

# Frequently Asked Questions – PPE

## **Where can homecare and personal support workers (including personal care attendants) receive up-to-date information about COVID-19?**

Workers can sign-up to receive updates and the latest news about COVID-19 in Oregon from the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) by visiting [Healthoregon.org/coronavirus](https://healthoregon.org/coronavirus).

OHA answers COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions here: <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/DISEASESCONDITIONS/DISEASESAZ/Pages/COVID19-FAQ.aspx>

Workers are also encouraged to visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).

The Oregon Home Care Commission has a dedicated [health and safety website](#) for homecare and personal support workers. The site contains translated fact sheets and frequently asked questions, videos, and infection control resources.

## **What is PPE?**

PPE stands for personal protective equipment. It is specialized clothing or equipment that protects a person from exposure to bloodborne pathogens and infectious diseases by creating a barrier. They are made to protect the wearer's face, eyes, nose, mouth, skin, hands, respiratory tract, and clothing. The most common types of PPE used by homecare and personal support workers are gloves and surgical masks.

## **When should PPE be used?**

During the COVID-19 pandemic, gloves and surgical masks should be worn when providing direct services and support to an individual, such as helping with personal care, and when in the individual's home. Otherwise, PPE is used when there is a risk of contact with bodily fluids.

The Office of Developmental Disabilities Services (ODDS) has provided additional guidance for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and those who support them. Please follow this link to see an infographic: <https://www.oregon.gov/DHS/SENIORS-DISABILITIES/DD/ODDS%20Resource%20Library/COVID-ODDS-Mask-Infographic-Final.pdf>

## **What is the correct way to put on and take off gloves and masks?**

Information provided by the CDC is available on OHCC's health and safety website ([infection control resources](#)) that provides examples of how to safely put on and take off PPE.

The CDC also offers [videos](#) demonstrating the proper way to put on and take off PPE.

Wash your hands before and immediately after taking off all PPE.

The CDC does not recommend reusing PPE.

## **When can cloth face coverings be used when working as a homecare or personal support worker?**

**The CDC provides important information about cloth face coverings here:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/cloth-face-covering.pdf>

The CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings when leaving your home and in public places like the grocery store or pharmacy.

Consumer-employers or Employers of Record may request you wear a cloth face covering while working.

You may request one cloth face covering for each consumer you support. Please use a clean face covering for each person and wash the coverings after each use. Keep the cloth face coverings in separate bags.

### **How should cloth face coverings be cleaned and how often?**

According to the CDC, cloth face coverings can be cleaned in a washing machine and should be washed after each use. The CDC provides information about how to wash cloth face coverings here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-to-wash-cloth-face-coverings.html>

### **What is the best way to remove a cloth face covering?**

Do not touch your eyes, nose, or mouth when removing a cloth face covering and wash your hands immediately after removing.

### **Where do I find information about making cloth face coverings?**

Please visit the CDC's website at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) for [videos](#) and [tutorials](#) on how to make cloth face coverings.

**Where can homecare and personal support workers find information and training about standard precautions and preventing infectious diseases?**

The Oregon Home Care Commission offers free training for all homecare and personal support workers. Information about how to enroll can be found in the [Elevate](#) newsletter. Workers can learn about standard precautions and preventing infectious diseases by taking these courses (click on the course title for information about the course):

- [Preventing Disease Transmission](#)
- [National COVID-Ready Caregiver Certification](#)

Infection control self-studies developed by the Department of Human Services are also available on the Oregon Home Care Commission's [health and safety website](#):

- [Introduction to Infectious Disease](#)
- [Hand and Respiratory Hygiene](#)