

Update Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Requirements

Staff COVID-19 Circular

14 September 2022



Barwon
Health

Surgical masks

- ALL visitors **ARE REQUIRED** to wear a minimum **LEVEL 1** disposable surgical mask **AT ALL TIMES** at ALL Barwon Health sites. N95 masks are available should visitors wish to wear one.
- ALL staff **ARE REQUIRED**, at a minimum, to wear a **LEVEL 2** disposable surgical mask **AT ALL TIMES** at all Barwon Health sites in the following circumstances:
 - Public facing & shared areas (for example; entrances, corridors, waiting areas, elevators and stairways within the hospital grounds)
- Masks are **RECOMMENDED**, but not mandatory in non-clinical areas such as shared offices or other non-public areas.
- Masks are **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED** in situations where you and your colleagues are unable to physically distance from those around you.
- Surgical masks are required for all meetings
- There is no change to N95 mask requirements for patient facing activities (see below)

P2/N95 respirators

A P2/N95 respirator masks reduce healthcare worker exposure to airborne particles, filtering out very fine particles and therefore reducing exposure to aerosols containing virus particles that may arise from AGPs or AGBs, as well as larger droplets. A P2/N95 respirator mask may be worn continually for a maximum of 4 hours.

Healthcare workers **MUST** wear a P2/N95 respirator mask under the follow conditions:

- **AT ALL TIMES** for **ALL** patient facing activities
- **AT ALL TIMES** for staff undertaking COVID-19 testing.
- For all staff who are household or household like contacts or considered a social or workplace contact.

Staff are required to 'fit check' every time a P2/N95 mask is put on.

Staff required to wear a P2/N95 respirator mask are to book a 'fit test'. Fit testing requires an appointment with the Respiratory Protection Program team. Information on how to book a 'fit test' can be found via the [Respiratory Protection Program One Point webpage](#). Whilst Staff await a 'fit test' appointment they are to continue to 'fit check'.

Fit testing needs to be conducted ANNUALLY.

DO NOT use P2/N95 respirators masks with a valve. The air you exhale is unlikely to be filtered and may expose other healthcare workers and patients.

Eye protection

Eye protection (face shields where practical) to be worn under the following circumstances:

- **AT ALL TIMES** for ALL exposure, care or contact with patients/residents that are considered:
 - SCOVID.
 - Confirmed COVID.
- As per standard and transmission-based precautions.
- **AT ALL TIMES** for staff undertaking COVID-19 testing.
- Prescription glasses are not considered as adequate eye protection.

Disposable gowns

Disposable gowns to be worn under the following circumstances:

- **AT ALL TIMES** for exposure, care or contact with the:
 - SCOVID
 - Confirmed COVID patients.
- **AT ALL TIMES** for staff undertaking COVID-19 testing
- As per standard and transmission-based precautions

Disposable gloves

Disposable gloves to be worn under the following circumstances:

- **AT ALL TIMES** for exposure, care or contact with:
 - SCOVID
 - Confirmed COVID patients.
- **AT ALL TIMES** for staff undertaking COVID-19 testing.
- As per standard and transmission-based precautions.
- Gloves to be removed and hand hygiene performed between all patient contacts.

References

DHHS Guidance

This advice will be reviewed on a regular basis, with updated guidance to be provided as appropriate –

<https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/personal-protective-equipment-ppe-covid-19>.

What is the difference between the levels of masks?

Information about the different levels of masks is available on the DHHS website:

<https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus-covid-19-ppe-and-levels-protection>

How can my area order more masks?

Information on how to order masks is available on the COVID-19 intranet site: <http://covid-19.barwonhealth.org.au/education-training/ppe-guidelines/>

For more information, contact Supply on 4215 0677 or email:

SupplyDept@BarwonHealth.org.au

Appendix 1: PPE Requirements Table

Departments/Areas/Procedures	COVID Negative Patient	SCoVID or confirmed COVID Patient
All patient facing activities Community staff providing home-based care**	At all times: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P2/N95 Masks • Eye Protection As per standard precautions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gown and gloves 	At all times: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P2/N95 Masks • Eye Protection • Gown • Gloves
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community COVID testing locations* 	At all times: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P2/N95 Masks • Eye Protection • Gown and Gloves 	At all times: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P2/N95 Masks • Eye Protection • Gown • Gloves

* Gloves to be removed and hand hygiene performed between each patient contact

** All PPE to be doffed once patient home has been exited & placed in general waste unless contaminated with blood and body fluids