

Dublin City Council

Corporate Health and Safety Office

Coronavirus COVID – 19
Standard Operating Guidelines
Covid-19 Personal Protective Equipment

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Introduction

The outbreak of Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) has evolved rapidly. The Department of Health (DoH) is leading the government response in Ireland to this national public health risk.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) means any device or appliance designed to be worn or held by an individual for protection against one or more health and safety hazards. The fundamental principle regarding PPE is that it should only be used *as a last resort*. The safety and health of employees must be primarily safeguarded by measures to eliminate workplace risks at source, through technical or organisational means or by providing protection on a collective basis. Collective protective measures covering numbers of employees in a workplace must have priority over protective measures applying to individual employees. If these measures are not sufficient, PPE must be used to protect against the hazards that are unavoidable.

Section 8 of the 2005 Act places a duty on employers to supply PPE where risks cannot be eliminated or adequately controlled. Section 13 of the 2005 Act places a duty on employees, having regard to their training and instructions, to make correct use of PPE.

1.0 PPE and Covid-19

The same principle applies to Covid-19 PPE, i.e. while PPE can help prevent some exposures, it should not take the place of other key preventative measures, i.e. public health measures.

Employees should follow the public health advice and guidance, including ensuring good hygiene practices, such as frequent hand washing and respiratory (coughing/sneezing) etiquette, as the primary control to protect against COVID 19 infection. In the context of risk of respiratory infection, PPE adds an extra layer of protection after scrupulous attention to hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette, and environmental hygiene.

2.0 Potential Hazards

- Contamination with COVID-19 virus.
- Spread of COVID-19 virus.
- Coming into contact with someone who has the virus and is coughing and sneezing. Close contact includes face to face contact; spending more than 15 minutes within two metres of an infected person; living with an infected person.
- Touching surfaces that an infected person has coughed or sneezed on.
- Inability to maintain physical distancing requirements in line with public health advice.

3.0 Public Health Control Measures



4.0 Covid-19 PPE

Again, always consider the use of PPE under standard primary hygiene measures, as per HSE posters and advice. Covid-19 PPE is available to DCC staff for scenarios where Covid-19 has been identified as a possible risk. However, please note that all PPE may not be required at all times.

Where physical distancing cannot be maintained for a work activity, a risk assessment must be carried out to determine the type of PPE to be provided and to ensure that the PPE is appropriate to the risk. In general, certain Covid-19 PPE is recommended for the scenarios outlined below:

- **Close Working Within a DCC Team:**

Where specific tasks require that physical distancing cannot be maintained (e.g. manual handling, trench work, specific joinery tasks, etc.), then disposable masks and eye protection/visor are recommended, along with the normal PPE.

- **Close Working outside of DCC Team/within Enclosed Spaces:**

Where it has been established that close working cannot be avoided, whether with contractors/members of the public (e.g. visiting halting sites) or in an enclosed space (e.g. social work within domestic premises, maintenance repairs within a property), and physical barriers cannot be achieved, disposable masks and eye protection and/or visor, at a minimum, are recommended.

Please refer to:

- DCC Guidelines for Site Inspection or Visit to Private Residence, DCC Tenant's Residence, Commercial Property or Site.
- DCC Guidelines for Entering or Calling to a Building due to Serious Imminent Risk to the Occupants and or the Building

- **When treating First Aid Incidents:**

When treating First Aid Incidents, appropriate face mask, disposable gloves and eye protection are recommended. Refer to DCC Guidelines for Occupational First Aid.

- **Suspect Case of COVID-19:**

If an employee displays symptoms of COVID-19 during work, he/she is to be moved to a designated isolation area and should be provided with a disposable face mask, if one available. The employee should wear the face mask if in a common area with other people and while exiting the premises. Please refer to DCC Guidelines for Staff Displaying Symptoms of Covid-19, available on Dubnet.

4.1 Face Masks

Disposable facemasks are currently available to Dublin City Council staff for:

- existing non Covid-19 related safety measures, i.e. as stated in existing risk assessments
- specific circumstances relating to Covid-19, as per risk assessment and/or relevant DCC Guidelines

While DCC will endeavour to make FFP3 or FFP2 masks available to staff, surgical masks may be utilised in current crisis circumstances for specific situations. The use of surgical facemasks is considered an additional protective measure at this time, i.e. in situations that the surgical mask is worn where *“I wear a surgical mask to protect you; and you correspondingly wear a surgical mask to protect me”*. Surgical masks may also be used, where assessed as necessary as an additional control measure, in circumstances where there is low risk and/or where DCC activities during this crisis time do not require any degree of contact with infected individuals.

However, should a specific respirator/face mask, e.g. FFP3/FFP2 be identified as a control measure in a risk assessment for a specific work activity, e.g. using abrasive wheels / silica dust, employees must not proceed with work activity unless the specified mask is available.

