

# CORONAVIRUS UPDATE



## ENA PPE Action Guide

This document is designed by the Emergency Nurses Association to bring proper attention to the issue of personal protective equipment (PPE) amid the COVID-19 pandemic and to help emergency nurses who need proper PPE as they serve on the front lines during this public health crisis. The information within outlines the efforts ENA has taken regarding PPE and will guide emergency nurses in requesting more PPE from hospitals and the federal government.

### ENA's Statement on PPE

On March 27, the Emergency Nurses Association released the following statement relating to the availability and use of personal protective equipment by emergency nurses during the COVID-19 pandemic:

ENA believes emergency nurses and other health care workers (HCWs) providing direct care for suspected and confirmed COVID-19 patients should be provided the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) necessary to safely care for these patients, including PPE that meets National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) standards. ENA also believes recommendations for PPE should be evidence-based and not downgraded based on supply chain. ENA supports emergency nurses and other HCWs in obtaining and using self-supplied PPE that meets NIOSH standards when, in their professional opinion, hospital-supplied PPE supplies are inadequate.

ENA strongly cautions against use of homemade or cloth masks by HCWs in this pandemic. Makeshift or homemade PPE such as bandanas, scarves, and cloth masks are not appropriate PPE as there is no evidence they will adequately protect HCWs. Using homemade PPE also puts HCWs at higher risk for exposure due to poor fit and need for frequent adjustments. Only as a **last resort**, after all options for obtaining appropriate respiratory protection have been exhausted--including working with manufacturers, state and local health departments, other local health care providers, and community resources--should homemade masks be used, in combination with a face shield that covers the entire front (that extends to the chin or below) and sides of the face.

#### References

[CDC: Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Patients with Suspected or Confirmed Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) in Healthcare Settings](#)

[CDC: Checklist for Healthcare Facilities: Strategies for Optimizing the Supply of N95 Respirators during the COVID-19 Response](#)

[WHO: Advice on the use of masks in the community, during home care and in health care settings in the context of the novel coronavirus outbreak](#)

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[BMJ: A cluster randomised trial of cloth masks compared with medical masks in healthcare workers](#)

### Joint Call to Action

On April 14, the [Emergency Nurses Association](#) joined other health care organizations to call on the government, private sector and all Americans to help in the fight against COVID-19.

The statement, “[The Fight Against COVID-19: A Call to Action for America](#),” is supported by ENA, American Association of Critical-Care Nurses, American Association of Respiratory Care, American Nurses Association, American Thoracic Society, Association of periOperative Registered Nurses and Society for Critical Care Medicine, and represents more than 18 million nurses, physicians, respiratory therapists and health care workers.

“If we’re going to stop the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, everyone is going to have to join the fight,” said ENA President Mike Hastings, MSN, RN, CEN. “The government, companies and each person can make a difference as front-line health care workers continue to treat patients. We request that everyone play their part in this to help those who are facing this virus every single day.”

The statement outlines three urgent priorities including:

- The need for PPE. The critical shortage of PPE is putting the health care workforce, patients and other Americans at risk.
- The need for lifesaving equipment, medications and supplies. The deficit of lifesaving equipment, medications and supplies will be paid in lives lost and cause ethical dilemmas for nurses.
- The need to stop the spread. As citizens, it is our moral obligation to act now by staying at home to save lives.

“ENA, and our partners in this statement, are calling for more personal protective equipment as well as the necessary lifesaving equipment that is needed. Health care workers are putting their own health at risk to ensure our communities are safe, but we need more support,” said Hastings.

The full statement is available [here](#).

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## **ENA Partners with AFFIRM for #GetUsPPE Movement**

ENA has partnered with the American Foundation for Firearm Injury Reduction in Medicine on its mission to get emergency nurses, and all health care providers, the proper PPE needed. In addition to a \$5,000 donation to AFFIRM's efforts, ENA is encouraging health care providers to visit <https://getusppe.org/> to help in the fight against COVID-19. This website allows health care workers, and the general public, to make monetary contributions, as well as PPE donations. Additionally, health care providers can request PPE.

ENA encourages health care providers to join the effort by using the hashtag #GetUsPPE and the Facebook Profile Photo Frame created to bring additional awareness to this mission. The frame is available [here](#).

