

American University

PPE Guide for COVID-19

When used correctly, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) can help protect the wearer against various workplace hazards, including COVID-19. PPE is not recommended in every situation or for every person, and the university has an evidence-based approach to determine which workplace tasks require the use of PPE. While indoors on university property, all individuals are required to supply and wear a face covering. For most job tasks, this face covering is the only PPE needed to promote a safe workplace environment. Faculty, staff, and students are permitted to provide their own additional PPE as long as the PPE does not create an additional hazard in the application in which it is worn/used.

The university will also provide appropriate PPE pursuant a university-approved Workplace Reasonable Accommodation. This document describes common types of PPE provided by the university and their approved uses.

New requests for PPE must be made and approved through the Environmental Health and Safety office at pina@american.edu. Once approved, orders can be placed by contacting Procurement at pcd@american.edu. Requests for Workplace Accommodations should be made using the [form](#) on the AU portal.

Nitrile Gloves

Disposable gloves are provided by the university to individuals who perform the following job tasks:

- Work with hazardous chemicals, such as in facilities management, laboratory, and research environments
- Work with heavily (visibly) soiled items, such as trash, or blood and bodily fluids
- Perform patient care where skin-to-skin contact is required as part of that care
- Provide food services

Surgical masks

Surgical masks are one-time use masks and are meant to help block large-particle droplets, splashes, and sprays from reaching the mouth and nose. [Layering](#) a surgical mask beneath a tight-fitting cloth face covering can provide enhanced protection to the wearer.

Individuals visiting the campus premises are expected to bring and wear their own face coverings, as required by the [Health and Safety Directive on Face Coverings](#). Face coverings will be provided to university departments so that they may be distributed as needed to campus visitors and community members who do not have

a face covering available. Departments who regularly host visitors (e.g. welcome centers, information desks) may request a back-up supply disposable masks by contacting Procurement at jasonlee@american.edu or pcd@american.edu.

N95 masks

The university will provide N95 and/or KN95 masks when they are **required** to be worn in accordance with [OSHA](#) and [NIOSH](#) guidelines. Those who are issued an N95 mask for required use must complete respiratory protection training, receive medical clearance, and pass a fit test prior to being issued the mask. This process is coordinated through the Environmental Health and Safety office.

Examples of job tasks where an N95 would be required based on a Job Hazard Analysis include:

- Healthcare providers performing aerosol-generating procedures
- Healthcare providers coming into close contact (within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes) with COVID-19 confirmed or symptomatic patients
- First responders performing emergency healthcare services to suspected or confirmed COVID-19 patients
- Facility managers required to enter the room of someone who has tested positive

Disposable gowns

Disposable isolation gowns are provided by the university to individuals who perform the following job tasks:

- Healthcare providers and first responders providing care to ill individuals, in instances where aerosol generation/bodily fluid contamination is high

Face shields/Eye goggles

Face shields or goggles are provided by the university to individuals in the following circumstances:

- Customer-facing employees when a plexiglass barrier is not in place
- Healthcare providers/first responders in a patient care setting where likelihood of aerosol generation is high

Plexiglass partitions

Partitions are approved for use at point of service and point of sale locations, including reception desks, customer service desks, cash registers, and residence hall entry desks. Partitions will not be provided for meetings in individual offices, classrooms, breakrooms, community bathrooms or lounges.

Disinfectant wipes or spray

Surface transmission is not a major source of [COVID-19 transmission](#). Individuals may choose to provide their own disposable wipes as desired for use in personal workspaces.

Hand sanitizer

Hand sanitizer stations can be found in all major building entry points and/or in elevator bays across campus. Refills can be requested by submitting a 2FIX ticket at 2fix@american.edu.

More Information

Additional information and guidance on PPE can be found at:

[FDA: N95 Respirators, Surgical Masks, and Face Masks](#)

[CDC: COVID-19 Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\)](#)

[CDC: Use Masks to Slow the Spread of COVID-19](#)

[OSHA: Personal Protective Equipment](#)

[OSHA: COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions about Face Coverings](#)

[OSHA: Respiratory Protection Standard for General Industry](#)

[OSHA: Hazard Prevention and Control – Hierarchy of Controls](#)