

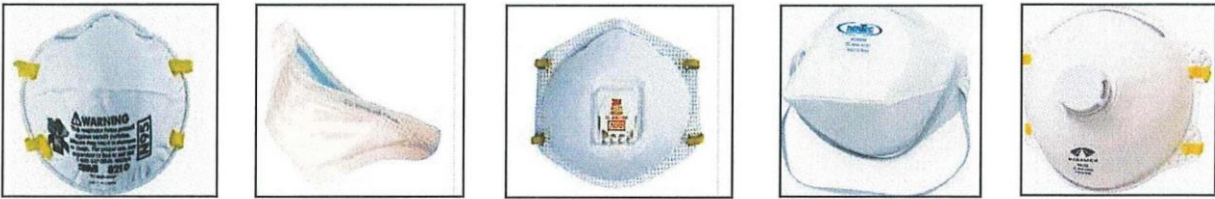
# N95 Respirators, Surgical Masks & Cloth Masks – Guidance Document

April 10, 2020

Respiratory protection is a key element of protection for staff and others from exposure to COVID-19. There are several different levels of protection; each have their benefits and limitations. This guidance document is intended to help explain those differences and the effective use of each type in respiratory protection for non-medical staff. HSU staff should follow the direction of Health Services.

Definitions:

**N95 Respirator** – is a respiratory protective device designed to achieve a very close facial fit and very efficient filtration of airborne particles. Note that the edges of the respirator are designed to form a seal around the nose and mouth. Surgical N95 Respirators are commonly used in healthcare settings and are a subset of N95 Filtering Face Piece Respirators (FFRs), often referred to as N95s.



**Surgical Mask** – is a loose-fitting, disposable device that creates a physical barrier between the mouth and nose of the wearer and potential contaminants in the immediate environment. These are often referred to as face masks, although not all face masks are regulated as surgical masks. Note that the edges of the mask are not designed to form a seal around the nose and mouth.



**Cloth Mask** – is a loose fitting mask made from cloth and is intended to minimize exposure to other people from individuals who may be asymptomatic (a person who carries the virus but does not show symptoms). It will help keep the spread of the virus down due to people interacting in close proximity, for example speaking, coughing or sneezing. NOTE: this use of these masks does not minimize the need to maintain the 6 foot social distancing requirement.



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Recommended Respiratory Protection for Staff during the COVID-19 Response				
	N95 Respirators	Face Mask		
		Surgical	Cloth	
<b>Staff</b>				
Staff having direct contact with asymptomatic incarcerated/detained persons under quarantine as close contacts of COVID-19* (but not performing temperature checks or providing medical care).		X		
Staff performing temperature checks on any group of people (staff, visitors, or incarcerated/detained persons), or providing medical care to asymptomatic quarantined persons.		X		
Staff having direct contact with (including transport) or offering medical care to <b>confirmed</b> or suspected COVID-19 cases.	X	X*		*A NIOSH approved N95 respiratory is preferred. However, based on availability face masks are an acceptable alternative when the N95 is not available. During this time N95's should be prioritized for procedures that are likely to generate respiratory aerosols.
Staff present during a procedure on a <b>confirmed</b> or suspected COVID-19 case that may generate respiratory aerosols.	X			
Staff present in a facility that is not in close proximity with potentially infected persons or infected persons. This includes central office.			X	NOTE: Use of a cloth face mask does not negate the need to maintain the 6 foot social distancing practice.

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## Specific Requirements for N95

N95 respirators are considered a “respirator” under OSHA’s Respiratory Protection Standard. As such they need to be NIOSH certified. In order to properly use them they user must be fully trained on each style and brand of N95 and fit tested for each. The wearer must also be medically cleared to wear a respirator. This clearance includes the completion of a medical questionnaire that is reviewed by a medical provider prior to donning a respirator. The DOC respiratory protection program that explains the entire process can be found under the “References” section below.

If fit testing is needed all institutions and centers as well as most regions have individuals that have been trained to conduct fit tests. They should also have fit test kits to aid in this process. A list of trainers is available from DOC Risk Management.

## References:

DOC Respiratory Protection Program Link:

<http://mydoc.corrections.wi/wps/wcm/myconnect/c9c6fad3cd1-4b29-b0dd-536768184c3d/204-601-0005+Respiratory+Protection+Program%2C+Rev+D.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CVID=n236j78>

COVID-19 Interim Guidance on Management of Coronavirus Disease 2019 in Correctional and Detention Facilities Link:

<http://mydoc.corrections.wi/wps/wcm/myconnect/8d72e9cc-26e8-499e-b3c2-17b3dd53506c/COVID-19+Interim+guidance-correctional-detention.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CVID=n5qsj8k>

“Understanding the Difference” between a surgical mask and an N95 respirator can be found on the last page of this document. A CDC publication.

<http://mydoc.corrections.wi/wps/wcm/myconnect/ddce037a-dcc2-4d32-ba36-30295b7b6530/UnderstandDifferenceInfographic-508.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CVID=n5r3-Be>