



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
**DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS**  
P.O. Box 41100 • Olympia, Washington 98504-1100

January 28, 2022

**TO:** All Prisons Staff  
**FROM:** Sean Murphy, Deputy Secretary  
**RE:** **N-95 Respirator Fit Testing Guidance**

We continue to experience a significant increase in positive cases of COVID-19 amongst staff and our population statewide. The high number of positive cases is anticipated to continue and as a result we must review our current protocols and adjust as needed to ensure the highest level of protection for our staff and the individuals incarcerated in our care.

In addition to our current protocols, to include mandatory COVID-19 vaccinations for staff, routine testing of staff and incarcerated individuals, and adherence to PPE guidelines, we are now preparing for the potential expansion of N-95 respirators use for staff. Currently, N-95 respirators are required for those staff working in medical isolation. The N-95 respirators offer further protection and are an essential tool for working with COVID-19 positive individuals. Staff and incarcerated individual safety are our priority and the motivation for this potential action.

[DOC Policy 890.090 Respirator Program](#) identifies staff positions that are required to be fit tested and during our response to COVID-19 many staff have volunteered to be fit tested for respirators. We truly appreciate your efforts, thank you. If positive cases continue to rise, fit testing for respirators may become mandatory.

**We are asking all custody and Health Services staff who may not already be fit tested to:**

- Complete pages 1-3 of the [DOC Form 03-219 Respirator Medical Evaluation Questionnaire](#), and
- Email the form using the Subject Line “*MEQ Clearance, Your Last Name, Your First Name, Your Facility*” to [DOC Occupational Health and Wellness Unit](#) by February 4, 2022.

This questionnaire will help us in being pro-active and to prepare for a potential change to N-95 respirator use. If you are currently fit tested for a Department gas mask or other respirator, you have satisfied the medical requirement and you do not need to complete a new medical questionnaire.

After submitting your evaluation questionnaire, a licensed health care provider (LHCP) will review your responses to ensure it is safe for you to be fit tested for an N-95 respirator. Following approval from the LHCP, fit testing will be coordinated through the safety program.

You should know that there is an open Demand to Bargain with Teamsters Local 117 to further discuss the impacts of mandatory N-95 respirator use for staff. We will continue to engage in conversations with the Teamsters and keep you informed as we move forward in our response to COVID-19.

Thank you for your continued cooperation as we work together to keep each other, our incarcerated population, and the community safe and better protected against the spread of COVID-19.