

Long-term Care

Use of Face shields or protective eyewear/goggles

EYE PROTECTION

To align with updated Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines, Indiana Department of Health is now recommending the use of eye protection as a standard safety measure to protect long-term care (LTC) healthcare personnel (HCP) who provide essential direct care within 6 feet of the resident, especially when doing procedures that lead to sprays and splashes.

High-risk examples include assistance in showers, tub rooms, salons, assistance in toileting, hygiene, changing linens, and environmental cleaning.

Some lower-risk examples are giving meds or glucose monitoring, dropping off meals.

This includes the delivery of care for non-COVID residents in facilities with 1 or more symptomatic and/or COVID positive residents, and those who are quarantined in COVID positive, symptomatic, or quarantined residents who are already in transmission-based precautions -Droplet-Contact. For facilities without COVID symptomatic and/ or COVID positive residents, this is up to HCP should they wish to use this added protection.

Changes to the CDC guidance as of July 15, 2020: Added language that protective eyewear (e.g., safety glasses, trauma glasses) with gaps between glasses and the face likely do not protect eyes from all splashes and sprays.

CDC guidance: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html>

WHY IS THIS CHANGE HAPPENING?

The state health department is providing this guidance to align with CDC and their recommended safety measures for HCP; there is no change in our understanding of the risk of COVID-19 infection for LTC personnel.

WHO IS AFFECTED BY THIS RECOMMENDATION?

All LTC facilities care providers (Nurse, CNA, QMA, hospice, EMS, healthcare providers, environmental services, and support staff) who provide direct care within 6 feet of the resident. HCP who provide care for residents confirmed or suspected to have COVID-19 are required to wear eye protection already as part of Droplet-Contact TBP—this practice has already been in place across the state. It is now recommended to wear eye protection when providing direct care within 6 feet of the resident regardless of COVID-19 status.

WHAT TYPE OF EYE PROTECTION IS RECOMMENDED?

Face shields are the recommended source of eye protection and are readily available; if you have access to goggles/safety glasses in your area, those are permitted as well. They must fit close to the face and not have gaps at the side of the glasses/goggles. Note that face shield or goggles should be worn in addition to a facemask; they are not meant to replace them.

TIPS FOR APPROPRIATE USE AND CLEANING

Face shields should not be shared between HCP, however the HCP may reuse a face shield/ goggles/eyewear for multiple resident encounters/days until it is no longer functional.

Face shields/ goggles/eyewear must be cleaned with an approved disinfectant that kills the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Use approved cleaning agents from List N: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-useagainst-sars-cov-2>.