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### **Federal Policy Priorities and Advocacy**

ENA has taken action to request the federal government to push the development and distribution of PPE. The following outlines some of ENA's advocacy efforts:

- ENA partners with ACEP to send a letter to the House Appropriations Committee on Feb. 26.
  - The letters urged passage of appropriations to fund medical equipment, vaccine development, improved diagnostic tests, the Hospital Preparedness Program and Public Health Emergency Preparedness Cooperative Agreements
- ENA joins John Hopkins Health Care Organizations letter on Feb. 28.
  - The letter specifically calls for PPE funding and laboratory surge capacity for testing among other requests.
- ENA distributes Action Alert regarding PPE shortage to EN411 members
  - On March 17, EN411 members received a call to action that resulted in nearly 4,900 advocates sending more than 15,000 letters to Congressional offices.
- ENA President-elect Ron Kraus participated in a meeting at the White House on March 18 with President Trump, Vice President Pence and members of the Coronavirus Task Force.
  - At the meeting, Ron raised the issue of PPE shortages, including N95 masks and urged immediate action to rectify this problem.
- Nursing Community Coalition Letter sent on March 19
  - As part of the Nursing Community Coalition, a letter was sent to request support for health care workers, including funding for adequate supplies of PPE.
- ENA sends letter to Congressional leaders on March 19
  - The letter urged Congressional leaders to prioritize funding for PPE and other medical equipment in the economic rescue bill that was being negotiated.
- Coalition letter sent to administration officials on April 3
  - The letter requests immediate action to alleviate the critical shortage across the nation of ventilators and PPE. The letter also called for a process that is transparent, equitable, based on need and is non-competitive.
- ENA sends letter to Congressional leaders on April 9
  - The letter called for the creation of a federal supply chain czar; additional investments in PPE/other medical equipment and the rapid provision of coronavirus testing kits to areas where testing is not currently available; timely testing for COVID-19 that is readily available; hazard or premium pay for health care providers; and emergency action by OSHA to protect health care workers who face serious risk
- ENA distributes second Action Alert focused on continue PPE shortage.

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- The Action Alert also supported the passage of S. 3568 and H.R. 6390 – both of which would compel the president to fully utilize the Defense Production Act to better supply PPE to health care providers.

As a result of ENA’s efforts, and those of other health care organizations, multiple bills have been signed into law – one of the most important being the CARES Act on March 27. The bill included billions in funding for PPE and other medical equipment and supplies.

ENA continues to advocate on behalf of ENA members, and all emergency nurses, by actively participating in discussions and sending additional letters to members of Congress. Currently, ENA is supporting the Medical Supply Chain Emergency Act of 2020 (S. 3568/H.R. 6390). This bill would require the president to utilize the Defense Product Act to compel manufacturers to produce needed PPE and other equipment and supplies. This includes 500 million N95 respirators; 20 million face shields; 500 million pairs of gloves; 20 million surgical gowns and 200,000 ventilators. You can join ENA in supporting this legislation by sending a letter to Congress through ENA’s [EN411 Action Network](#).

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## Template Letter to Your Member of Congress

Dear REPRESENTATIVE/SENATOR [NAME]:

As a supporter of the Emergency Nurses Association and your constituent, I am writing to urge you to support taking additional steps to ensure that emergency nurses and other front-line health care providers have sufficient equipment and other resources to respond to the coronavirus pandemic.

Despite the enactment of billions of dollars for the purchase of PPE including N95 respirators, emergency nurses still do not have adequate amounts of critical PPE and have been forced to ration and reuse this gear for weeks, against best practices and guidelines related to infection control. This puts health care workers, their patients and families at unreasonable risk of infection. Additionally, states are now fighting to produce these supplies as producers struggle to fill orders.

This is a result of a lack of central coordination at the federal level related to the procurement and distribution of these supplies. I applaud the administration for taking initial steps to invoke the Defense Production Act, but to date, this powerful tool has not been fully deployed, leaving front-line health care workers exposed to COVID-19.

In order to immediately compel the production and organized distribution of PPE and other supplies, I am asking you to cosponsor the Medical Supply Chain Emergency Act of 2020 (H.R. 6390/S. 3568). This timely legislation would compel President Trump to exercise authority under the DPA to arrange for the procurement of at least 500 million N95 respirator masks, 20 million face shields, 500 million pairs of gloves, 20 million surgical gowns and 200,000 medical ventilators.

