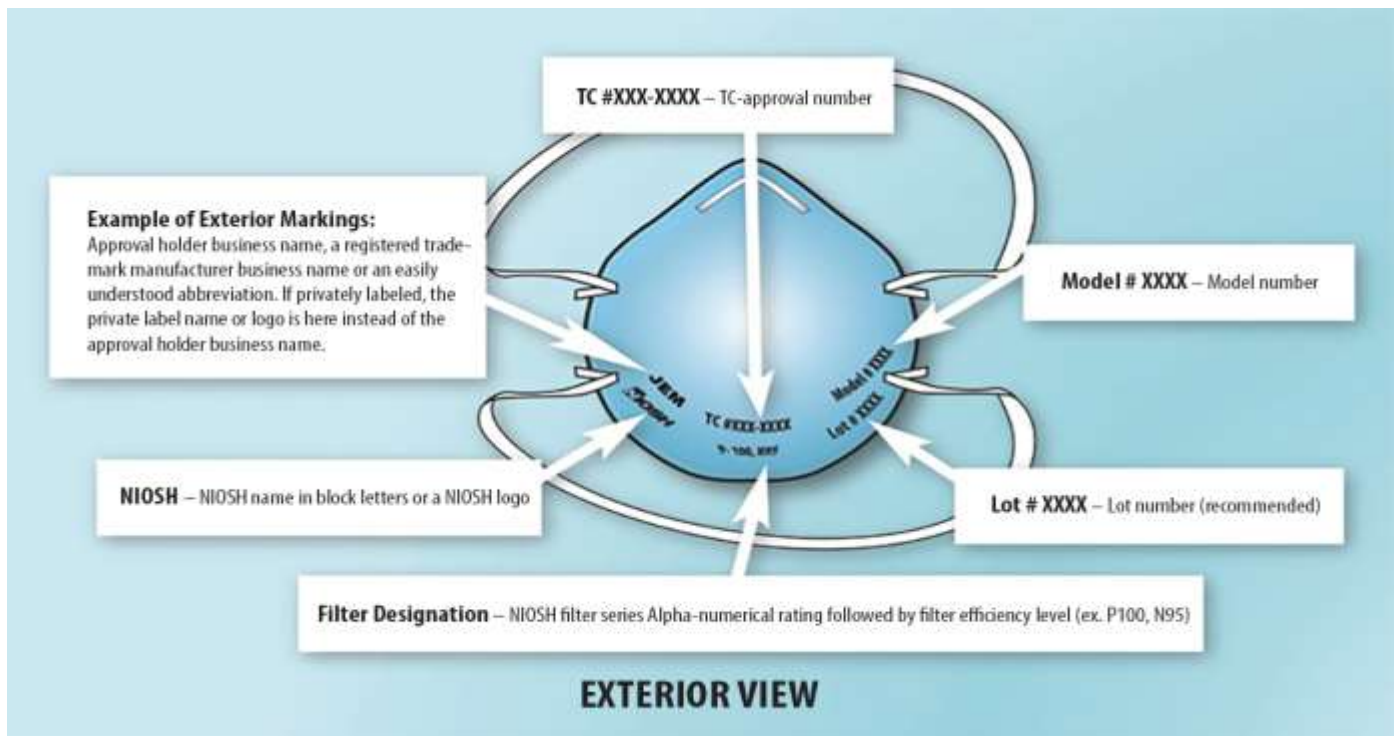
NIOSH Testing and Certification approval number, *e.g.*, **TC-84A-XXXX**.

NIOSH filter series and filter efficiency level, *e.g.*, **N95, N99, N100, R95, P95, P99, P100**.

Model number or part number: The approval holder's respirator model number or part number, represented by a series of numbers or alphanumeric markings, *e.g.*, **8577 or 8577A**.

NIOSH recommends the lot number and/or date of manufacture also be included, however, this is not required.

Sample of a generic filtering facepiece respirator with appropriate markings.



Filtering facepiece respirators (FFR's) that are private labeled are required to have the following statement on the packaging as a special S caution and limitation statement identified on the full label and located in the respirator user instructions:

- **Marketed by xxxxxx (the private label company name).**
- **Produced by xxxxxx (the approval holder company name).**

This private label related statement does not need to appear on the exterior surface of the respirator as part of the required name marking.

