



## COVID-19 Surge Planning FAQ: Personal Protective Equipment (Current as of: April 22, 2020)

[Click here for a Process Map for requesting/acquiring PPE from the State-Managed Caches](#)

[Click here for the full MDH PPE Prioritization Protocol](#) (April 10, 2020)

**QUESTION:** What is the process for requesting / acquiring Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other critical supplies from state or regional sources during the COVID-19 emergency?

Minnesota's State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) maintains a stockpile of PPE that it distributes to hospitals, long-term care, EMS, clinics, and other health care providers. The State continually works to acquire inventory, and the materials on hand change daily, as existing supplies flow out to sites and new supplies arrive.

**What equipment or supplies are available?** The available inventory is limited to face masks or surgical masks, N95 respirators, isolation/disposable gowns, gloves (counted per glove, not by pairs), face shields, and Powered Air Purifying Respirator (PAPR) Hoods.

**Who are the key players in the distribution process?** The SEOC controls and manages the inventory. It works to monitor PPE shortages and coordinate distribution of supplies through eight [Health Care Coalitions \(HCCs\)](#), each led by a Regional Health Care Preparedness Coordinator (RHPC). Providers should continue to work with your regional HCC during the COVID-19 response.

**What is the process to obtain resources from the State?** There are two steps in the process: Mitigation Efforts and Submitting a Request.

**1. Mitigation Effort Assumptions:** Because supplies are limited, the State asks providers to do the following before submitting a request:

- Pursue all available options to obtain PPE on your own, including from within your own organization, if you are part of a larger health system, and through your regular ordering and procurement processes. NOTE: If you have a confirmed case, be sure to let your supplier know. If your supplier has PPE in stock, this may allow them to release additional supplies to you.
- Conserve the PPE that you do have, following the [CDC's recommended conservation strategies](#).
- Contact your regional [Health Care Coalition \(HCC\)](#) for support before submitting a request to the State.

Be prepared to describe your efforts in these areas when you submit a request.

**2. Submitting a Request to the Statewide Health Care Coordination Center (SHCC):** Providers should report resource needs through the [Minnesota Department of Health REDCap web platform](#).

For each of the items you request (face masks or surgical masks, N95 respirators, isolation/disposable gowns, gloves, face shields/eye protection, and PAPR Hoods/Covers) you will need to provide the following information:

- Quantity needed
- Size (where applicable)
- How many days of supply you have left for that item

The request form encourages you to use the [CDC's Personal Protective Equipment Burn Rate Calculator](#) to estimate your PPE needs, and it asks that you upload an Excel file with your calculations. If you are in crisis and do not have the capacity to complete the calculator (or need technical assistance to do so), we recommend that you submit your request without uploading the file and make a note to that effect in the Additional Comments field.

### **How does the State evaluate requests? How does it decide who will receive PPE?**

Unfortunately, submitting a request does not guarantee that you will receive supplies.

Requests are categorized and responses triggered according to the following severity standards:

- Urgent: No supplies left – Red (Crisis)
- Priority 1: 0-3 days supply in current facility inventory – Red (Crisis)
- Priority 2: 4-7 days supply in current facility inventory – Yellow (Contingency)
- Priority 3: 8 days and more supply in current facility inventory – Green (Conventional)

*Access Process Map at top of page for detailed steps in request evaluation and processing.*

### **Should we still submit a request, if we do not have a COVID-positive case?**

No, not unless you get to a crisis level of PPE capacity as described above.

### **Will we receive a response from the State, telling us whether we are or are not going to receive supplies? How will that be communicated?**

Yes, you will get a response back that your items are on the way or that the request is denied.

### **How often should we submit a request?**

Any time you reach a crisis level of PPE capacity.

### **Who do I contact for more information?**

Contact your local [Regional Health Care Preparedness Coordinator](#) through your health care coalition.

You may also contact the Minnesota Healthcare Resource Call Center at **1-833-454-0149** (toll free) or **651-201-3970** (local). The Call Center is designed to be a provider resource for a variety of needs and questions, including PPE. It will be staffed 7 days a week, and a system will be developed for routing after-hours emergency calls to someone who can assist.