

Prevention of COVID-19
Guidance for Voluntary Respirator Use



Created 03/26/2020

Overview:

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance for TDOT HELP program personnel regarding the voluntary use of respirators under certain conditions. The general rule of thumb should be for field personnel to avoid direct contact with vehicle occupants whenever possible. The use of respirators should only be considered necessary in situations where direct contact is unavoidable, such as administering emergency first aid. By following the steps outlined in this guide, TDOT HELP staff will minimize their risk for exposure to airborne illness and will be able to perform their duties and responsibilities in a safe manner. The use of respirators on a regular basis requires the participation in a formal respiratory program as per OSHA 1910.134, which the Department does not currently have in place. It should be noted that, as certified Emergency Medical Responders, HELP Operators and supervisors are temporarily exempt from this standard in accordance with the Temporary Enforcement Guidance released from OSHA on 3/14/2020 due to the current COVID-19 situation. Any questions regarding this guidance or the use of respirators in general may be directed to the TDO HQ Safety Office.

I have reviewed the Voluntary Use Guidelines for N95 filtering facepiece devices used while conducting emergency response activities during the COVID-19 Pandemic. I understand the steps to take for proper wear, disposal, storage and limitations during voluntary use of the N95 filtering facepiece device.

Employee Name: _____ Employee ID: _____

Employee Signature: _____ Date: _____



<p>General Precautions for HELP Operators</p>	<p>Please utilize the following guidelines to protect yourself and help to prevent the potential spread of the virus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Wash your hands with soap or sanitizer thoroughly and frequently. ○ Exercise cough and sneeze etiquette; Be aware of those around you and use your elbow or tissue. ○ Clean your workstation or shared vehicle before and during your shift with disinfecting cleaners or wipes. ○ When approaching a vehicle, exercise not only safety but minimize contact with the public. Use the PA system to request people to remain in their vehicles. ○ Use disposable gloves, if available when interacting with the public. ○ Maintain a safe distance from motorist to limit exposure- at least 6 feet. ○ Do not let motorist use personal or state phone. Drivers can make calls for the motorist. ○ When a motorist transport is completed, ensure we disinfect the cab of the truck and ourselves. ○ Minimize the amount of personal belongs in the truck to “must have” items, this will minimize the chance of items being contaminated and taking home to our families. ○ Minimize shift meetings as much as possible. If information needs to be passed along use email. ○ Do not congregate unnecessarily in the TMC. Keep a healthy distance as much as possible.
<p>Appendix D to Sec. 1910.134 (Mandatory) Information for Employees Using Respirators When Not Required Under the Standard</p>	<p>During TDOT Help Program <i>emergency medical response activities</i>, when <i>voluntarily</i> using N95 particulate filtering facepiece respirators, you need to take certain precautions to be sure that the respirator itself does not present a hazard.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read and heed all instructions provided by the manufacturer on use, maintenance, cleaning and care, and warnings regarding the respirators limitations. 2. Choose respirators certified for use to protect against the contaminant of concern. NIOSH, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, certifies respirators. A label or statement of certification should appear on the respirator or respirator packaging. It will tell you what the respirator is designed for and how much it will protect you. 3. Do not wear your respirator into atmospheres containing contaminants for which your respirator is not designed to protect against. For example, a respirator such as a filtering facepiece designed to filter dust particles will not protect you against gases, vapors, or very small solid particles of fumes or smoke. 4. Keep track of your respirator so that you do not mistakenly use someone else's respirator.

**Donning
Procedure
(Putting On)**

Before fitting device, ensure hands are clean.

All respirator components should be inspected for damage prior to each use.



1. With reverse side up and using the tab, separate top and bottom panels to form a cup shape. Bend slightly at center of the nose clip.

2. Ensure panels are fully unfolded.

3. Cup respirator in one hand with open side towards face. Take both straps in other hand. Hold respirator under chin, with nosepiece up, and pull straps over the head.



4. Locate the upper strap across the crown of the head and the lower strap below the ears. *Straps must not be twisted.*

Adjust top and bottom panels for a comfortable fit, ensuring panels and chin tab are not folded in. If equipped with ear loops, please ear loops around ears one at a time.

5. Using both hands, mold nose clip to the shape of the lower part of the nose to ensure a close fit and good seal. *NOTE: Pinching the nose clip using only one hand may result in less effective respirator performance. USE BOTH HANDS SHOWN IN FIGURE 5, ABOVE.*

A good fit means the respirator will seal to your skin.

A respirator can only work when air passes through the filter. Air will take the path of least resistance, so if the seal to the face isn't secure, the air will go around rather than through the respirator. Therefore, it is essential to ensure a proper fit when wearing tight-fitting respirators.