The selection of *N*-, *R*-, and *P*-series filters depends on the presence or absence of oil particles, as follows:

If no oil particles are present in the work environment, use a filter of any series (*i.e., N-, R-, or P-series*).

If oil particles (*e.g., lubricants, cutting fluids, glycerine, etc.*) are present, use an *R*- or *P*-series filter. Note: *N*-series filters cannot be used if oil particles are present.

If oil particles are present and the filter is to be used for more than one work shift, use only a *P*-series filter.

Note: To help you remember the filter series, use the following guide:

N for Not resistant to oil,

R for Resistant to oil

P for oil Proof

Selection of filter efficiency (*i.e., 95%, 99%, or 99.97%*) depends on how much filter leakage can be accepted. Higher filter efficiency means lower filter leakage.

The choice of facepiece depends on the level of protection needed—that is, the **assigned protection factor (APF)** needed.

***Code of Federal Regulations. See CFR in references.**

Filter efficiency is the stated percentage of particles removed from the air.

Filter efficiency degradation is defined as a lowering of filter efficiency or a reduction in the ability of the filter to remove particles as a result of workplace exposure.



[Photo above from Honeywell N95 Masks Explained](https://www.honeywell.com/us/en/news/2020/03/n95-masks-explained)
<https://www.honeywell.com/us/en/news/2020/03/n95-masks-explained>

N: This is a **Respirator Rating Letter Class**. It stands for “**Non-Oil**” meaning that if no oil-based particulates are present, then you can use the mask in the work environment. Other masks ratings are **R (resistant to oil for 8 hours)** and **P (oil proof)**.

95: Masks ending in a **95**, have a **95** percent efficiency. **Masks ending in a 99 have a 99 percent efficiency**. Masks ending in **100 are 99.97 percent** efficient and that is the same as a HEPA quality filter.

.3 microns: The masks filter out contaminants like **dusts, mists** and **fumes**. The **minimum size of .3 microns** of particulates and large droplets won't pass through the barrier, according to the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC.)**

Material: The filtration material on the mask is an electrostatic non-woven polypropylene fiber.

Valve: Some disposable **N95 masks** come with an **optional exhalation valve**. “**The presence of an exhalation valve reduces exhalation resistance**, which makes it easier to breathe (**exhale,**)” according to the **CDC**.

For information on how to protect yourself during the **COVID-19 outbreak**, contact your local health care professionals, visit the **CDC** and **World Health Organization (WHO)**.

Learn more about our commitment to our customers during the coronavirus outbreak.

Information above from Honeywell N95 Masks Explained
<https://www.honeywell.com/us/en/news/2020/03/n95-masks-explained>

N95 Masks made from Electrostatic Nonwoven Polypropylene Fibers

EXPLANATION OF AN OIL-BASED PARTICLE?

Oil-based products (EX. some solvents, or pesticides, that are sprayed to cover a surface the oil particles become airborne) The airborne oil particles started before are oil-based particles. You should consult the safety data sheet (SDS) about the product or products you are using the safety data sheet (SDS) should explain and make it clear.

SHOULD I USE AN N95 OR R95 (OR P95)?

The easiest and simplest thing to do is use an **R95** you can use this even if there are no oil-based particles present. The reason behind this is that the **R95** does everything the **N95** does in keeping you safe and plus it protects against oil-based particles. Please be aware that **R95** respirators are more expensive.

You will find that mentioned the **P95** designation. Like the **R95**, the **P95** also manages oil-based particulates with the same **95%** level of efficiency rating. The benefit is that it protects for **40 hour service** life the **R95** protects **8 hours** of service life. The **P95** is more expensive normally then both the **N95** and **R95**.

THE P100 OR N100 RATING?

Lets now talk about the P100 and N100 Ratings

What we just explained above about the **N95** and **R95** also still applies to the "**P**" or "**N**" designations rating. The **P100** protects the wearer against oily particles. The "**best**" disposable respirator you can purchase would be a **P100**. The **N100** does not protect against oily particles that is the difference. The difference between **N95**, **R95** and **P100** or **N100** is that these disposable respirators have a filtration efficiency of at least **99.9%** this means they block out finer particles.

