



## Corporate Health, Safety & Wellbeing Service

The Corporate Health Safety & Wellbeing Service is striving to improve the health, safety & wellbeing culture across the organisation.

***What we believe in – “A Sensible Risk Management approach”***



*The goal of the Corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service is to provide you with the help you need to help yourself.*

### **Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE)**

#### **Regulation(S)**

The Personal Protective Equipment Regulations 2002

#### **Introduction**

Basic respiratory protection equipment (RPE) such as disposable masks and reusable half masks rely on having a good seal with the wearers face. A face fit test should be carried out to ensure the RPE can protect the wearer. To ensure you have put the mask on correctly, use a mirror or a colleague to check the mask is fitted correctly and is tight fitting **Ensure social distancing is carried out as much as possible.**

The steps highlighted below outline the process that must be adopted to ensure the RPE is fitted correctly to the face, as follows:-

- Step 1 – Gentlemen must be clean shaven to ensure there is an adequate seal on the skin. Facial hair will break the seal, thus rendering the level of protection insufficient
- Step 2 – Cup the disposable respirator upside down in one hand, with the straps hanging out of the way.
- Step 3 – Place the respirator onto the face using the hand that is currently holding it.
- Step 4 – With the other hand, lift the lower strap up and over the head and pull down to the back of the neck under the ears.
- Step 5 – Pull the top strap over the top of the head and locate to sit on the head above the ears
- Step 6 – Check the straps are not twisted, if you need to tighten the straps, pull both ends at the tensioner at the same time, bottom strap first and then the top straps.

Step 7 – If there is a nose strap, depress this to the shape of the nose.

Step 8 – Before entering the working area a user seal check should be carried out. This should be done by placing your hands over the filter material and breathing in. The mask should suck down onto your face when you breathe in sharply. You should hold your breath for 10 seconds and if the disposable respirator should not loosen. If it does, you should repeat the steps listed above.

Check your disposable respirator before you put it on for any defects, check for users are clean shaven, ensure it's the right respiratory mask for the work to be completed, make sure the respiratory equipment is undamaged and is clean, follow the manufacturer's guidance, check the fit every time the RPE is used to ensure there are no leaks.

Once the respirator is donned - Remember:- to be clean shaven, edges of the mask are tight, the chin is snug, the nose clip is shaped and the straps are located in the right place.

### **Facial Hair**

Many masks rely on a good seal against the face so that, when you breathe air in, it is drawn into the filter material where the air is cleaned. If there are any gaps around the edges of the mask, 'dirty' air will pass through these gaps and into your lungs. It is therefore very important that you put your mask on correctly and check for a good fit every time.

Facial hair – stubble and beards – make it impossible to get a good seal of the mask to the face.

If you are clean-shaven when wearing tight-fitting masks (ie those which rely on a good seal to the face), this will help prevent leakage of contaminated air around the edges of the mask and into your lungs. You will therefore be breathing in clean air, which will help you stay healthy.

If there are good reasons for having a beard (eg for religious reasons), alternative forms of RPE, that do not rely on a tight fit to the face, will need to be considered.

A face fit chart produced by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is available to view below.

Corporate Health and Safety Officers are fully trained to deliver face fit training / testing, to request face fit testing for your staff, please contact via the email address listed below.

**For further Advice / Support Please Contact the Corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service via the following: Telephone: 01792 636210 Email: [Healthandsafety@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:Healthandsafety@swansea.gov.uk)**



A disposable fluid-resistant face mask (FRSM) is worn over the nose and mouth to protect the mucous membranes of the **wearer's** nose and mouth from splashes and infectious droplets and also to protect clients. When recommended for infection control purposes a 'surgical face mask' typically denotes a fluid-resistant (Type IIR) surgical mask.

Social distance and personal hygiene (hand washing) must always be the first line of protection from infection.

For use when in :-

Direct care to any individual of the household where any member of the household is a possible confirmed case, or, Facility with possible or confirmed case and direct resident care (within 2 metres).

