

PPE During COVID-19 Pandemic

Applies to:	All Island Health staff and providers
Purpose:	To supplement staff and providers' standard Point of Care Risk Assessment (PCRA) , to inform the appropriate selection of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for their care setting and patient/resident/client scenario

The PPE recommendation in this guide is the combined guidance from the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC)/BC Ministry of Health (see: [Personal Protective Equipment](#) and [COVID-19: Emergency Prioritization in a Pandemic Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\) Allocation Framework](#)), and Island Health's Infection Prevention and Control principles of best practice, developed in collaboration with Professional Practice, Clinical Operations, Occupational Health and Safety, and Medical Affairs.

Appropriate use of PPE by a healthcare provider will mitigate COVID-19 transmission for both healthcare providers and patients, but clinical judgement during the PCRA may also determine that additional protection is required (for symptoms not related to COVID-19). Step-by-step posters and videos for donning and doffing of PPE are available on the [COVID-19](#) intranet page.

In line with current Ministry [direction](#), all staff must wear a medical-grade mask when in a care facility and anywhere healthcare is provided. This includes the hallways used to move between areas where healthcare is provided, as well as any other shared spaces. The term medical-grade mask is used to define any surgical or procedure mask used in healthcare; it does not include cloth or N95 masks.

In order to ensure sustainable supply, it is always important to preserve our PPE stocks. A mask can be worn for prolonged periods and between patients, but must not be touched. If you touch your mask to reposition it, clean your hands.

Appropriate eye protection is a visor, face shield or goggles. Eye protection cleaning protocol: [Coronavirus COVID-19: Cleaning and Disinfection Instructions for Eye/Facial Protection](#); or [Cleaning and Disinfection Instructions for Eye/Facial Protection in the Absence of Water](#).

Prior to using an N95 mask, please ensure you have undergone [fit testing](#) and do not require renewal.

Note: Recommendations in this resource are updated as new information becomes available. If you choose to print and post the page applicable to your care setting, please check the published version ([PPE Required During COVID-19 Pandemic](#)) frequently for updates.

View the PPE Guidance for the care settings most applicable for your role:

- [All Inpatient Care Areas \(including Mental Health, Pediatric, Adult, Porters and Lab Techs\)](#)
- [Perinatal Services](#)
- [Medical Imaging](#)
- [Community Health Services and Assisted Living](#)
- [Long-Term Care](#)
- [Emergency Department](#)
- [Out Patient/Ambulatory Care](#)
- [Primary Care](#)

PPE During COVID-19 Pandemic



All Inpatient Care Areas (including Mental Health, Pediatric, Adult, Porters* and Lab Techs)								
Patient Description	Excellent Hand Hygiene	Isolation Gown	Gloves	Medical-Grade Mask	Face Shield, Visor or Goggles	N95 Mask	Head and Neck Cover	Doffing
No symptoms suggestive of COVID-19	✓	✗	✗	✓ Must be worn	✓ Must be worn within 2 meters of a patient	✗	✗	If the mask is subsequently used to care for patient on droplet precautions area, doff mask as part of leaving that area. Hand hygiene is required when touching or removing mask. Clean and disinfect eye protection each time it is removed.
Confirmed or highly suspected (i.e. awaiting testing) COVID-19 patient	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	Full doffing of all elements, face shield/visor/goggles requires cleaning and disinfecting . Mask is disposed.
COVID-19 Cohort Unit	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	May use same mask and eye protection between patients, but must change gown and gloves and perform hand hygiene between patients. When mask requires changing or when leaving care area or unit (e.g., going for break, end of shift), doff and dispose mask. Face shield/visor requires cleaning and disinfecting .
Aerosol Generating Medical Procedures (AGMPs) for confirmed or suspected COVID-19 patients not itemized on next row	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	Doff all elements of PPE . Put N95 into receptacle for reprocessing. Face shield/visor requires cleaning and disinfecting .
Performance of specific AGMP for confirmed or suspected COVID-19 patients: intubation and extubation, bronchoscopy, TEE, gastroscopy	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	Doff all elements of PPE . Put N95 into receptacle for reprocessing. Face shield/visor requires cleaning and disinfecting .