Please NOTE: There is a great deal of interest about coronavirus or **COVID-19** and the **N95** respirators. We are asked whether an **R95** or **P95** can be used. As explained above, **R95's**, **P95's**, along with **P100's** works in the same way that an **N95** does as well as offering protection from oil-based particles.

Face covering made by cloth

How to Wear Cloth Face Coverings

- Cloth face coverings should cover your nose and mouth in the community setting.
- This is to protect people around you if you are infected but do not have symptoms.
- Masks should fit snugly but comfortably against the side of your face
- Be secured with ties or ear loops
- Include multiple layers of fabric
- Allow for breathing without restriction
- Washing machines should suffice in washing a cloth face mask properly and machine dry without damage or change to shape. They should be routinely washed depending on the frequency of use.
- Do not touch your eyes, nose, and mouth when removing your cloth face covering and make sure you wash your hand immediately after removing.
- Cloth face masks should not be placed on children underage of **2 years** or on anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious, disabled or otherwise unable to remove the cloth face covering without assistance.
- The cloth face masks recommended are not surgical masks or **N95 respirators**. Those are critical supplies that must continue to be reserved for healthcare workers and other medical first responders as recommended by current **CDC Guidance**.

Wear your face covering correctly

- Wash your hands before putting on your face covering
- Put it over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin
- Try to fit it snugly against the side of your face
- Make sure you can breathe easily
- Do not place a mask on a child younger than **2**
- Keep the covering on your face the entire time you are in public. Do not put the covering around your neck or up around your forehead
- Don't touch your face covering and if you do, clean your hands

Take off your face covering carefully when your home

- Untie the strings behind your head or stretch the ear loops
- Handle only by the ear loops or ties
- Fold outside corners together
- Place covering in the washing machine or throw paper masks away.
- Wash your hands with soap and water

From the CDC

N95 Masks

To wear N95 right you need to do one of two types of fit tests: Qualitative or Quantitative.

Quantitative is the most common form of fit testing, and it measures your ability to wear an N95 respirator.

Qualitative fit testing is a pass/fail test method that uses your sense of taste or smell, or your reaction to an irritant in order to detect leakage into the respirator facepiece. Qualitative fit testing does not measure the actual amount of leakage. Whether the respirator passes or fails the test is based simply on you detecting leakage of the test substance into your facepiece. There are four qualitative fit test methods accepted by OSHA:

- [Isoamyl acetate](#), which smells like bananas.
- [Saccharin](#), which leaves a sweet taste in your mouth.
- [Bitrex](#), which leaves a bitter taste in your mouth; and
- [Irritant smoke](#), which can cause coughing.

[Qualitative](#) fit testing is normally used for half-mask respirators -those that just cover your mouth and nose. Half-mask respirators can be filtering facepiece respirators - often called "**N95s**" - as well as elastomeric respirators.

[Quantitative](#) fit testing uses a machine to measure the actual amount of leakage into the facepiece and does not rely upon your sense of taste, smell, or irritation in order to detect leakage. The respirators used during this type of fit testing will have a probe attached to the face piece that will be connected to the machine by a hose. There are three quantitative fit test methods accepted by **OSHA**:

- [Generated aerosol](#).
- [Ambient aerosol; and](#)
- [Controlled Negative Pressure](#).

Quantitative fit testing can be used for any type of tight-fitting respirator and is the most common form of fit testing, and it measures your ability to wear an **N95 respirator**.

N95 respirators come in all different sizes and shapes, and fit testing helps determines the best mask for your face.

An approved filtering facepiece, such as an **N95/P95/N100 particulate respirator**, always will have a **NIOSH** stamp on it.

Approved respirators must be used if a fit test is performed.

Fit testing is not required for either product if it is voluntary use.

N95 respirators come in different sizes.

The sizing differs with each respirator model.

Some of the sizing options include small, small/medium, medium, medium/large, and large.

Below are a sample of the n95 mask sizes

•1500 N95 Surgical Mask & Particulate Respirator. • Available in five (5) color coded sizes. 1510 N95. Extra Small. 20

Masks per Box

•• **Fluid resistant - 160mm Hg. 1512 N95. Medium. 160 Masks per Case. ...**

•**3200N95 Surgical Mask & Particulate Respirator. • Available in *three (3) color coded sizes. 3211N95. Small.***

Reuse of N95

One important addition to your respiratory protection plan should be reuse of **N95 respirators** during a shortage. The **OSHA** directive indicates that a respirator can be reused as long as it "maintains its structural and functional integrity and the filter material is not physically damaged or soiled."