Respirator Masks e.g. FFP3, FFP2	<p>These are intended to filter out essentially all small particles from the air inhaled by the wearer. These are normally required for employees who are considered at higher risk from <i>occupational</i> exposure to COVID-19. The requirement to use should be based on the appropriate risk assessment and should be task specific. They are intended for single use and for discarding after use.</p> <p>Guidance on fitting these masks can be found: https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/disposable-respirator.pdf</p> <p>Note: Certain DCC employees are required to wear respirator masks for non Covid-related safety measures.</p>
Surgical Masks	<p>The use of surgical masks has two objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To reduce the risk of droplet transmission of infection to the wearer.2. To reduce the risk of droplet transmission of infection to others. <p>Use of surgical masks for these purposes is in addition to and is not intended as a replacement for other public health measures, to reduce the risk of transmission of infection. Surgical masks must be worn correctly and should remain in place covering the nose and mouth throughout the period of use.</p> <p>These are intended for single use and for discarding after use.</p>

Safe use of masks

Never fidget with your mask when it is on – Do not move mask up and down over nose and mouth.

Never store your mask in your pocket.

Change your mask:

- When you answer the telephone or take a drink/break
- If your mask is wet, dirty or damaged.

- When leaving the work area/the work activity is complete.

Note:

There is currently no rationale for use of a face mask, or face covering, of any kind in situations where the wearer can maintain a distance of 2m from other people (HSPC, 2020).

An employee should put on a mask if they anticipate being within 2 m of one or more other employees for a continuous period of 15 minutes or longer. It is not intended that employees should attempt to estimate in the morning the total duration of a sequence of very brief encounters that may occur during the day (HSPC, 2020, pg.2).

4.2 Disposable Gloves

Disposable gloves are generally not required for infection prevention and control purposes, but are available to DCC staff for use. However, please note the following:

- Do not wear disposable gloves instead of washing your hands.
- Dispose of gloves after each use and/or if they become damaged/torn.
- Wearing disposable gloves can give you a false sense of security. You might:
 - sneeze or cough into the gloves - this creates a new surface for the virus to live on
 - not wash your hands as often as you need to
 - touch your face with contaminated gloves
 - contaminate yourself when taking off the gloves or touching surfaces

Follow Glove Removal Technique in **Appendix B**.

4.3 Disposable Overalls

Single-Use disposable overalls are available for DCC staff undertaking specific tasks during this unprecedented time, as per specific DCC Guidelines and risk assessments. See **Appendix A** for further guidelines.

4.4 Eye Protection

As per HSE guidance, avoid touching face, particularly eyes, nose and mouth, at all times. However, eye protection - safety goggles or face visors - are available for staff, as appropriate.

5.0 Putting on and Removing PPE

See Appendix A.

The HSE advises the following sequence for putting on and removing PPE*:

5.1 Putting on PPE sequence:

1. Hand wash / sanitise hands
2. Put on overalls
3. Put on Mask, where required
4. Put on eye protection
5. Put on gloves
6. Prepare disposal bag at location you are working to place PPE in after task

5.2 Removing PPE sequence

1. Remove gloves – follow standard technique
2. Hand wash / sanitise hands
3. Remove eye protection
4. Remove overalls
5. Remove mask – remove by straps
6. Hand wash / sanitise hands
7. Double bag waste – only touching outside of bag. Dispose of waste as regular waste.
8. Hand wash / sanitise hands

*All PPE may not be required

NOTE: If anything goes wrong at any stage or PPE is compromised, sanitise and clean hands

6.0 Disposal of PPE

- At the end of all tasks, all disposable COVID-19 PPE to be disposed of appropriately i.e. disposable PPE to be double bagged and placed in a bin and non-disposable PPE to be sanitised. Hands to be sanitised following same.
- Eye Protection to be washed thoroughly after use with suitable decontamination solution. Hands to be sanitised following same.

7.0 Monitoring of Arrangements

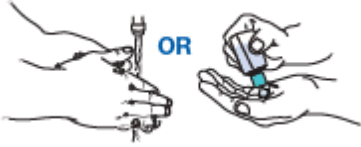
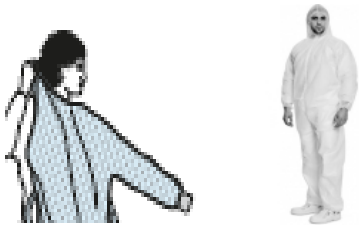


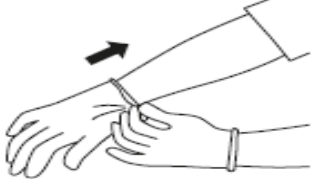

PPE and other Covid-19 arrangements to be monitored regularly by local management.