Note: PPE above is required by HCP when entering exam room. PPE must be changed if accompanying/transporting symptomatic patient elsewhere in the building.

*refer to [Personal Protective Equipment for Patient Transport](#)

PPE During COVID-19 Pandemic



Long-Term Care								
Patient Description	Excellent Hand Hygiene	Isolation Gown	Gloves	Medical-Grade Mask	Face Shield, Visor or Goggles	N95 Mask	Head and Neck Cover	Doffing
No symptoms suggestive of COVID-19	✓	✗	✗	✓ Must be worn	! Based on PCRA	✗	✗	If the mask is subsequently used to care for patient on droplet precautions area, doff mask as part of leaving that area. Hand hygiene is required when touching or removing mask. Clean and disinfect eye protection each time it is removed.
Admission to LTC from acute care or community (for 14 days from admission)	✓	✗	✓	✓ Must be worn	✓	✗	✗	If the mask is subsequently used to care for patient on droplet precautions area, doff mask as part of leaving that area. Hand hygiene is required when touching or removing mask. Clean and disinfect eye protection each time it is removed.
Resident reports/develops respiratory symptoms or fever	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	Doff all elements of PPE . Put N95 into receptacle for reprocessing. Face shield/visor requires cleaning and disinfecting .
Confirmed or highly suspected (i.e. awaiting testing) COVID-19 patient	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	Full doffing of all elements, face shield/visor/goggles requires cleaning and disinfecting . Mask is disposed.
AGMPs for confirmed or suspected COVID-19 patients not itemized on next row	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	Doff all elements of PPE . Put N95 into receptacle for reprocessing. Face shield/visor requires cleaning and disinfecting .
Performance of specific AGMP for confirmed or suspected COVID-19 patients: intubation and extubation, bronchoscopy, TEE, gastroscopy	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	Doff all elements of PPE . Put N95 into receptacle for reprocessing. Face shield/visor requires cleaning and disinfecting .

*AGMPs should only be performed if medically necessary. All persons in the room are wearing a fit tested, seal-checked N95 mask and additional PPE as described. If no negative pressure room available, resident must be in a single room with the door closed for the duration of the procedure and associated time to clear the air.

PPE During COVID-19 Pandemic

Perinatal Services								
Patient Description	Excellent Hand Hygiene	Isolation Gown	Gloves	Medical-Grade Mask	Face Shield, Visor or Goggles	N95 Mask	Head and Neck Cover	Doffing
No symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 – antepartum, early labor or postpartum (see below for delivery and C/S)	✓	✗	! Based on PCRA	✓ Must be worn	✓ Must be worn within 2 meters of a patient	✗	✗	If the mask is subsequently used to care for patient on droplet precautions area, doff mask as part of leaving that area. Hand hygiene is required when touching or removing mask. Clean and disinfect eye protection each time it is removed.
No symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 – during delivery	✓	✓	✓ Contact with body fluids*	✓ Must be worn	✓ Must be worn within 2 meters of a patient	✗	✗	If the mask is subsequently used to care for patient on droplet precautions area, doff mask as part of leaving that area. Hand hygiene is required when touching or removing mask. Clean and disinfect eye protection each time it is removed.
All perinatal patients (ante-, intra- or postpartum patient and/or baby): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports/develops respiratory symptoms or fever • COVID-19 cohort unit • Confirmed or highly suspected (i.e. awaiting testing) COVID-19 patient 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	Doff all elements of PPE except eye protection, which requires cleaning and disinfecting .