There are video about the respirator fit testing requirements for any worker who is required to use a tight-fitting respirator.

The federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration - also called "**OSHA**"- and **State OSHA Agencies** require employers to **fit test workers** who must wear these respirators on the job.

There is a video from **OSHA** that provides a brief overview and general information about fit testing requirements under the **Federal OSHA or State OSHA Respiratory Protection Standards**.

This video can be a part of the **OSHA-required** respiratory protection training, which includes many topics, like how to put on and take off a respirator and how to use, clean, and maintain your respirator.

Your employer must also provide you with worksite-specific training.

While the -video discusses some of the employer's responsibilities under OSHA's respiratory protection fit testing requirements, it is important to remember that using a respirator that fits you properly protects your health and safety.

A respirator can't protect you if it doesn't fit your face. It's that simple. Certain respirators, known as tight-fitting respirators, must form a tight seal with your face or neck to work properly. If your respirator doesn't fit your face properly, contaminated air can leak into your respirator facepiece, and you could breathe in hazardous substances. So before you wear a tight-fitting respirator at work, your employer must be sure that your respirator fits you. Your employer does this by performing a fit test on you while you wear the same make, model, and size of respirator that you will be using on the job. That way, you know that your respirator fits you properly and can protect you, as long as you use it correctly.

In addition, before you use a respirator or are fit-tested, your employer must ensure that you are medically able to wear it.

So what is a fit test? A "fit test" tests the seal between the respirator's facepiece and your face. It takes about fifteen to twenty minutes to complete and is performed at least annually. After passing a fit test with a respirator, you must use the exact same make, model, style, and size respirator on the job.

A fit test should not be confused with a user seal check. A user seal check is a quick check performed by the wearer each time the respirator is put on. It determines if the respirator is properly seated to the face or needs to be readjusted.

Many workers need to wear prescription glasses or personal protective equipment, such as safety goggles or earmuffs, while performing a job. If you fall into this category, then you must wear these items during the fit test to be sure they don't interfere with the respirator's fit.

You must be fit tested before you use a respirator in the workplace, and you must be retested at least every 12 months to make sure that the respirator you use still fits you. You must be fit tested with the specific make, model, style, and size of respirator that you will be using.

Not everyone can get a good fit with one specific respirator. If the respirator fails the fit test, then another **make, model, style, or size** must be tried until one is found that fits you properly. Therefore, your employer needs to provide you with a reasonable selection of sizes and models to choose from. When you've completed the fit testing process, it's very important that you know which make, model, style, and size respirator fits your face properly, and when and where you'll need to wear it for protection.

Also, **the fit of your respirator** must be retested whenever you have a change in your physical condition that could **affect the fit of your respirator**. **Such changes could include:**

- **large weight gain or loss.**
- **major dental work (such as new dentures).**
- **facial surgery that may have changed the shape of your face; or**
- **significant scarring in the area of the seal.**

Any of these changes could affect the ability of your respirator to properly seal to your face, which could allow contaminated air to leak into your respirator facepiece.

If you find that the fit of your respirator becomes unacceptable, you must be allowed to select a different type of respirator and be retested. The selection may include a **new make, model, style, or size of respirator**.

Facial hair, like a beard or mustache, can affect your respirator's ability to protect you. Anything that comes between your face and the respirator's seal or gets into the respirator's valves can allow contaminated air to leak into the respirator facepiece and you will not be protected. For example, if you have long hair, make sure it doesn't get between the respirator seal and your face because this can allow contaminated air to leak into the respirator.

Fit testing can be done by your employer or an outside party, including a union, an apprenticeship program, a contractor's association, or a past employer. Your current employer is permitted to accept fit testing you have received from an outside party (such as a former employer) within the last **12 months**, as long as you use the same respirator make, model, style, and size at your new worksite. This is known as "fit testing portability."

While recent fit testing can follow you from job to job, it is still the current employer's responsibility to ensure that the fit testing and recordkeeping requirements of **OSHA's respiratory protection** standard have been met before you use a respirator for protection against hazardous exposures at work.

