

## KCVA COVID-19 PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE) GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEES IN PATIENT CARE AREAS DURING PATIENT ENCOUNTERS

As of 04/01/2020

**UPDATE:** ALL ENCOUNTERS WHERE AN EMPLOYEE COULD GET WITHIN 6 FEET OF A PATIENT FOR DIRECT PATIENT CARE REQUIRE A FACEMASK (NON-N95)\*

	PATIENT MASKED FOR WHOLE ENCOUNTER	PATIENT UNMASKED FOR ANY PORTION OF ENCOUNTER
<b>FOR ENCOUNTERS WITH COVID-19 + OR PUI PATIENT:</b> EMPLOYEE ENTERING PATIENT ROOM FOR ANY REASON OR HAVING INTERACTION WITHIN 3 FEET OF A PATIENT	-Facemask (non-N95) -Eye Protection -Gown -Gloves	-N95 or PAPR** -Eye Protection -Gown -Gloves  EXAMPLES: obtaining pharyngeal swab, doing posterior oropharyngeal exam, etc.
<b>IF ANY EMPLOYEE IS IN THE ROOM DURING AN AEROSOL GENERATING PROCEDURE IRRESPECTIVE OF COVID-19 STATUS:</b>	-N95 or PAPR** -Gown *Please see below for guidance.	-Eye Protection -Gloves

### N95 GUIDANCE & EMPLOYEE SAFETY CONCERNS

The KCVA leadership's goal is to ensure that employees have access to guideline-based PPE for every patient care situation indefinitely. This requires strict guidelines adherence, supply chain monitoring, and tracking COVID-19 epidemiology. Remember: practice hand hygiene and avoid facial contact at all times.

\*Cloth masks should NOT be worn alone for protection as they are not proven to be effective. Employees are permitted to wear them over protective masks, though it is not clear whether this is helpful or harmful to the underlying mask.

\*\*N95s must be used unless emergent, life-saving procedures are necessary or employee does not pass fit testing. Beards are no longer an acceptable reason for fit test failure.

N95 masks must be treated with the utmost care and used as long as the mask is functional. These masks must only be used during patient care situations as guidelines suggest, and they should not be worn outside patient care situations. **MASKS MUST BE STORED IN A PAPER BAG WHEN NOT IN USE. DO NOT STORE IN PLASTIC OR ZIPLOC BAGS.**

The future allocation of N95 masks will proceed based on guidelines as well as supply chain status, with prioritization of high-risk areas and patient care interactions. N95 masks should no longer be used if soiled, contaminated, or no longer fitting appropriately. Once an N95 mask needs to be exchanged, DO NOT THROW AWAY. Please alert your supervisor of the need for a mask exchange.

We greatly appreciate our staff's resilience and continued care of our Veterans during these times.

References: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov), [www.who.int](http://www.who.int) These guidelines may change based on expert opinion, supply chains, and epidemiology.