	<p>6. The seal of the respirator on the face should be fit-checked before entering the workplace. Follow the 4 steps for Fit Check below.</p> <p>Fit Check</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cover the front of the respirator with both hands being careful not to disturb the fit of the respirator. 2. EXHALE sharply 3. If air leaks around the nose, re-adjust the nose clip to eliminate leakage. Repeat the above fit check. 4. If air leaks at the respirator edges, work the straps back along the sides of the head to eliminate leakage. Repeat the above fit check. 
<p>Doffing Procedure (Taking Off)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bend forward slightly and carefully remove the mask from your face by touching only the ties or elastic bands. 2. Start with the bottom tie, then remove the top tie. If you have ear loops, remove one ear loop at a time. 3. Throw the mask in the garbage.  <p style="text-align: center;">DO NOT TOUCH THE FRONT OF THE MASK WITH YOUR HANDS. WASH HANDS IMMEDIATELY AFTER DISPOSAL OF CONTAMINATED MASK.</p>
<p>Limitations and Warnings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ These filtering facepieces do not protect against gases/vapors. ○ Do not use in atmospheres containing less than 19.5% oxygen deficiency ○ Do not use with beards or other facial hair that may inhibit contact between the face and the product thus preventing a good seal. ○ Leave the contaminated area immediately if: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Breathing becomes difficult. b) Dizziness or other distress occurs. ○ Discard and replace the respirator if it becomes damaged, breathing resistance becomes excessive or at the end of the shift. ○ Do not alter, modify, clean or repair this disposable respirator.

CDC
Guidance for
Reuse during
Pandemic
Response
Activities

<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/hcwcontrols/recommendedguidanceextuse.html>

There is no way of determining the maximum possible number of safe reuses for an N95 respirator as a generic number to be applied in all cases. Safe N95 reuse is affected by a number of variables that impact respirator function and contamination over time.

However, manufacturers of N95 respirators may have specific guidance regarding reuse of their product.

The recommendations below are designed to provide practical advice so that N95 respirators are discarded before they become a significant risk for contact transmission or their functionality is reduced.

- Discard N95 respirators following use during aerosol generating procedures.
- Discard N95 respirators contaminated with blood, respiratory or nasal secretions, or other bodily fluids from patients.
- Discard N95 respirators following close contact with any patient co-infected with an infectious disease requiring contact precautions.
- Consider use of a cleanable face shield over an N95 respirator and/or other steps (e.g., masking patients, use of engineering controls), when feasible to reduce surface contamination of the respirator.
- Hang used respirators in a designated storage area or keep them in a clean, breathable container such as a paper bag between uses. To minimize potential cross-contamination, store respirators so that they do not touch each other and the person using the respirator is clearly identified. Storage containers should be disposed of or cleaned regularly.
- Clean hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer before and after touching or adjusting the respirator (if necessary for comfort or to maintain fit).
- Avoid touching the inside of the respirator. If inadvertent contact is made with the inside of the respirator, perform hand hygiene as described above.
- Use a pair of clean (non-sterile) gloves when donning a used N95 respirator and performing a user seal check. Discard gloves after the N95 respirator is donned and any adjustments are made to ensure the respirator is sitting comfortably on your face with a good seal.

To reduce the chances of decreased protection caused by a loss of respirator functionality, respiratory protection program managers should consult with the respirator manufacturer regarding the maximum number of donnings or uses they recommend for the N95 respirator model(s) used in that facility. If no manufacturer guidance is available, preliminary data suggests limiting the number of reuses to no more than five uses per device to ensure an adequate safety margin.

Check for damage before each use (e.g., Are the straps stretched out so much that they no longer provide enough tension for the respirator to seal to the face?, Is the nosepiece or other fit enhancements broken?, etc.).

1. Follow the manufacturer's user instructions, including conducting a user seal check.
2. Follow the employer's maximum number of donnings (or up to five if the manufacturer does not provide a recommendation) and recommended inspection procedures.
3. Discard any respirator that is obviously damaged or becomes hard to breathe through.
4. Pack or store respirators between uses so that they do not become damaged or deformed.

Secondary exposures can occur from respirator reuse if respirators are shared among users and at least one of the users is infectious (symptomatic or asymptomatic). Thus, N95 respirators must only be used by a single wearer. To prevent inadvertent sharing of respirators, healthcare facilities should develop clearly written procedures to inform users to:

Label containers used for storing respirators or label the respirator itself (e.g., on the straps between uses with the user's name to reduce accidental usage of another person's respirator.