

PPE Guidance Update | December 23, 2021

To all our clinical and support staff:

Throughout the COVID crisis, our System has placed a priority on protecting the health and safety of our staff. In light of the recent rapid rise in COVID infections in our community and patients, we are continuing to reevaluate our policies to ensure you remain protected. The Corporate Supply Chain continues to strive to source the best quality PPE to protect you and your team members in all our working environments across our system.

Underlying patient conditions may justify the use of respirators in areas where they would normally not be indicated based on the level of clinical contact. We respect your ability to assess the risk of your environment, and to use respirators responsibly while remaining mindful of the overall need of PPE for our caregivers across the System. Please use judiciously and according to our policy, which is formed in conjunction with our Infection Prevention and Occupational Health leaders.

IMPORTANT: PLEASE DO NOT STOCKPILE. Stockpiling and hoarding creates inequity in supply by interfering with our ability to appropriately distribute and assess need.

[YNNHS PPE Resource Page](#)—General YNHHS web page where all COVID PPE policies, SOPs, and SBARs are placed. Save this page to your browser.

[YNHHS PPE Policy](#) – Overall policy providing guidance across our System for staff in various scenarios. Created by COVID PPE Task Force in conjunction with Infection Prevention and Occupational Health.

Eye Protection:

Eye protection is an important part of our COVID-protective PPE, and should be used in all patient-facing contact regardless of COVID status. Face shields and goggles are recommended. Safety glasses are not considered to be sufficiently protective to be part of our COVID PPE policy.

N95 Respirators:

The N95 respirator is our mainstay for respiratory protection for infectious airborne diseases like COVID. For maximal protection, you must use the N95 to which you were fit tested (contact Occupational Health if you are unsure). To further clarify, there is no “universal” N95—the folded N95 respirator is a fit-tested respirator and does not protect everyone. To be fit-tested for a respirator, please contact your manager who will send a roster to Occupational Health. Our current PPE policy allows for extended use and reuse of N95 respirators.

[PPE Extended Use and Reuse Guidelines](#)

Elastomerics (P100) Respirators:

The P100 respirators were instituted as part of our PPE strategy to reduce our burn rate of scarce N95 face masks. The P100 respirators do not impart superior protection to N95, and prolonged use of them is difficult, due to discomfort and difficulty with communication while wearing. For these reasons, Occupational Health will not be routinely fit testing staff for P100 masks. Many P100 respirators do not have a filtered exhalation valve and must have a surgical mask placed over the exhalation valve when in use.

[P100 Elastomeric SOP](#)

PAPR Respirator

PAPR supplies remain available in PAPR carts on some units. They work by blowing air into the mask, preventing outside air from entering the mask. Because of this positive air flow, they are not suitable for many environments, as the individual's exhaled air is blown out of the mask. For this reason, a facemask must always be worn under the PAPR. The PAPR respirator masks are reusable for the individual that received it, and do not require fit-testing.

From YNHHS PPE policy: Please refer to full policy for further details.

Table 1. Indications for PPE Selection
(based upon anticipated care and patient's COVID status¹)

<u>Clinical Indication</u>	COVID Positive / PUI /Quarantine*	COVID Negative / Not suspected / Recovered	
<u>Patient Care</u>	All Care including AGP	General Patient Care	Aerosol Generating Procedures (Table 2)
<u>PPE</u>	Respirator Face shield/goggles Gown & gloves	Facemask Face shield/goggles (plus gown/gloves if splash anticipated, per Standard Precautions)	Respirator Face shield/goggles (plus gown/gloves if splash anticipated, per Standard Precautions)
<u>Criteria for COVID Classification</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PUI: patients with signs or symptoms concerning for COVID PUI: patients with signs and symptoms awaiting results of COVID testing Patient requiring COVID isolation per Guidelines for Discontinuation of COVID Isolation and Retesting* High suspicion of COVID despite negative test* Patients under quarantine due to exposure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asymptomatic without signs or symptoms concerning for COVID Patient tested negative for COVID COVID recovered—patient who previously tested positive for COVID who no longer requires COVID isolation per Guidelines for Discontinuation of COVID Isolation and Retesting. 	

Note: All patient contact requires that both clinical staff and patient wear a face mask.

* When a COVID positive patient no longer requires respiratory isolation, the COVID recovered PPE requirements are to be followed.