

INFECTIOUS DISEASE AND INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL COVID-19 COMMITTEE

Bulletin #47 – COVID-19 – ID-IPC – Mask Use and Storage – May 22 2020

COVID-19 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Continuous Use of Masks – Storage of Used Masks

The Pandemic Task Force released the Directive on the [Continuous Use of Masks for Full Shifts in Health-care Settings](#).

To minimize the risk of self-contamination, health-care workers (HCWs) are reminded NOT to let their mask hang off their ear, sit below their chin or hang around their neck. The following steps provide guidance on how to safely remove a mask and store it for reuse when taking a break or eating a meal. If the surgical/procedure mask is NOT damaged, soiled/wet or contaminated, it should be stored for re-use.

- Fold the mask in half (lengthwise or widthwise), so the outside surfaces are touching each other, carefully store in a bag labelled with your name and date. This will avoid destroying the shape of the mask and to prevent contamination.
- If proper storage in a bag is not feasible, masks should be discarded after each use.

HCWs must discard used masks after their shift even if the surgical/procedure mask is NOT damaged, soiled/wet or contaminated. Masks cannot be kept for re-use outside the facilities.

The aim of the directive on continuous use of masks by HCWs is to ensure health care worker safety while maintaining judicious use of masks.