

INFECTIOUS DISEASE AND INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL COVID-19 COMMITTEE

Bulletin #107b – COVID-19 – ID-IPC – Continuous Use of Masks and Eye Protection – Jan 18 2021

**COVID-19 Infection Prevention & Control Guidance
Directive for the Continuous Use of Masks and Eye Protection for Full Shifts in
Healthcare Settings During COVID-19 Pandemic - All Phases**

The Public Health Agency of Canada recommends the continuous use of medical grade face masks by health care workers (HCWs) during all phases of the pandemic and the continuous use of eye protection based on local area epidemiology. This directive is being issued in response to the emerging evidence that asymptomatic, pre-symptomatic or minimally symptomatic individuals can transmit COVID-19 and is meant to prevent transmission of COVID-19 between HCWs, patients and co-workers.

As more information becomes available about the risks of acquiring COVID-19 in the workplace, Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) best practice continues to evolve in each phase of the pandemic. As such, based on local area colour phase, eye protection (goggles / face shield) will now be used continuously with a medical grade face mask as outlined below:

Yellow Phase

- The continuous use of eye protection is optional for HCWs working in clinical settings.

Orange Phase

- The continuous use of facial protection (medical grade face mask and goggles / face shield) is mandatory for all HCWs in high-risk clinical settings; COVID-19 units, ERs, ICUs, ORs and COVID-19 assessments centres.
- The continuous use of eye protection is optional for HCWs working in other clinical settings.

Red Phase

- The continuous use of facial protection (medical grade face mask and goggles/face shield) is mandatory for all HCWs in all clinical settings.

Details are highlighted in [Continuous Use of Medical Grade Face Masks and Eye Protection for Full Shifts in Healthcare Settings During COVID-19 Pandemic – All Phases](#) document.

Eye Protection Ordering Information and instructions for how to clean and disinfect goggles/face shield prior to re-use are included in the document: [*Infection Prevention and Control Cleaning and Disinfection Instructions for Eye Protection and Ordering Information.*](#)

The use of face masks and eye protection, together with diligent hand hygiene, are most critical for preventing transmission of respiratory infections.

Please visit the [IPC Resources COVID-19 Skyline Page](#) for COVID-19 information.