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July 20, 2020

TO: Nursing Facilities
Assisted-Living Facilities
Residential Care Facilities

SUBJECT: Masks and eye protection on for all LTCF staff

Dear Long-Term Care Facility Administrators and Staff,

Due to the accelerated spread of COVID-19 in Oregon, we are issuing an updated recommendation that **all LTCF staff** wear both masks and eye protection upon facility entry for the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic.

What does this mean for our facility?

Staff have already been masking when in facility (i.e. universal masking). This update means that staff should wear eye protection in addition to their facemask to ensure the eyes, nose, and mouth are all protected. Face shields or goggles are appropriate, but face shields are preferred as they may provide additional protection for the nose and mouth. Masks and eye protection should be worn at all times while in the facility, **including in breakrooms or other spaces where they might encounter co-workers**. When masks and eye protection need to be removed (e.g., to eat meals or upon leaving the facility), strict social distancing should be observed.

Why is this being recommended?

The virus that causes COVID-19 can spread from individuals without symptoms. The recent increase in case numbers in Oregon increases the likelihood that COVID-19 will be unknowingly brought into long-term care facilities. Universal use of masks and eye protection reduces the release of respiratory secretions from talking, sneezing, and coughing. It also protects the eyes, nose, and mouth from exposure from others. **Wearing masks and eye protection protects you from others and protects others from you.**

What if we do not have enough face shields or goggles?

Information about potential suppliers can be found [here](#). If supply is limited, please see [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) guidance](#) for optimization strategies.

Where can I find more information about this?

A sample infographic is attached for use in your facility. CDC discusses universal masking and eye protection in their [infection control guidance](#). OHA's LTCF Toolkit for COVID-19 is being updated to reflect these changes.

Thank you for all your doing to protect your staff and residents during this challenging time.

Sincerely,

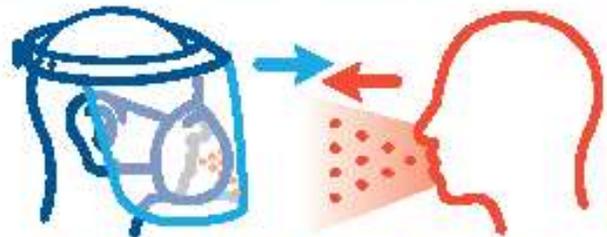
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Universal use of personal protective equipment (PPE) in long-term care facilities

During the COVID-19 pandemic, all staff must wear a mask* and eye protection (face shield or goggles) while in the facility.

Why?

People can have the virus that causes COVID-19 and spread it without showing any symptoms. Wearing PPE reduces the release of respiratory secretions from talking, sneezing, and coughing. It also protects the eyes, nose, and mouth from exposure to splashes or sprays of infectious materials from others.



PPE protects you from others and others from you

* Mask refers to medical grade facemask or respirator. Respirators with an exhalation valve are not recommended, as they allow unfiltered exhaled breath to escape

Best Practice Tip #1



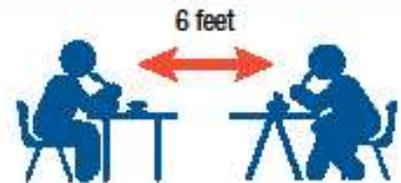
Mask and eye protection should be worn properly at all times. Eye protection should cover the eyes. Masks should cover the nose and mouth.

Best Practice Tip #2



Avoid touching your mask and eye protection. If you need to readjust or remove PPE, use hand hygiene before and after.

Best Practice Tip #3



When mask and eye protection cannot be worn (e.g., during meals), staff should observe strict physical distancing of six (6) feet or more and clean/disinfect the area before leaving.

Remember:

- Universal use of PPE does not replace the need to monitor for illness. You should not come to work ill or if you have recently tested positive for COVID-19. Discuss return to work policies with your supervisor.
- Reusable eye protection must be properly cleaned, decontaminated, and maintained after and between uses. Never share PPE with other staff.

Document accessibility: For individuals with disabilities or individuals who speak a language other than English, OHA can provide information in alternate formats such as translations, large print, or braille. Contact Mavel Morales at 1-844-882-7889, 711 TTY or OHA.ADAModifications@dhsosha.state.or.us.
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