The steps highlighted below outline the process that must be adopted to ensure the mask is fitted correctly to the face, as follows:-

1. Wash hands with soap and water or alcohol based hand wash if soap and water is unavailable.
2. Cover the mouth and nose with the mask, making sure there are no gaps between your face and the mask and attach the straps to either side of the head behind the ears.
3. Avoid touching the mask while it is in use. If you do clean your hands with soap and water or use alcohol based hand wash if soap and water is not available.
4. When removing the mask, do so from behind, **DO NOT** place your hands on the front of the mask. Discard immediately into a closed bin.
5. Wash your hands with soap and water or alcohol based hand gel if soap and water is not available.

Replace the mask with a new one - as soon as it is damp, move to deal with a client that is not symptomatic and when the work process has been completed,

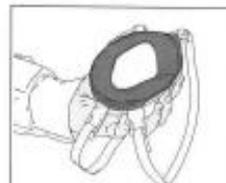
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# Using disposable respirators

## Pre-use checks

- You should be clean-shaven around the face seal to achieve an effective fit when using disposable respirators. Beards and stubble will stop the disposable respirator sealing to your face and protecting you properly
- Make sure it is the right disposable respirator for your work and for you - have you passed a face fit test in this disposable respirator?
- Make sure the disposable respirator is clean and undamaged before you use it
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for checking the disposable respirator and putting it on
- Check the fit every time you put on the disposable respirator to ensure there are no leaks

## Putting the disposable respirator on and checking it fits



1 Cup the disposable respirator in one hand, with the straps hanging out of the way.



2 Hold the disposable respirator in place on your face.



3 Pull the bottom strap over your head, to the back of your neck.



4 Pull the top strap over your head to sit above your ears.



5 Check the straps are not twisted. If you need to tighten the straps, pull both ends at the same time, bottom first, then top.



6 If there is a nose clip, press this firmly to the shape of your nose.



7 Before entering the workplace, a user seal check should be carried out. This is done by placing your hands over the filter material and breathing in. The mask should suck down onto your face when you breathe in sharply. You should hold your breath for ten seconds and the disposable respirator should not loosen. If it does, you should readjust and repeat.

Check your disposable respirator before you put it on. **Then do a pre-use seal check or fit check - for a proper seal each time:** Clean shaven? Edges tight? Chin snug? Nose clip shaped? Straps in place?

This poster illustrates a typical disposable respirator, there are many other types available. Follow the manufacturer's instructions on putting your type of disposable respirator on and checking it fits.

Visit [hse.gov.uk/respiratory-protective-equipment](https://www.hse.gov.uk/respiratory-protective-equipment) for more information



# Guide to donning and doffing standard Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

## for health and social care settings

### Donning or putting on PPE

Before putting on the PPE, perform hand hygiene. Use alcohol handrub or gel or soap and water. Make sure you are hydrated and are not wearing any jewellery, bracelets, watches or stoned rings.

- 1** Put on your plastic apron, making sure it is tied securely at the back.  

- 2** Put on your surgical face mask, if tied, make sure securely tied at crown and nape of neck. Once it covers the nose, make sure it is extended to cover your mouth and chin.  

- 3** Put on your eye protection if there is a risk of splashing.  

- 4** Put on non-sterile nitrile gloves.  

- 5** You are now ready to enter the patient area.  


### Doffing or taking off PPE

Surgical masks are single session use, gloves and apron should be changed between patients.

- 1** Remove gloves, grasp the outside of the cuff of the glove and peel off, holding the glove in the gloved hand, insert the finger underneath and peel off second glove.  

- 2** Perform hand hygiene using alcohol hand gel or rub, or soap and water.  

- 3** Snap or unfasten apron ties the neck and allow to fall forward.  


Snap waste ties and fold apron in on itself, not handling the outside as it is contaminated, and put into clinical waste.

- 4** Once outside the patient room. Remove eye protection.  

- 5** Perform hand hygiene using alcohol hand gel or rub, or soap and water.  

- 6** Remove surgical mask.  

- 7** Now wash your hands with soap and water.  


Please refer to the PHE standard PPE video in the COVID-19 guidance collection:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-use-for-non-aerosol-generating-procedures](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-use-for-non-aerosol-generating-procedures)

If you require the PPE for aerosol generating procedures (AGPs) please visit:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-use-for-aerosol-generating-procedures](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-use-for-aerosol-generating-procedures)

