

# COLUMBIA | PREPAREDNESS Fact Sheet 8



As faculty, staff, and students (personnel) begin to return to their University workplaces, it is essential that they follow guidelines on proper respiratory protection practices. This Fact Sheet will help to identify the appropriate level of respiratory protection to be used in a wide variety of settings across campus.

## Types of Facial Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

### Face Coverings (Cloth Face Coverings and Disposable Surgical Face Masks)

- Limit the spread of SARS-CoV-2 virus by physically blocking respiratory droplets shed by the person wearing the mask (e.g., coughing, sneezing or talking) from reaching others.
- Are **required at all times** except while eating or working alone in a private office or space, with the door closed.
- The University will provide two cloth face coverings to all personnel. Individual departments may also provide disposable surgical masks to personnel for certain tasks or roles.
- Personnel may choose to wear a personal face covering throughout the day or a university-provided cloth mask or surgical face mask. Surgical masks are required in wet laboratories or working with hazardous materials.
- Are **not** a substitute for physical distancing or hand hygiene.



#### DO's

Put it over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin.

Try to fit it snugly against the sides of your face.

Cloth face coverings should be laundered (hand-washed) daily

#### DON'Ts

Do not put the covering around your neck or up on your forehead.

### Face Shields

- May be used in **addition to face coverings** to provide an additional physical barrier for the facial area (e.g., fluid contact with eyes and mucus membranes) when personnel cannot avoid working in close proximity for a limited period of time.
- Should **not** be worn in general workplace settings as a substitute for physical distancing or respiratory protection.
- Must be cleaned after use; avoid sharing whenever possible.



### Respirators (Filtering Face Piece-FFR and Air Purifying Respirators-APR)

- FFRs: N-95 and authentic KN-95 respirators are worn by healthcare workers and some researchers whose work involves potential risk of high exposure to viral materials, and thus need highly efficient filtration of airborne particles
- APRs: Half-face, full-face and Powered Air Purifying Respirator (PAPR). Used by research personnel working with SARS-CoV-2 in a BSL-3 facility. They also protect against some gases, vapors and/or particles.
- FFRs and APRs are not required in general workplace settings, nor most laboratories.



N-95

KN-95



Half-face APR

Full-face APR

PAPR

To check the authenticity of a N95 or KN95 visit <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/npptl/usernotices/counterfeitResp.html>

For any questions regarding additional PPE that may be required in a research laboratory setting contact [occusafety@columbia.edu](mailto:occusafety@columbia.edu)