Furthermore, the bill would make the federal government responsible for the allocation of this gear based on the number of COVID-19 cases in the state. The legislation also takes additional steps to prevent price gouging and ensures that unused supplies will be returned to the national stockpile.

In these unprecedented times, I urge you to take these critical steps to protect our nation's emergency nurses and their colleagues combatting COVID-19. Emergency nurses are on the front lines facing this pandemic. We cannot allow them to go into battle unarmed. Please support the Medical Supply Chain Emergency Act of 2020 (H.R. 6390/ S. 3568) today.

Sincerely,

[NAME]

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## Template Letter to Your State Legislator

Dear REPRESENTATIVE/SENATOR [NAME]:

As a supporter of the Emergency Nurses Association and someone who lives in your state, I am writing to urge you to take additional steps to ensure that emergency nurses and other front-line health care providers are supported during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. You can provide additional support to us in a variety of ways including additional PPE, [ENACTING/EXTENDING] a shelter in place, [FILL IN THE BLANK BASED ON POTENTIAL LEGISLATION OR NEEDS OF YOUR STATE]

[FILL IN THE BLANK ON THE SIGNIFICANT IMPACT YOUR STATE AND HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS WILL EXPERIENCE BASED ON YOUR REPRESENTATIVE/SENATOR'S ACTIONS].

In order to immediately help your state's health care providers, I am asking you to cosponsor the [INSERT STATE BILL INFORMATION].

Additionally, if we want to "flatten the curve" or slow the spread of COVID-19, citizens of [STATE] must not congregate in large gatherings, remain at least six feet apart and practice social distancing at all times. These simple steps can help slow the spread of the virus and will lessen the burden on the health care system in our state. This will help ensure that those who are serving on the front lines can better treat existing positive cases and prepare for those that will still come in.

I request that you help slow the spread by [ENACTING/EXTENDING] [STATE'S] shelter in place order until [DATE].

In these unprecedented times, I urge you to speak up loudly on behalf of our state's emergency nurses and their colleagues combatting COVID-19. Emergency nurses are on the front lines facing this pandemic. If we fall, who will stand with you?

Sincerely,

[NAME]

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## Letter to the Editor Template

To the Editor:

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic is an unprecedented challenge for the United States. Health care providers are on the front lines treating patients and putting their own health at risk to protect communities.

As an emergency nurse, I'm afraid for my health. I'm afraid of contracting COVID-19, of infecting my patients, and of taking this home and infecting my family. However, knowing I'm at risk, none of this has stopped me from going to my emergency department to do my job caring for patients.

This is why personal protective equipment is so crucial in this fight. PPE not only keeps the person wearing it safe, but other patients and the loved one that the health care workers go home to.

As a member of the Emergency Nurses Association, I'm proud to say we have been advocating on our behalf to urge the government to push development and distribution of more PPE. More needs to be done. We need corporations to step up their production and we need the general public to stay at home and follow shelter-in-place orders to slow the spread.

If a health care worker becomes infected, not only do they risk spreading COVID-19 to others, but they can no longer work for at least 14 days. This has a significant impact on the individual, as well as their emergency department and hospital as a whole. Going two weeks without work results in two weeks without pay. The ENA Foundation has developed a COVID-19 Relief Fund for ENA members who are experiencing personal financial difficulties as a result of the pandemic.

Emergency nurses, and all front-line health care providers, need the community's support. Continue to follow guidelines on social distancing and the use of masks or some face covering in public to limit the spread of COVID-19. Consider donations, financial or otherwise, to help ensure your nurses and physicians have the supplies they need. Share a message of gratitude or show them kindness in whatever way you can.

So much can be done on the local level during this public health crisis. We need everyone's help because if we fall, who will stand up for you?

Sincerely,

[NAME]

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## Personal Protective Equipment Resources

In conjunction with federal guidelines for PPE, ENA has developed visual abstracts to help guide you in personal safety best practices.