If you have any queries, contact your Line Manager and/or Health & Safety Officer


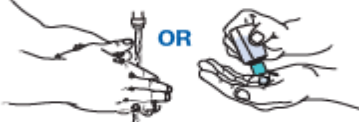


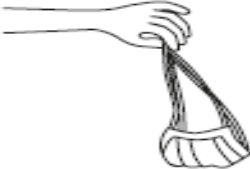
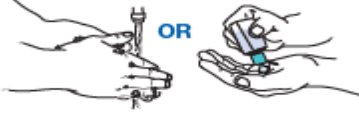

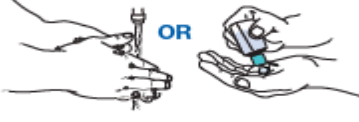
If you are feeling unwell or displaying symptoms, self-isolate and make phone contact with your GP/ Line Manager and Human Resources Department.





If anything goes wrong at any stage or PPE is compromised, it is important to hand wash or sanitise hands as per HSE Guidelines

PUTTING ON PPE

<p>Hand wash / sanitise hands as per HSE Guidelines</p>	
<p>Put on overalls, where required</p> <p>Close the front with zipper and/or tape</p> <p>Inspect for any holes or tears in fabric.</p> <p>Ensure cuffs of overalls are OVER shoe/boot covers</p>	
<p>Put on Mask, where required – FFP2 or FFP3</p> <p>Fit Check</p> <p>A. Place mask over nose, mouth and below chin</p> <p>B. Fit flexible nose piece over nose bridge</p> <p>C. Secure on head with elastic / ties</p> <p>D. Adjust to fit</p> <p>E. Inhale</p> <p>F. Exhale – check for leakage around face</p>	
<p>Put on eye protection / goggles, where require</p> <p>Place goggles over face and eyes/glasses and adjust to fit</p>	
<p>Put on gloves, where required – Extend to cover wrists</p>	
<p>Prepare disposal bag at location you are working to place PPE in after task</p>	

REMOVING PPE

<p>Remove gloves - Avoid touching the outside of gloves.</p> <p>Grab the outside of the glove with the opposite gloved hand and peel off.</p> <p>Hold the removed glove in the gloved hand.</p> <p>Slide the fingers of the ungloved hand under the remained glove at wrist. Peel the second glove off over the first glove.</p> <p>Discard in waste bag/bin.</p> <p>See Appendix B</p>	
<p>Hand wash / Sanitise hands as per HSE Guidelines</p>	
<p>Remove eye protection / goggles</p>	
<p>Remove overalls using a peeling motion.</p> <p>Unzip/Unfasten front and pull overalls from shoulder towards the same hand, then roll towards ankles</p> <p>Overalls will turn inside out as removed.</p> <p>Hold away from the body, roll in a bundle and discard.</p>	
<p>Remove mask</p> <p>Break the ties. If ties/straps are elastic, grasp and lift from behind head and pull off mask away from face.</p> <p>Avoid touching the front of the mask & use ties/straps to discard</p>	
<p>Hand wash / Sanitise hands as per HSE Guidelines</p>	
<p>Double bag waste – only touching outside of bag.</p> <p>Dispose as per regular waste disposal.</p>	
<p>Hand wash / Sanitise hands as per HSE Guidelines</p>	

	
<p>Step 1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grasp the palm of one glove near your wrist. • Carefully pull the glove off, turning it inside out. 	<p>Step 2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold the glove in the palm of the still-gloved hand. • Slip two fingers under the wrist of the remaining glove.
	
<p>Step 3.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pull the glove until it comes off inside out. • The first glove should end up inside the glove you just took off. • Dispose of the gloves safely. 	<p>Step 4.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always wash your hands after removing gloves and before touching any objects or surfaces. Gloves can have holes in them that are too small to be seen.

References:

HSPC (May 2020) *Use of Face Masks by the General Public V1.1*. Available at:

[HPSC respiratory guidance and infection prevention/useoffacemasksbythegeneralpublic. pdf](#)

HSPC (28th April 2020), Version 2.0, Guidance on the use of surgical masks when healthcare is being provided in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Available at:

<https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/guidance/infectionpreventionandcontrolguidance/ppe/useofsurgicalmasksinhealthcaresetting/COVID19-IPC-PPE-HCW-Surgical-Masks.pdf>

HSPC/HSE (2020) Current recommendations for the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in the management of suspected or confirmed COVID-19. Available at: [https://www.hpsc.ie/a-](https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/guidance/infectionpreventionandcontrolguidance/ppe/Interim%20Guidance%20for%20use%20of%20PPE%20%20COVID%2019%20v1.0%2017_03_20.pdf)

[z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/guidance/infectionpreventionandcontrolguidance/ppe/Interim%20Guidance%20for%20use%20of%20PPE%20%20COVID%2019%20v1.0%2017_03_20.pdf](https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/guidance/infectionpreventionandcontrolguidance/ppe/Interim%20Guidance%20for%20use%20of%20PPE%20%20COVID%2019%20v1.0%2017_03_20.pdf)