*Reminder - PCRA is performed when there is a likelihood of exposure to infectious agents, in this case through large volumes of body fluids during delivery – those directly involved in the delivery should wear this additional PPE

PPE During COVID-19 Pandemic



Perinatal Services								
Patient Description	Excellent Hand Hygiene	Isolation Gown	Gloves	Medical-Grade Mask	Face Shield, Visor or Goggles	N95 Mask	Head and Neck Cover	Doffing
Caesarean Section (C/S) in low or no risk – a patient with no risk factors for COVID-19 and/or no symptoms or signs of COVID-19 and/or a negative COVID-19 test where relevant	✓	✗	! Based on PCRA	✓	✓ Must be worn within 2 meters of a patient	✗ #	✗ #	Doff all elements of PPE except eye protection, which requires cleaning and disinfecting . # Not required regardless of neuraxial or general anesthesia Follow standard OR practices
C/S is unknown risk – a patient where the risk factors history and symptomology are unknown, and a COVID-19 test result is pending or unknown	✓	✓	✓	✓ **	✓	✓ **	✓	Doff all elements of PPE except eye protection, which requires cleaning and disinfecting . **Pediatric Team and other personnel in droplet and contact PPE in room at start of procedure if they are able to leave the room to don an N95 mask (or alternative) if the C/S moves from neuraxial to general anesthesia
C/S is moderate to high risk – a patient where the risk factors, history and symptomology are unknown or suggestive of COVID-19, and/or a COVID-19 test result is pending, unknown or confirmed COVID-19	✓	✓	✓	✓ **	✓	✓ **	✓	Doff all elements of PPE . Put N95 into receptacle for reprocessing. Face shield/visor requires cleaning and disinfecting . **Pediatric Team and other personnel in droplet and contact PPE in room at start of procedure if they are able to leave the room to don an N95 mask (or alternative) if the C/S moves from neuraxial to general anesthesia

[Infection Prevention and Control \(IPAC\) Protocol for Obstetrical Procedures during COVID-19](#)

PPE During COVID-19 Pandemic



Perinatal Services								
Patient Description	Excellent Hand Hygiene	Isolation Gown	Gloves	Medical-Grade Mask	Face Shield, Visor or Goggles	N95 Mask	Head and Neck Cover	Doffing
NICU – all infants born from non-COVID mothers	✓	✗	✗	✓ Must be worn	✓ Must be worn within 2 meters of a patient	✗	✗	If the mask is subsequently used to care for patient on droplet precautions area, doff mask as part of leaving that area. Hand hygiene is required when touching or removing mask. Clean and disinfect eye protection each time it is removed.
NICU –infants born from COVID-19 confirmed or suspected mothers (infant in incubator) No AGMP	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	Doff all elements of PPE . Put N95 into receptacle for reprocessing. Face shield/visor requires cleaning and disinfecting .
NICU – infant from COVID-19 confirmed or suspected mother requiring any AGMP other than intubation/extubation (infant in incubator)	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	Doff all elements of PPE . Put N95 into receptacle for reprocessing. Face shield/visor requires cleaning and disinfecting .
NICU – infant from COVID-19 confirmed or suspected mother requiring intubation/extubation (infant in incubator)	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	Doff all elements of PPE . Put N95 into receptacle for reprocessing. Face shield/visor requires cleaning and disinfecting .

PPE During COVID-19 Pandemic



Emergency Department Staff and Physicians								
Patient Description	Excellent Hand Hygiene	Isolation Gown	Gloves	Medical-Grade Mask	Face Shield, Visor or Goggles	N95 Mask	Head and Neck Cover	Doffing
No symptoms suggestive of COVID-19	✓	✗	✗	✓ Must be worn	✓ Must be worn	✗	✗	If the mask is subsequently used to care for patient on droplet precautions area, doff mask as part of leaving that area. Hand hygiene is required when touching or removing mask. Clean and disinfect eye protection each time it is removed.
Patient reports/develops respiratory symptoms or fever, or is confirmed or highly suspected (i.e. awaiting testing) COVID-19 patient	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	Full doffing of all elements, face shield/visor/goggles requires cleaning and disinfecting . Mask is disposed.
Known or highly suspected (i.e. awaiting testing) COVID-19 patient	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	Full doffing of all elements, face shield/visor/goggles requires cleaning and disinfecting . Mask is disposed.
COVID-19 Cohort Unit	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	May use same mask and eye protection between patients, but must change gown and gloves and perform hand hygiene between patients. When mask requires changing or when leaving care area or unit (e.g., going for break, end of shift), doff and dispose mask. Face shield/visor requires cleaning and disinfecting .
AGMPs for confirmed or suspected COVID-19 patients not itemized on next row	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	Doff all elements of PPE . Put N95 into receptacle for reprocessing. Face shield/visor requires cleaning and disinfecting .
Performance of specific AGMP for confirmed or suspected COVID-19 patients: intubation and extubation, bronchoscopy, TEE, gastroscopy	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	Doff all elements of PPE . Put N95 into receptacle for reprocessing. Face shield/visor requires cleaning and disinfecting .