### Strategies for Optimizing PPE

**Prioritize HCP Safety:**  
**EXCLUDE:** High-risk HCP from contact with COVID-19 positive patients  
**DESIGNATE:** HCP recovered from COVID-19 to care for known or suspected COVID-19 patients

 <p><b>NONE AVAILABLE:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Safety/trauma glasses instead</li></ul> <p><b>PRIORITIZE USE FOR</b> Anticipated splashes/sprays Prolonged face-to-face contact</p> <p><b>REUSE AND REPROCESS</b> Wipe <b>INSIDE</b> to <b>OUTSIDE</b> with disinfectant Wipe <b>OUTSIDE</b> with water or alcohol to remove residue</p>	 <p><b>NONE AVAILABLE:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Disposable lab coats</li><li>• Reusable patient gowns</li><li>• Disposable aprons</li><li>• Combinations of clothing (open back gowns with lab coats, etc.)</li></ul> <p><b>PRIORITIZE USE FOR</b> During high-contact patient care activities (dressing, bathing/showering) For surgical/sterile procedures</p> <p><b>EXTEND USE</b> Wear same isolation gown when interacting with patients infected with same disease</p>	 <p><b>NONE AVAILABLE:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ventilated headboards</li><li>• HEPA portable fan devices</li><li>• Home-made masks (last resort)</li></ul> <p><b>PRIORITIZE USE</b> by patient care activity-type</p> <p><b>EXTEND USE</b> beyond manufacturer-designated shelf-life</p>	 <p><b>NONE AVAILABLE:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Face shields</li><li>• Home-made masks (last resort)</li></ul> <p><b>PRIORITIZE USE</b> by patient care activity-type</p> <p><b>LIMITED RE-USE</b> Fold outer surface inward, store in clean sealable paper bag in between uses</p>
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Information from: "Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)" (14 March 2020). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.  
Prepared by Sue Anne Bell, PhD, FNP-BC, NHDP-BC

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## ENA Personal Protective Equipment Abstracts

Download the "Strategies for Optimizing PPE" image [here](#).

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## Preventing Unintentional PPE Loss During COVID-19 in Healthcare Facilities



IMPLEMENT

### Inventory Systems:



TRACK DAILY USAGE



TAILOR CONSERVATION  
STRATEGIES TO CARE AREAS



IDENTIFY AREAS  
OF HIGH USE



STRATEGIZE DISTRIBUTION  
BASED ON USAGE

Information from: "Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)" (14 March 2020). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.  
Prepared by Sue Anne Bell, PhD, FNP-BC, NHDP-BC

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Download the "Preventing Unintentional PPE Loss During COVID-19 in Healthcare Facilities" image [here](#).

### Additional PPE Resources

- [The Joint Commission Statement on Use of Face Masks Brought From Home](#)
  - This statement outlines The Joint Commission's stance on health care providers bringing their own standard face masks or respirators when their hospital can not provide it.
- [CDC Strategies for Optimizing the Supply of N95 Respirators](#)
  - This document provides federal, state and local public health officials with strategies and options to optimize supplies in health care settings with limited supply.
- [CDC Personal Protective Equipment Burn Rate Calculator](#)
  - The CDC's burn rate calculator is an Excel Spreadsheet designed to help health care facilities plan and optimize the use of PPE.

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## Additional Resources

The Emergency Nurses Association has developed multiple webpages in response to the COVID-19 pandemic including clinical resources, opportunities for support and initiatives related to the ENA Foundation.

- [COVID-19 clinical page](#)
  - This page was designed to aggregate a variety of helpful resources for health care providers, provide micro-learning opportunities through COVID Bytes and ENA Visual Abstracts as well as serve as a hub for ENA communications regarding the pandemic.
- [ENA Together](#)
  - The ENA Together page has information on how to support emergency nurses, and all health care providers. The information is valuable for the general public as well as those looking to help colleagues. You can find a virtual gratitude board, ideas on how to support your local ED and more.
- [ENA Operations](#)
  - The ENA Operations page provides updates for ENA members on all things ENA during the ongoing pandemic. Visit this page for more information on membership, TNCC/ENPC courses and more.
- ENA Foundation
  - The ENA Foundation has created the COVID-19 Relief Fund to help support ENA members who are experiencing financial hardship as a direct result of COVID-19. ENA members who are seeking financial assistance can apply [here](#).
  - To continue supporting emergency nurses through the COVID-19 Relief Fund, the Foundation is accepting monetary contributions from corporations, individuals and organizations [here](#).