

OCW Guidance for COVID-19

COVID-19: Suggested Use of Personal Protective Equipment for DCF Frontline Team Members

Effective March 29, 2020, frontline team members must utilize Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) while conducting investigations, inspections, or site-visits to homes, child care programs, group homes, foster homes, or other facilities/settings, to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Frontline team members are to don (put on) a surgical mask upon the start of their shift or visit and only change it once it becomes moist, soiled, torn, or difficult to breathe through. Gloves should also be utilized. It is important to keep hands away from the mask and only touch the straps of the mask. Gloves should be worn when donning and removing masks and it is necessary to perform hand hygiene prior to donning PPE and after removing PPE. It should be noted that there is a difference between a surgical mask and a N-95 mask. N-95 masks should be prioritized and used in situations where there is a positive case of COVID-19 in a setting.

Regional leadership will disseminate PPE to frontline team members. The use of PPE should only be used in the field during investigations, inspections, site-visits and other interactions with the public. PPE use is not required, and should not be used, in DCF offices since social distancing, self-isolation, and teleworking measures are in place to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Team members who are reporting to DCF offices and have compromised immune systems, or identify as part of a vulnerable population, may use PPE (gloves, masks) upon approval from their supervisor.

Even with the use of PPE, frontline team members should follow DOH guidelines and practice social distancing by maintaining at least six feet of distance from anyone you come in contact with. If appropriate, conduct the assessment, investigation, or site-visit in an outdoor setting.

Before entering a home, child care program, group home, foster home, or other facilities/settings, frontline team members should begin by asking the following screening questions to determine need of a surgical mask or N-95 mask:

- Is anyone sick, feverish, experiencing ongoing coughing or shortness of breath?
- Has anyone come into contact with someone who is sick, feverish, experiencing ongoing coughing, or shortness of breath, or with someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19?
- In the last 14 days has anyone been on a cruise or traveled outside the United States, or has anyone traveled within the United States to a location with a confirmed COVID-19 case?

If the subject answers yes to any of the above questions or there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the home or setting, the frontline team member should utilize a N-95 mask.

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In the instance

that supply of PPE is limited, the use of PPE should be prioritized in the following circumstances:

- Known risk of exposure to COVID-19
- During activities where prolonged face-to-face contact with a potentially infectious individual is unavoidable (i.e. transporting or buckling a sick child into a car seat).
- COVID-19 hotspot areas (hospitals, counties with high rates of COVID-19, etc.)

Required training on the use of PPE has been uploaded into the DCF Learning Management System (LMS) in People First. This training is intended to inform DCF employees on PPE procedures. The instructional video is comprehensive in nature and in accordance with established CDC guidelines. All of the equipment identified in the video may not be required in the course of day-to-day contact with clients, but is provided as informational reference should you be required to use PPE in the course of your duties. Ensure that you observe social distancing and hygiene guidelines in the daily performance of your duties as this is the best practice to prevent infection. It should be noted that DCF frontline team members have been directed to use the following PPE: hand sanitization, gloves, surgical masks, and N-95 masks (for situations with known COVID-19 exposure). The course information is as follows:

DCF Personal Protective Equipment for COVID-19 Video
COURSE: DCF.OCW.COVID.PPEVideo