Sometimes workers own their own respirators and bring them to a job where respiratory protection is required. If your employer allows you to use your own personal respirator for protection, then your employer still has to comply with all of the requirements of the **OSHA standard**. For example, your employer must still ensure that:

- **your respirator is appropriate for the hazards you face.**
- **your respirator is properly cleaned, maintained, and stored; and**
- **the proper schedule for replacing cartridges and filters is followed.**

Keep in mind, however, that while your employer may allow you to use your own respirator, your employer cannot require you to use your own respirator.

This video has provided you with a brief overview of **OSHA's fit testing requirements**. There are many other things that you must know and do before you can safely use a respirator in a hazardous work environment. While this video may be a part of your respiratory protection training, your employer must also provide you with additional training on respirators, including worksite-specific training.

Remember, if you don't know if a respirator is needed for the task you will be doing, or if you are unsure about how to properly use a respirator or which filter or cartridge to use, talk to your supervisor before entering the hazardous area.

For more information about respirator use in your workplace, refer to these **OSHA** and **NIOSH websites**. You will find **OSHA's respiratory protection standard**, additional respirator training videos, and other guidance material to help you work safely.

References

DHEC (Healthy People Healthy Communities)

Visit: scdhec.gov/COVID19 for more information. CR-012688 3/21

Major Safety

<https://www.majorsafety.com/blogs/news/whats-the-difference-between-an-n95-and-r95-respirator>

Content source: National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health

https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/npptl/topics/respirators/disp_part/default.html

NIOSH Guide to the Selection and Use of Particulate Respirators

<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/96-101>

Honeywell N95 Masks Explained

<https://www.honeywell.com/us/en/news/2020/03/n95-masks-explained>

About the Code of Federal Regulations

[https://www.archives.gov/federal-register/cfr/about.html#:~:text=The%20Code%20of%20Federal%20Regulations%20\(CFR\)%20is%20the%20codification%20of,areas%20subject%20to%20Federal%20regulation.](https://www.archives.gov/federal-register/cfr/about.html#:~:text=The%20Code%20of%20Federal%20Regulations%20(CFR)%20is%20the%20codification%20of,areas%20subject%20to%20Federal%20regulation.)

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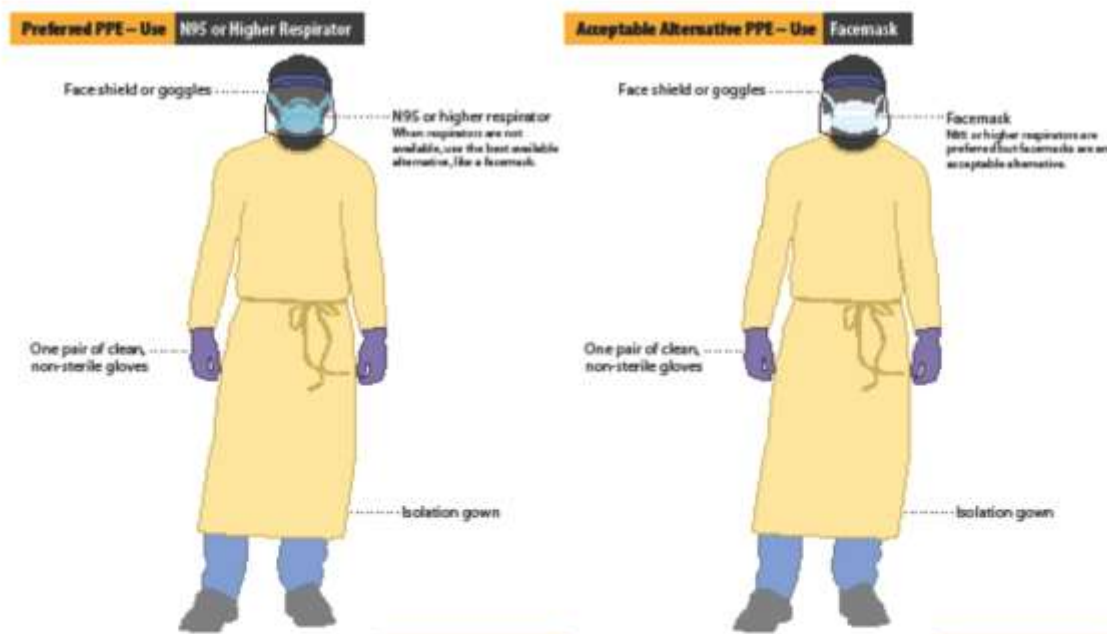
Use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) When Caring for Patients with Confirmed or Suspected COVID-19

