



# US Department of Veterans Affairs COVID-19 Response

## What Type of Mask or Face Covering is Required, and Where?

Guidance as of  
05/27/2020

The Department of Veterans Affairs takes the safety and health of our nation's Veterans, their families, and our outstanding employees very seriously. In this facility, all are advised to maintain effective hand hygiene, physical distancing of at least **6 feet** when possible, and to keep their hands away from their face. A minimum of a cloth face covering is required for source control. A more advanced facemask may be required for health care workers in areas where health care is provided as personal protective equipment (PPE).

### Public and Administrative Areas:

### Non-COVID-19 Area:

### COVID-19 Area:

**Patients<sup>(1)</sup>  
& Visitors<sup>(2)</sup>**

**Face Coverings**  
As source control; not PPE



**Face Coverings**  
As source control; not PPE



Or

**Face Masks**



**Face Coverings**  
As source control; not PPE



Or

**Face Masks**



Face coverings or masks for patients in COVID-19 areas, if clinically compatible, especially when HCWs enter the room

**Staff &  
Volunteers**

**Face Coverings**  
As source control; not PPE



**Face Coverings**  
As source control; not PPE



Not Providing Patient Care

**Face Masks**



Providing Patient Care

**Face Coverings**  
As source control; not PPE



Not Providing Patient Care

**Face Masks**



Providing Patient Care  
without AGP

**N95 Respirator**



Providing Patient Care  
including AGP

Everyone in VA facilities should wear, at minimum, a face covering. This includes visitors and non-clinical staff. Face coverings can be scarves, cloth masks, or other non-medical masks. These should be in compliance with local VA policy.

All health care workers performing direct patient care within 6 feet of an individual who does not have a positive COVID-19 test and is not under observation for COVID-19 should wear a minimum of a face mask. Staff in non-COVID-19 areas must wear a minimum of a cloth face covering for source control or face mask for PPE. Check local VA policy for additional guidance.

All healthcare workers (HCWs) providing direct patient care within 6 feet of a COVID-19 patient (under investigation or confirmed) should wear at a minimum a face mask and additional PPE; N95 respirator may be worn if available. HCWs present during aerosol generating procedures (AGPs) should wear a minimum of an N-95 respirator or equivalent & additional PPE. Additional PPE worn for the care of a COVID-19 patient includes gown, gloves, and eye protection (goggles or face shield). Gowns & gloves are to be disposed of, or changed, before/when exiting a COVID-19 patient room. Check local VA policy for additional guidance, including on extended use/reuse of respiratory protection.

<sup>(1)</sup> Patient face cover/mask for source control unless physically incompatible with treatment. Note: closed-circuit ventilation is source control.

<sup>(2)</sup> End-of-life patients in COVID-19 areas may have limited compassionate visitation

**Disclaimer:** The above chart serves only as a minimum standard and does not replace effective infection prevention & control protocols. N95, KN95, or other equivalent respirators that are given to patients or guests without proper fit testing serve only as source control and should not be mistaken for effective respiratory protection for those in direct contact with infectious persons or in proximity of aerosol generating procedures. Follow "CDC Guidance Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Patients with Suspected or Confirmed Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Healthcare Settings". <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html>