

## Guidance for Home Health Agencies and other Nursing Agencies, Visiting Physicians, and Vendors entering or working in a Congregate Settings

When seeing residents within a congregate setting it is important to protect yourself and the resident you are seeing within the facility, while also working to minimize potential exposure to other residents and staff in the building. The facility has guidance they have implemented to protect their residents, such as symptom and temperature checks, masking while in the facility, and social distancing guidance that you will need to follow. Additionally, there is general recommendations and guidance for PPE use for resident/patient care in the facility that should be followed. These recommendations are highlighted below.

In addition to the PEE recommended below, individuals who are doing work within a congregate facility as a vendor, outside physician or nurse fall under the appropriate licensing body regulations and guidance, including testing. For vendors entering skilled nursing facilities please review CDPH all facility letter for [mitigation plan recommendations for testing Health Care Personal](#) and other appropriate [all facility letters](#) for further information and recommendations on staff testing. For vendors entering Department of Social Service facilities please review appropriate [Provider Information Notices](#).

What PPE is needed varies depending on the patients COVID status and what care is taking place.

Noted below is the minimum PPE that is needed for care of residents, based on their COVID status, and donning and doffing guidance for PEE use.

### What PPE is needed

COVID **NEGATIVE** residents with **NO** known exposure (green residents): Surgical mask, face shield/eye protection and gloves should be worn with any patient/resident care, as guided by the facility. Note face shield/eye protection may not be required with COVID negative residents with NO exposure if COVID transmission is low in the county as noted in CDC COVID tracker: <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view>. Surgical mask, isolation gowns, gloves and face shield/eye protection should be worn with resident/patient care that have contact care activities with bodily fluids or risk of splash and spray. N95, isolation gowns, gloves and face shield/eye protection should be worn with resident care with aerosol generating procedures, such as nebulizers/breathing treatments.

COVID **NEGATIVE** residents with **KNOWN** exposure **OR** residents experiencing COVID symptoms and awaiting test results (yellow residents): N95, isolation gowns, gloves and face shield should be worn when entering residents' room and for all resident care.

COVID **POSITIVE** residents (red residents): N95, isolation gowns, gloves and face shield should be worn when entering residents' room and for all resident care.

**Note:** If staff entering the facility are using a N95 with an external valve they will need to replace this mask with a N95 without a valve or place a surgical mask/mask over the valve for source control. The external valve protects the wearer, but no one else. Placing a mask over the top will close this valve so the mask can be used to protect both the wearer and others.

### Donning and Doffing

#### Donning PPE

- Do not Don PPE before entering the facility.
  - You may wear your surgical mask or N95 prior to entering the facility, but the facility may give you a new surgical mask or N95.
  - Face shield or eye protection maybe donned at the front of the building.
- You should not put on your gloves or gowns prior to entering the facility. For the most part, you should Don your gloves and gown, after proper hand hygiene, in front of the patient's room.
  - Note, donning location maybe slightly different depending on the outbreak status of the facility. Some facilities may have a donning station outside of the building or in the front for COVID positives residents if they are in outbreak status and you are entering a COVID positive area. You will need to follow proper donning procedures, including donning location, in these cases.
- If you are seeing multiple patients within the facility, you would need to don new PPE for each resident.
  - If you are seeing many COVID positive residents in the COVID wing the facility maybe practicing extended use of the gowns and the gown can be used for multiple patients within the facility. Ensure you are reviewing PPE use and procedures for the facility in these cases.

#### Doffing PPE

- You should remove your gloves and gowns inside the patient room prior to exiting, sanitize hands, and exit room. Hands should be sanitized again.
  - If seeing COVID positive resident in the COVID unit and the facility is practicing extended use gowns, remove your gown and gloves in the designated doffing location for the unit.
- You may continue to wear your surgical mask/N95, but if needed, remove these outside the patients/residents room or doffing area using proper hand hygiene.

For further information, please see: [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/A FS HCP COVID19 PPE 11x17.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/A_FS_HCP_COVID19_PPE_11x17.pdf) for how to put on and take off PPE.

Notes, if staff have not been fit tested for their N95 ensure doing Seal check for FIT <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2018-130/pdfs/2018-130.pdf>.