Before caring for patients with confirmed or suspected COVID-19, healthcare personnel (HCP) must:

- Receive comprehensive training on when and what PPE is necessary, how to don (put on) and doff (take off) PPE, limitations of PPE, and proper care, maintenance, and disposal of PPE.
- Demonstrate competency in performing appropriate infection control practices and procedures.

Remember:

- PPE must be donned correctly before entering the patient area (e.g., isolation room, unit if cohorting).
- PPE must remain in place and be worn correctly for the duration of work in potentially contaminated areas. PPE should not be adjusted (e.g., retying gown, adjusting respirator/facemask) during patient care.
- PPE must be removed slowly and deliberately in a sequence that prevents self-contamination. A step-by-step process should be developed and used during training and patient care.



11/17/2020 10:00:00 AM

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus

COVID-19

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How to Wear Cloth Face Masks

Remember to wash your hands before and after putting on a face mask. Don't touch your face or the mask after putting it on.

Cloth face masks should:

- fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face.
- be secured with ties or ear loops.
- include multiple layers of fabric.
- cover your nose and mouth and allow for breathing without restriction.
- be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape.

Continue to keep a 6 feet distance between yourself and others while wearing a mask. The mask is not a substitute for social distancing.



Options to Improve your Face Mask

- Wear a disposable mask under your cloth face mask for extra protection.
- When wearing two masks, tie knots in the ear loops of the disposable mask and tuck the cloth mask over the disposable mask to ensure a snug fit.
- Use a mask fitter or nylon mask cover.
- Use adhesive nose strips or masks with a nose wire to fit the mask snugly against your nose.
- Your best choice for a mask is one that fits you properly. Explore different options to find the mask that is the best fit for you.

Remember:

- Be careful not to touch your eyes, nose and mouth when removing your face mask.
- Cloth face masks should be washed regularly after each day worn.
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Cloth face masks should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the cloth face mask without assistance.



Visit [scdhec.gov/COVID19](https://www.scdhec.gov/COVID19) for more information.

20-01288 3/21

Use of Cloth Face Coverings to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19

How to Wear Cloth Face Coverings

Cloth face coverings should—

- fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face
- be secured with ties or ear loops
- include multiple layers of fabric
- allow for breathing without restriction
- be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape

CDC on Homemade Cloth Face Coverings

CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies), **especially** in areas of significant community-based transmission.

CDC also advises the use of simple cloth face coverings to slow the spread of the virus and help people who may have the virus and do not know it from transmitting it to others. Cloth face coverings fashioned from household items or made at home from common materials at low cost can be used as an additional, voluntary public health measure.

Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the cloth face covering without assistance.

The cloth face coverings recommended are not surgical masks or N-95 respirators. Those are critical supplies that must continue to be reserved for healthcare workers and other medical first responders, as recommended by current CDC guidance.

Should cloth face coverings be washed or otherwise cleaned regularly? How regularly?

Yes. They should be routinely washed depending on the frequency of use.

How does one safely sterilize/clean a cloth face covering?

A washing machine should suffice in properly washing a cloth face covering.

How does one safely remove a used cloth face covering?

Individuals should be careful not to touch their eyes, nose, and mouth when removing their cloth face covering and wash hands immediately after removing.



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How should I care for a cloth face covering?

It's a good idea to wash your cloth face covering frequently, ideally every day. Have a bag or container to store cloth face coverings until they can be laundered with detergent and hot water and dried on a hot cycle. Bleach is not needed as it may damage and break down the fibers of the cloth used in the mask. If you must re-wear your cloth face covering before washing, wash your hands immediately after putting it back on and avoid touching your face.

Discard cloth face coverings that:

- No longer cover the nose and mouth
- Have stretched out or damaged ties or straps
- Cannot stay on the face
- Have holes or tears in the fabric



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