

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH



Renée D. Coleman-Mitchell, MPH
Commissioner

Ned Lamont
Governor
Susan Bysiewicz
Lt. Governor

Date: March 16, 2020

To: Directors of Health/Acting Directors of Health
Hospital Preparedness Coordinators
DEMHS Regional Coordinators

From: Lisa Bushnell, Strategic National Stockpile Coordinator
Connecticut Department of Public Health

Re: Personal Protective Equipment

Due to the global shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE) available for purchase in the medical supply distribution chain, the Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) has submitted a request to the federal government for assets from the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) to support Connecticut's response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

DPH requested N-95 respirators, surgical face masks, gloves, face shields, and isolation gowns. We are presently awaiting a response from the federal government on our request. We are developing a distribution strategy for the PPE we receive. The limited supplies we receive will be delivered to healthcare providers, including emergency medical responders, in both private and public industry to ensure ongoing operations, and the health and safety of patients and workers. We are likely to continue facing PPE shortages, even with the delivery of the SNS assets.

DPH participates in the Emergency Support Function (ESF7): *Resource Support and Private Sector Coordination* workgroup to ensure multi-agency coordination and centralized resource and logistical operations. Multiple state agencies have placed large orders for PPE through the state's Emergency Response Supplies, Services, and Equipment vendor list developed by the Department of Administrative Services. The vendors have notified the State of Connecticut that commercial supplies of PPE are not likely to be filled until May or June.

Municipalities and health care providers should assess current supplies, evaluate utilization of those limited supplies, and implement conservation strategies in an effort to preserve their inventory of PPE. We remind our first responder and emergency medical responder workforce to



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follow standard universal precautions when responding to calls, and to be mindful of established respiratory protection program protocols and guidelines for your employers.

New guidelines from the CDC indicate that health care workers while caring for patients suspected of having COVID-19, can use surgical face masks and face shields to prevent exposure to the coronavirus. The guidelines can be found using the following link:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/infection-control/control-recommendations.html>

Additionally, we have included other important links and information resources for your review:

CT Fire Academy website: fit testing, infectious disease protocols and other information
<https://portal.ct.gov/CFPC>

Strategies for Optimizing N95 Respirators
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/respirators-strategy/index.html>

Release of Stockpiled N95 Filtering Face piece Respirators Beyond the Manufacturer-Designated Shelf Life: Considerations for the COVID-19 Response
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/release-stockpiled-N95.html>

Resources for First Responders and Law Enforcement
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/first-responders.html>

cc: E. Blaschinski, DPH
C. Cepelak, DOC
W. Hackett, DEMHS