



Coronavirus COVID-19

BC Centre for Disease Control | BC Ministry of Health



HOW YOU CAN SLOW THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

Take care of others by taking care of yourself.

Wash your hands, don't touch your face, and stay home if you are sick.

Stay at Home and Physically Distance

Stay at home whenever you can. Maintain 2 meters distance from those outside of your household.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

BULLETIN #1

MARCH 29, 2020

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| PPE RISK ASSESSMENT LEVEL | All PPE levels are intact but at least one item will be depleted in a matter of days. |
| MINISTRY OF HEALTH DIRECTION | Activate and operationalize PPE Framework at Stage 4 |

DIRECTION FROM MINISTRY OF HEALTH

This bulletin is to provide direction to all health authorities to **immediately review, activate and operationalize** the *Emergency Prioritization in a Pandemic: Personal Protective Equipment Allocation Framework* (the PPE Framework) that was distributed March 25, 2020.

The PPE Framework was developed for health authorities and highlights the clinical, ethical, and operational structures and principles that must be applied to effectively manage PPE in the context of a pandemic and critical supply shortages. The PPE Framework provides detailed guidance on required actions broken down by multiple settings, personnel, and PPE risk assessment level.

This guidance is subject to change and will be updated as required.

PPE RISK ASSESSMENT LEVEL

This bulletin provides an alert that the province's PPE supply is at **Stage 4**. The following are broad actions that are required to respond to this stage. **Please consult the PPE Framework for detailed guidance on specific settings and providers:**

- All health care and support workers **must engage in a full PPE risk and point of care assessment for every patient or client interaction.**
- All health care and support workers who have **direct physical contact with patients who are suspected or known cases of COVID-19 or have respiratory symptoms must wear:**
 - a surgical or procedural mask,
 - eye protection (i.e., eye goggles or face shield),
 - gloves, and
 - gown.
- All health care and support workers **must extend the use of donned PPE by wearing the same PPE throughout their entire shift only changing when absolutely necessary**, for example when items are damaged or visibly soiled.

- Gloves **must** be changed between patients or clients.
- **Diligent hand hygiene is required** between glove changes, after doffing each individual piece of PPE, and before donning new PPE.
- All health care workers **must only use N95 respirator masks for aerosol generating medical procedures**.
- Health care workers who have engaged in fit testing for N95s within the previous 2 years can use N95s without additional testing but must perform a fit check prior to use.

Supply Chain Management

Ensuring the safety of health care workers is critical to BC's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We must all diligently and deliberately manage, monitor, and utilize PPE supplies appropriately, strategically, and in response to the situation on the ground.

The Ministry of Health and PHSA Supply Chain, BC's central, provincial purchasing and procurement organization, are working to ensure that medical supplies and PPE are being managed and shared across the health care system, and prioritizing distribution to ensure availability in the most critical situations. The focus is currently on conserving existing PPE while actively procuring additional supply through any and all avenues.

Work is underway to develop a complementary PPE Framework for the protection of health care workers in home and community settings, including community physicians, midwives, pharmacists, long term care facility workers and nurse practitioners.

RESOURCES

[Infection Prevention and Control Policy Communique \(March 20, 2020\)](#)

Emergency Prioritization in a Pandemic: Personal Protective Equipment Allocation Framework (attached)