

DONATED PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

WHAT IS CONSIDERED PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)?

PPE consists of gowns, gloves, masks, facial protection (including masks and eye protection, face shields or masks with visor attachments) and respirators used to create a barrier and prevent exposure to infectious diseases. PPE are deemed medical devices in Canada and are regulated under the Medical Devices Regulations to ensure they are safe, effective and high quality.

Receiving donated PPE is a realistic measure to address the limited supplies available. It is recommended that anyone handling/transporting PPE wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before and after contact with the supplies. If soap and water is not available, use a 70% alcohol based hand rub.

When receiving a PPE donation, it is recommended to perform a general risk assessment regarding the supplies. This includes:

1. Assessing the types of items

- What supplies are being donated?
- Are they appropriate and approved for use in health care?

2. Assessing the condition of the items

- Are the items stored in clean and/or protected packaging or containers?
- Are the items stored in original packaging?
- Are there signs of damage, debris, dirt or moisture on the packaging and/or items?

3. Assessing the location/storage of the source

- Where are the items from?
- Were the items stored in a clean, dry, dust-free area?
- Were there signs of vermin/pests at the previous site?

4. Assessing the transportation of the items

- Were the items transported in a manner that avoids contamination or damage?
- Ensure anyone handling/transporting the items has access to and performs hand hygiene

WHAT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHEN ACCEPTING PPE DONATIONS?

- Donations of N95 respirators and masks should be accepted in sealed boxes and not expired when possible
- Donations of gloves should be accepted in sealed boxes and not expired
- Health Canada is advising the public and health care professionals on important considerations for the use of homemade masks to protect against the transmission of COVID-19

HOW SHOULD PPE AND DONATED PPE BE STORED?

- Donations must be stored in a clean, dry area free of sunlight and possible contaminants
- Bulk containers used for transporting PPE must be inspected for visible contamination, damage or deterioration; cardboard boxes and bags should be emptied of donated supplies to prevent the spread of pests or molds
- PPE received should be placed in a secure and centralized location in the facility
- Have staff assigned to keep a daily inventory of donated PPE or medical supplies to monitor what is needed
- Have staff assigned to monitor and stock PPE supplies in areas where they have access while providing patient care, resident care or screening areas within the facility
- PPE should be placed in areas where staff can easily access it prior to entering the facility
- There must be enough PPE available in different sizes for staff use.
- PPE must be stored in a manner to prevent cross contamination by staff or resident/patient and if possible, stored in clean covered containers to protect supplies in resident/patient care areas
- Disinfectants, alcohol based hand rub and garbage bins that are lined and covered must also be provided in areas where staff put on and take off PPE.

The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety provides [guidance on PPE programs](#) and indicates the importance of staff training on the use, wearing and care of any PPE.