

Long Term PPE Distribution Process

The ongoing response to COVID-19 has put a tremendous strain on supplies of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) across the globe, leading to widespread shortages and supply line disruptions. The State of Wisconsin and our local partners have been working tirelessly over the past month to improve access to this valuable resource, which is needed by those working to slow the spread of this virus and to treat those who are currently COVID-19 positive.

The supply of PPE is extremely limited. It is being prioritized to those who need it for providing direct patient care such as hospitals, clinics, and long-term care providers. In addition, the PPE the State is sourcing is going to essential operations with workers who are directly interacting with possible COVID-19 infections in situations where social distancing is not possible. With the high demand we are experiencing, there is simply not enough PPE to go around.

PPE that the State has been able to access is now being distributed through our county and tribal emergency management directors. The directors have relationships with the vast array of care providers and emergency responders in their communities and are in the best position to assess local priorities and needs.

Care providers are encouraged to reach out to their county and tribal emergency management directors to learn how this distribution process works locally. It is important to recognize that with all the essential care providers and responders who need PPE, county and tribal emergency managers will not have enough PPE to fulfill all the requests they receive.

PPE supplies available through emergency management agencies are intended to only fill critical PPE needs when all other supplies have been exhausted. Before requesting county or state assistance, all public and private entities are expected to make reasonable attempts to source PPE and other needed supplies locally and through existing supply channels. If PPE is received, every effort should be made to conserve it.

We understand that these decisions impact your safety and ability to provide care and we don't take the task for allocating scarce resources lightly. These decisions are being made in conjunction with public health, health care providers and first responders. We all have a shared responsibility to protect our communities, and we ask for everyone's understanding and partnership as we work together to meet the enormous challenges of COVID-19.

Frequently Asked Questions

This document provides answers to frequently asked questions pertaining to the long term strategy for distribution of personal protective equipment.

Why is there a new process?

Initially in the COVID-19 response, the majority of personal protective equipment being received by the State had been from the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS). As the response has evolved, the State has continued to source additional PPE resources through procurement, donations, and the PPE buy-back program. As we come to the end of the SNS resources, we have the ability to merge to one centralized PPE request process, rather than separate request processes for healthcare and non-healthcare partners.

What is the new process?

Under the new process, county and tribal emergency managers will be collecting PPE requests from all applicable agencies in their county. The county emergency manager will then submit a weekly request to the state emergency operations center (SEOC) for the resources needed in their respective county. The SEOC will collect these requests, and allocate a certain amount of resources to each county based on their population and number of healthcare beds, the current state inventory, and the PPE resources requested. Each county's allocation will then be shipped for distribution. Due to the scarcity of these resources, the quantities provided to the county or tribe will likely not meet the quantities requested by the county

Once the resources have arrived to the county, the county or tribal emergency manager and local or tribal health officer will determine how the resources will be allocated to the agencies who had submitted a request.

Where are the resources coming from?

The resources provided through this process will be those that the State has acquired through procurement, donations, and the PPE buy-back program. If the State receives additional resources from FEMA or HHS, these resources may also be provided through this process.

When does my agency use this process?

An agency may submit a request to their county or tribal emergency manager, per the county's established process, if the agency has exhausted all attempts to source PPE through other local channels, and is continuously implementing CDC's guidance regarding the conservation of PPE. This process should not be relied upon as the sole source for PPE, and even if receiving resources through this process, the agency should continue to acquire PPE through other channels.

How do I submit a request to my county emergency manager?

Each county and tribal emergency manager, in coordination with the local or tribal health officer, will determine their own process for accepting requests. Reach out to your [county or tribal emergency manager](#) to find out more about their process.

What additional information will my county or tribe need?

Each county or tribe will determine what information needs to be included in a request for PPE. At a minimum, your county or tribe will need the name, address, and city of your agency. Counties and tribes receiving distributions of State inventory PPE and other essential supplies will be required to submit a weekly report to the State that will detail distributions to local agencies, and this information will be included.

Will I get my full order?

It is not guaranteed that your agency will be allocated any resources. If your agency does receive an allocation from the county or tribe, it likely will not be the full amount requested due to the availability of resources.

Can I submit an order to my county or tribal emergency manager every week?

It is up to the county or tribal emergency manager to determine their process and timeline for accepting requests. However, agencies must continue to utilize and implement CDC guidance in regard to PPE conservation.

When does the new process begin?

County and tribal emergency managers will be submitting their first county or tribal-wide order to the state emergency operations center by Monday, April 27.

Will the PPE be delivered to my agency?

If your agency is allocated PPE from the county level, the county or tribal emergency manager and/or health officer will communicate how to retrieve the resources. The agency may need to pick up the resources from a designated location.

Does this replace the PPE Reserve Request process for long term care?

No. The process for long term care providers caring for a COVID-19 positive individual will continue. If you are a long term care provider caring for a COVID-19 positive individual, and have exhausted all attempts to get PPE from other sources, complete this [form](#) and submit to your county or tribal emergency manager.