Intubation should be performed in a negative pressure room where possible. Use of CARRT teams in hospitals where those teams exist is preferred.

PPE During COVID-19 Pandemic



Medical Imaging Department Staff and Physicians								
Patient Description	Excellent Hand Hygiene	Isolation Gown	Gloves	Medical-Grade Mask	Face Shield, Visor or Goggles	N95 Mask	Head and Neck Cover	Doffing
No symptoms suggestive of COVID-19	✓	✗	✗	✓ Must be worn	✓ Must be worn	✗	✗	If the mask is subsequently used to care for patient on droplet precautions area, doff mask as part of leaving that area. Hand hygiene is required when touching or removing mask. Clean and disinfect eye protection each time it is removed.
Patient reports/develops respiratory symptoms or fever, or is confirmed or highly suspected (i.e. awaiting testing) COVID-19 patient	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	Full doffing of all elements, face shield/visor/goggles requires cleaning and disinfecting . Mask is disposed.
Known or highly suspected (i.e. awaiting testing) COVID-19 patient	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	Full doffing of all elements, face shield/visor/goggles requires cleaning and disinfecting . Mask is disposed.
COVID-19 Cohort Unit	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	May use same mask and eye protection between patients, but must change gown and gloves and perform hand hygiene between patients. When mask requires changing or when leaving care area or unit (e.g. going for break, end of shift), doff and dispose mask. Face shield/visor requires cleaning and disinfecting .
AGMPs for confirmed or suspected COVID-19 patients not itemized on next row	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	Doff all elements of PPE . Put N95 into receptacle for reprocessing. Face shield/visor requires cleaning and disinfecting .
Performance of specific AGMP for confirmed or suspected COVID-19 patients: intubation and extubation, bronchoscopy, TEE, gastroscopy	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	Doff all elements of PPE . Put N95 into receptacle for reprocessing. Face shield/visor requires cleaning and disinfecting .

Intubation should be performed in a negative pressure room where possible. Use of CARRT teams in hospitals where those teams exist is preferred.

Please refer to the Society of Interventional Radiology's guidance <https://www.sirweb.org/practice-resources/covid-19-resources/covid-19-clinical-notification-3-26-20/>

PPE During COVID-19 Pandemic



Out Patient / Ambulatory Care Settings								
Patient Description	Excellent Hand Hygiene	Isolation Gown	Gloves	Medical-Grade Mask	Face Shield, Visor or Goggles	N95 Mask	Head and Neck Cover	Doffing
No symptoms suggestive of COVID-19	✓	✗	✗	✓ Must be worn	✓ Must be worn	✗	✗	If the mask is subsequently used to care for patient on droplet precautions area, doff mask as part of leaving that area. Hand hygiene is required when touching or removing mask. Clean and disinfect eye protection each time it is removed.
Patient reports/develops respiratory symptoms or fever, or is confirmed or highly suspected (i.e., awaiting testing) COVID-19 patient	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	Full doffing of all elements, face shield/visor/goggles requires cleaning and disinfecting . Mask is disposed.
AGMPs for confirmed or suspected COVID-19 patients not itemized on next row*	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	Doff all elements of PPE . Put N95 into receptacle for reprocessing. Face shield/visor requires cleaning and disinfecting .
Performance of specific AGMP for confirmed or suspected COVID-19 patients: intubation and extubation, bronchoscopy, TEE, gastroscopy*	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	Doff all elements of PPE . Put N95 into receptacle for reprocessing. Face shield/visor requires cleaning and disinfecting .

