

COMPANY NAME

Category: Safety/Infection Control

Number: 7.004.1

Subject: Personal Protective Equipment

Applies to: All Staff

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Purpose: To define what personal protective equipment is necessary for the prevention of infection and under what circumstances it should be used in the personal assistance setting.

Policy: Personal protective equipment for eyes, face, head and extremities, protective shields and barriers reduce the incidence of contamination of hands, but cannot prevent penetrating injuries due to needles and other sharp instruments. The type of protective equipment selected should be appropriate for the task being performed. The Agency will supply appropriate personal protective equipment to personnel.

Procedure:

Personal Protective Equipment

- A. On assignments where personnel have a risk of occupational exposure, the personal assistance organization will furnish, repair and clean, at no cost to personnel, appropriate personal protective equipment so that barrier precautions can be observed and compliance with this policy can be maintained. Personal protective equipment includes, but is not limited to, gloves, gowns, face shields, or masks, eye protection, mouthpieces and pocket masks. Personal protective equipment will be considered appropriate only if it does not permit blood or other potentially infectious materials to pass through to or reach the Agency personnel's work clothes, street clothes, undergarments, skin, eyes, mouth or other mucous membranes under normal conditions of use and for the duration of time which the protective equipment will be used.
- B. All personnel must use appropriate personal protective equipment when exposed to blood or other potentially infectious materials. This equipment will be readily accessible at the work-site and will be issued to personnel prior to arriving on personal assistance assignments where personal protective equipment is needed. In rare and under extraordinary circumstances should Agency personnel decline to use personal protective equipment for brief and temporary periods, they must do so only when in their professional judgment, in that specific instance, its use would have prevented the delivery of health care or public safety services or would have posed an increased

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hazard to the safety of themselves or a co-worker. When this occurs, the Agency will investigate and document the circumstances involved in order to determine whether changes can be instituted to prevent such occurrences. Documentation will be submitted to the Performance Improvement Manager who will present summary reports to the Performance Improvement Committee.

- C. Garment(s) penetrated by blood or other potentially infectious materials, shall be removed immediately or as soon as feasible. All personal protective equipment shall be removed prior to leaving the work area. When removed, it shall be placed in an appropriately designated container for disposal.
- D. Gloves will be worn when it can be reasonably anticipated that personnel may have contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials, when performing vascular access procedures; and when handling or touching contaminated items or surfaces. Any variety of latex gloves is acceptable as long as they are impervious to liquids and strong enough to withstand the rigors of the tasks to be performed. Personnel who are allergic to latex gloves should notify their supervisor so that hypo-allergenic gloves, glove liners, powder free gloves, or other similar alternatives may be provided to them. Gloves must not be so large and loose fitting as to easily slip off during use. Disposable gloves will be removed and discarded after contact with each person, fluid item, surface, if torn or punctured, or when their ability to function as a barrier is compromised. Hands must be washed immediately or as soon as feasible after removal of gloves or any other personal protective equipment. A new set of gloves will be used for contact with each person. Gloves may not be washed or disinfected for reuse.
- E. Masks in combination with eye protection devices, such as goggles or glasses with solid side shields, or chin length face shields, and gowns or aprons must be worn for all tasks or procedures which are likely to generate droplets, sprays, splatters or splashes of blood, or other potentially infectious materials which may be generated. This applies to all cases wherein eye, nose, or mouth contamination can be reasonably anticipated.
- F. Personnel whose tasks include participation in CPR must use a one-way mask when performing mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. The masks will be part of the personal protective equipment and made available by the Agency.

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G. Linen, clothing, or other materials, which are visibly contaminated with blood, body fluids, or other infectious materials, must be placed in bags or containers, which are impervious to moisture. Gloves must be worn while bagging these materials.

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