

PPE Guidance for First Responders

This guidance applies to all first responders who anticipate close contact with persons with confirmed or possible COVID-19 in the course of their work.

Public Health



Recommended PPE (Personal Protective Equipment):

First Responders who will care for a patient with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 should follow standard and transmission based precautions and use the following recommended PPE:

- **N-95 or higher level respirator**
 - If a respirator is not available, use a facemask
 - N95 respirators should be used instead of a facemask when performing or present for an aerosol-generating procedure
- **Eye protection** (i.e., goggles or disposable face shield that fully covers the front and sides of the face)
 - Personal eyeglasses and contact lenses are NOT considered adequate eye protection
- **A single pair of disposable patient examination gloves**
 - Change gloves if they become torn or heavily contaminated
- **Isolation gown**
 - If there are shortages, gowns should be prioritized for aerosol-generating procedures, care activities where splashes and sprays are anticipated, and high-contact patient care activities that provide opportunities for transfer of pathogens to the hands and clothing of EMS clinicians (e.g., moving patient)

N-95 Information:

- Before anyone can use a N-95 Respirator, they **MUST** be fit-tested and medically cleared
- N-95 respirators are tight-fitting respirators that filter out at least 95% of particles in the air
 - When properly fitted and worn N-95 respirators reduce the wearer's exposure to airborne particles
- **Achieving an adequate seal to the face is essential.**
 - Workers must conduct a *user seal check* each time the respirator is used.

For more information:

CDC Guidance for 1st Responders: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-for-ems.html>

CDC How to Don & Doff PPE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/using-ppe.html>

How to Perform a User Seal Check: <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2018-130/pdfs/2018-130.pdf?id=10.26616/NIOSH PUB2018130>

Understanding the Difference between a Surgical Mask and N-95 Respirator:

<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/npptl/pdfs/UnderstandDifferenceInfographic-508.pdf>

Three Key Factors Required for a Respirator to be Effective:

<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/npptl/pdfs/KeyFactorsRequiredResp01042018-508.pdf>