* Should be performed in a negative pressure room **where available**, or single room with door closed.

PPE During COVID-19 Pandemic



Primary Care Settings									
Patient Description	Excellent Hand Hygiene (HH)	Patient Performs HH and dons Medical-Grade Mask	Isolation Gown	Gloves	Medical-Grade Mask	Face Shield, Visor or Goggles	N95 Mask	Head and Neck Cover	Doffing
No symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 Reported by patient or detected by assessment*	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓ Must be worn	✓ Must be worn	✗	✗	If the mask is subsequently used to care for patient on droplet precautions area, doff mask as part of leaving that area. Hand hygiene is required when touching or removing mask. Clean and disinfect eye protection each time it is removed.
Confirmed or highly suspected (i.e. awaiting testing) COVID-19 patient	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	Full doffing of all elements, face shield/visor/goggles requires cleaning and disinfecting . Mask is disposed.
AGMPs** (nebulized medications, emergency intubation) for confirmed or suspected COVID-19	✓	Not Applicable	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	Full doffing of all elements, face shield/visor/goggles requires cleaning and disinfecting .

* HCP to perform risk assessment prior to initiating care by telephone or from a distance of at least 2 meters. Determine if patient has symptoms compatible with COVID-19: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/clinical-resources/covid-19-care/lab-testing>. All patients should be instructed to perform hand hygiene. If patient meets screening criteria for COVID-19, they should be instructed to don a procedural mask, and immediately be directed into an exam room. If no exam room available, maintain spatial separation of at least 2 metres from others.

** AGMPs should only be performed if medically necessary. All persons in the room are wearing a fit-tested, seal-checked N95 respirator, gloves, gown and face or eye protection. If no negative pressure room available, patient must be in a single room with the door closed for duration of procedure and associated time to clear air.

PPE During COVID-19 Pandemic



Community Health Services and Assisted Living								
Patient Description	Excellent Hand Hygiene	Isolation Gown	Gloves	Medical-Grade Mask	Face Shield, Visor or Goggles	N95 Mask	Head and Neck Cover	Doffing
No symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 reported by client or family member or detected by assessment	✓	✗ PPE should be determined by a PCRA –an apron or gown and gloves would be used for any risk of exposure to blood and/or bodily fluids Note: when wearing an apron it is important to be 'bare below the elbows'		✓ Must be worn	✓ Must be worn	✗	✗	Replace mask when visibly dirty, damp or too damaged for safe use. Clean and disinfect eye protection each time it is removed. Eye protection is dedicated to the Community Health Provider
Client or household member: • Is self-isolating for a 14 day period following arrival in Canada or known exposure • Develops symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 • Confirmed COVID-19	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	Full doffing of all PPE. Eye protection require cleaning and disinfecting .
If the client has been in Acute Care for 24 hours or more, they must self-isolate for 14 days when they return to Assisted Living	✓	✗	! PCRA	✓	✓	✗	✗	Eye protection require cleaning and disinfecting .
AGMPs (e.g. CPAP, open airway suctioning, nebulization) for any client with confirmed or highly suspect COVID-19	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	Follow donning and doffing procedure for AGMP. Clean, disinfect and store eye protection each time it is removed. Eye protection is dedicated to the Community Health Provider
AGMPs for asymptomatic clients not suspected for COVID-19	✓	✗	! PCRA	✓	✓	✗	✗	Full doffing of all PPE. Eye protection require cleaning and disinfecting .

*AGMPs for those clients positive or suspected of COVID-19 should only be performed when medically necessary. All persons in the room are wearing a fit-tested, seal-checked N95 respirator, gloves, gown and face or eye protection.

Note for CHS: Advise families of extra cleaning. Ensure the room is well ventilated, allowing time for droplet settling after therapy is complete.