

Personal Protective Equipment guidance for inpatient, residential and group living facilities

Recently, the Division of Mental Health and Addiction has received several questions regarding the use of Personal Protective Equipment in inpatient, residential or group-living settings. We have worked with the Indiana State Department of Health to create recommendation guidelines to help offer direction and clarity for our agencies.

This document will reference two types of masks: the N95, and cloth or hospital-grade surgical masks.

Our guidance follows current practice occurring within hospital systems. In hospital settings, N95 masks are reserved for healthcare staff who are working with patients who we know, or highly suspect, have COVID-19. These masks are also reserved for medical procedures that generate aerosol particles (like intubation).

For inpatient, residential, or group-living settings, we recommend the use of hospital-grade surgical masks. If you do not have access to a hospital-grade surgical mask, a cloth mask may be used instead. Due to the severe shortage of N95 masks, we recommend that you use them only if a staff person is in the isolation space of a person who is positive, or suspected to be positive for COVID-19.

In the case that a staff will be in the isolation space of a person who is positive for COVID-19, or a suspected positive, the staff should be wearing an N95 mask (if the agency does not have N95 masks, please utilize surgical mask), a gown, protective eyewear and gloves. Guidance around extended use and reuse can be found [by clicking here](#).

There is a national shortage of PPE, specifically for N95 masks. Therefore, we are not able to know the availability of these items in the future. Of course, if they are available, we will advocate for our programs to have access increased supply of PPE according to priority of population served. In the meantime, it is critical that we conserve what we have for potential future surges in COVID-19+ cases.

As a reminder, there are daily broadcasts at 2:30 p.m. that provide updates on the status of COVID-19, state initiatives, and PPE in the state of Indiana.

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Center for Disease Control guidelines around cloth masks can be found [by clicking here](#).

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