



PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

FOR MANAGERS IN THE CORE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION OF CANADA'S FEDERAL PUBLIC SERVICE.

STAY INFORMED

- Engage your departmental Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) committee for further information and guidance.
- Employees are encouraged to discuss their questions about **PPE** with their manager.

GENERAL GUIDANCE

- COVID-19** recovery activities will be gradual and phased in order to allow for **physical distancing**; note that a return to full building/worksite occupancy will not be possible at this time.
- Public health guidance reinforces that the best protection is personal hygiene measures (e.g., **hand washing** and coughing/sneezing into elbow) and physical distancing (see Tip Sheet #1). When physical distancing is not possible, the next layers of protection involve implementation of physical barriers (see Tip Sheet #2) and modifications to work flow/processes (see Tip Sheet #3).
- At this time, **there is no need for the general use of PPE** for **COVID-19**. The recommendations regarding PPE may be modified as the situation in Canada evolves.
- PPE such as medical-type masks (surgical or procedure) and medical-grade gloves should be used on the basis of risk assessments of specific environments and risk exposure, and in compliance with public health and OHS committee guidance for COVID-19.
- Gloves are not recommended when handling documents or providing services. The improper use of gloves can provide a false sense of security and increase the risk of infection. Regular hand hygiene and not touching the eyes, nose, and mouth are recommended at all times.
- PPE guidance has been developed for specific workplaces (e.g., **Points of Entry** and **Missions Abroad**). Departments and Agencies, with the participation of the OHS policy committee, should establish a program for the provision of PPE, based on guidance developed by the Public Service Occupational Health Program. Other federal organizations have developed specific guidance based on a risk assessment of their specific situations (e.g., Correctional Services Canada).
- The overuse or inappropriate use of PPE can lead to challenges with PPE availability for health care professionals.
- Please note that **non-medical masks** and cloth face coverings are not PPE. They are an additional measure that people can take to protect others around them (see Tip Sheets #1 and #3).

ASSESSMENT OF REQUIREMENTS

- There may be other hazardous exposures in a work environment, unrelated to **COVID-19**, that require **PPE** (e.g., chemical exposures). Please follow existing OHS guidance and procedures in those cases. If PPE is required at the workplace:
 - ▶ Gloves – Establish employee practices for suitable disposal or change of gloves when soiled. It is also important to consider other hazards that may be present in the workplace before introducing gloves. In some cases, gloves can be an 'entanglement' hazard and should not be worn.
 - ▶ Goggles, safety glasses or face shields – Should be assigned to employees and not shared, but can be reused regularly if kept clean. Ensure that employees' eye protection use does not result in them touching their faces more often because of heat or discomfort.
- Provide employees with the **PPE** they need to safely use cleaning products, taking into account that a range of sizes may be required based on anatomical differences (e.g., between women and men).

TRAINING

- In the limited number of cases where **PPE** is recommended for COVID-19, train employees on how to work with and care for PPE, including proper **donning and doffing techniques**, and understanding the PPE's limitations.

Public Health Information: canada.ca/coronavirus

Information for federal public service employees www.canada.ca/en/government/publicservice/covid-19.html

Risk-informed Decision-making Guide for Workplaces www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/guidance-documents/risk-informed-decision-making-workplaces-businesses-covid-19-pandemic.html

Mental Health and COVID-19 for Public Servants: www.canada.ca/en/government/publicservice/covid-19/protect-mental-health.html

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