

Respiratory Protection Support in Long-Term Care Facilities

DOH 420-403 September 2022



Protect Residents and Caregivers

- Proper respiratory protection:
 - ◆ Decreases respiratory spread of infection to staff and residents (example: COVID-19)
 - ◆ Helps to decrease workplace exposures which can reduce staff absences
- Follow L&I respirator requirements to keep your facility safe!

DOH Trainings:

- Conducting your own fit tests
 - Weekly webinars
 - Hands-on training (onsite)
- Monthly Lunch and Learn on various respiratory protection topics
 - Third Wednesday, 12-12:30p

Visit our website to register for our trainings at www.doh.wa.gov or scan the QR code



DOH assists with:

- Overview of the Respiratory Protection Program—Consultation
- Online Medical Evaluation*
- Onsite fit testing*
- Resources

*These services are available for a limited time

DON'T WAIT TO SIGN-UP!
Email HAI-FitTest@doh.wa.gov

Why do I need to have a respiratory protection program?

It's a regulatory requirement. Chapter [296-842 WAC, Safety Standards for Respirators](#)¹ requires employers to protect workers from respiratory hazards. The pandemic showed that staff in LTC facilities need to use respiratory protection when caring for residents/clients who have COVID-19, are quarantined for COVID-19, or during aerosol-generating procedures (AGPs). Having a Respiratory Protection Program creates the plan for your facility to provide respiratory protection when needed.

How do I get started?

As the owner or lead of your facility, you must designate yourself or appoint someone to put your Respiratory Protection Program together. L&I has created a [template](#)² for you to get your program off the ground. [Visit the DOH website](#)³ (www.doh.wa.gov/ltrcpp) for more information.

¹ [296-842 WAC, Safety Standards for Respirators](#), <https://apps.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=296-842>

² [L&I Respirator Program Template for COVID-19 Prevention in Long-Term Care Facilities](#), https://ini.wa.gov/safety-health/_docs/Respirator-Program-Template%20-Guide-for-N95-Use-in-LTC-During-the-COVID-19-Pandemic.docx

³ DOH webpage, [Respiratory Protection Program for Long-Term Care Facilities](#), <https://doh.wa.gov/public-health-healthcare-providers/healthcare-professionals-and-facilities/healthcare-associated-infections/>

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FAQs

We never take care of COVID-19 patients. Why do we need to do this?

All LTC facilities must be prepared to care for residents/clients who have or have been exposed to COVID-19, other respiratory illnesses, and other respiratory hazards. LTC facilities need to have a plan in place to prevent and control the spread of infection.

I already have a respiratory protection program from 2020. Do I need to update it?

Yes. The Respiratory Protection Program is an [ongoing program](#) that you will need to maintain. It requires periodic review and needs to be updated with current standards and guidance from state and federal agencies.

Why can't I just do the fit test and use the N95?

You won't know if your employees will be safe unless they get a medical evaluation, are trained on how to properly use the respirator, and make sure it fits properly. These requirements need to be done on a regular basis.

Can I do my own fit test?

Yes. Facilities can appoint individuals to become fit test conductors. Fit test conductors need to learn and follow the procedures in WAC 296-842 to conduct a valid respirator fit test. DOH offers fit test conductor training for LTC facilities. Please [visit the DOH website](#)³ for more information.

Where can I find more N95s?

Your facility needs to have and maintain an adequate supply of fitted respirators. [Visit the DOH website](#)³ for information about where to get more N95 respirators.

Please visit our website for more information:

www.doh.wa.gov/ltrcpp

