



PERSONNEL AND  
READINESS

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MEMORANDUM FOR CHIEF MANAGEMENT OFFICER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF  
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SUBJECT: Force Health Protection Guidance (Supplement 3) – Department of Defense  
Guidance for the Use of Personal Protective Equipment and Non-Pharmaceutical  
Interventions during the Coronavirus Disease 2019 Outbreak

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) continues to spread throughout the world. The Department remains focused on mission assurance and Force Health Protection. Well-informed and proper use of personal protective equipment (PPE) and other non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPI) reduces risk to our personnel and conserves scarce PPE resources. The following recommendations shall be used to prioritize the use of PPE and provide risk reduction interventions that can be implemented at all levels. This memorandum revises and supplements requirements in DoD Instruction 6200.03, "Public Health Emergency Management Within the DoD," March 28, 2019, with respect to COVID-19.

COVID-19 Priority PPE items:

- Respirators, including N95 filtering facepiece devices. These items are not recommended for use outside of healthcare settings. N95 devices must be fit-tested on the user in order to provide optimal prevention, and should be changed between patients.
- Surgical masks and other facemasks. These items are intended to reduce the spread of viruses when worn by those known or suspected to be infected. Wearing a surgical mask does not provide respiratory protection to individuals who are not infected.
- Gloves, gowns, eye protection. These items should be used in the healthcare setting or for the care of patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19. Between patient encounters, non-disposable eye protection must be cleaned and disinfected, gloves and gowns must be changed, and hands must be washed before and after PPE use.

Non-pharmaceutical Interventions:

PPE is one tool in a larger system of controls to limit transmission of infection. The following interventions should be consistently reinforced and practiced with and without PPE use.

- Frequent hand sanitation. This should be done using soap and water, or use of hand sanitizer when soap and water are not available.
- Properly covering coughs and sneezes.
- Social distancing, to include staying home when sick, reduction of large public gatherings, and use of telecommunications in place of face-to-face interactions.
- Frequent cleaning and disinfection of common touch points, including gym equipment, keyboards, laptops, door handles, etc.
- Further information is at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/preparing-individuals-communities.html>).

The matrix below provides guidance for prioritizing use of PPE

Priority	Category	Examples	Measures
1	COVID-19 Patients or PUI	Patient or person under investigation (PUI) self-care activities	Surgical Masks Hand Sanitizer
2	Healthcare Delivery	Military Treatment Facility Patient Care Requirements Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Ancillary Healthcare Providers (e.g., Dental, Veterinary)	N95 Respirators Surgical Masks Eye Protection Gowns Gloves Hand Sanitizer
3	Discrete COVID-19 Support Missions	COVID-19 Patient or PUI Transport Quarantine (consistent with DoDI 6200.03) and PUI Support	N95 Respirators Surgical Masks Eye Protection Gloves Hand Sanitizer
4	Increased Risk in performance of official duties	Commanders, in consultation with their Public Health Emergency Officer, may include special public-facing duties and incorporate CDC considerations for other special groups	Surgical Masks Gloves Hand Sanitizer NPI Measures
5	Non-medical considerations impacting mission	Host Nation Guidance/Expectations Public Relations	Surgical Masks* Hand Sanitizer NPI Measures
6	Community Preparedness Requirements	Health Education Risk mitigation for higher-risk cohorts	Hand Sanitizer NPI Measures

\*CDC does not currently recommend the general public use facemasks. If commanders direct PPE use by personnel not medically indicated or those without increased exposure risk to the virus that warrant use based on workplace hazard assessments, they should assess and control for hazards from such PPE use and recognize that PPE availability may be limited. In cases of limited availability, priority of these PPE items will go to higher priority categories of persons in this matrix who require these items based on health and safety determinations.

This guidance is consistent with CDC COVID-19 guidance which should be checked regularly at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>. My point of contact for this guidance is COL Jennifer Kishimori, who may be reached at (703) 681-8179 or [jennifer.m.kishimori.mil@mail.mil](mailto:jennifer.m.kishimori.mil@mail.mil).



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