

## PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

1. General. CAF members serve with greater strength and their families support them with more confidence when they are trained, properly equipped and trust that their kit will permit successful operation in an uncertain environment. The COVID-19 environment in which tasks will be conducted is new and must be managed with an informed understanding of the identified risk levels. Leadership must ensure that the risk and required level of PPE for any particular task is understood. Further, Tactics, Techniques and Procedures (TTPs) are as important as PPE, and their proper execution must be adhered to at all times.

2. Mitigation/TTPs. In the hierarchy of control measures against COVID-19 infection, the best preventive measures, emphasized by both the Surgeon General's staff and Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), are physical distancing and hand washing. These measures must be applied to the greatest possible extent in all risk environments. TTPs include avoiding touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands, coughing/sneezing into a tissue or your sleeve and not your hands, maintaining 2 metre distance between people as much as possible, hand washing for 20 seconds with lathered soap, or hand rubbing for 15 seconds with > 60% alcohol based hand rub (when hands are not visibly soiled). TTP Instructions and signage are available from PHAC at <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/phacaspc/documents/services/publications/diseases-conditions/coronavirus/covid-19handwashing/covid-19-handwashing-eng.pdf>.

3. PPE Table. The enclosed table provides PPE options for general duty personnel based on types of employment and risk of exposure to COVID-19. Risk is based on proximity and frequency of possible exposure. Separate tables have been published for health care providers, as well as military police and firefighters who serve as emergency medical first responders. In the event that non-medical personnel are called on to assist in the performance of medical procedures, they will wear PPE as directed by on-site medical staff. PPE will be issued to all CAF members deployed and will be carried at all times:

- a. LOW Risk – No contact. No contact with infected or symptomatic persons or their environment.
- b. MEDIUM – Indirect contact. No direct or close contact (within 2 metres) with infected persons, but contact with their belongings or environment, such as carrying their equipment or disinfecting their room. Members can also designate an environment as MEDIUM risk when operating near people that do not respect social distancing and/or do not employ other countermeasures, and could therefore pose a risk of COVID-19 transmission; and
- c. HIGH – Close or Direct contact. Direct or close contact (within 2 metres) of infected or symptomatic persons.

4. Physical Distancing/Non-Medical Masks. CAF members must endeavour to maintain a 2 metre spacing from others as much as is possible. PHAC has recently released guidance on the use of non-medical masks (commercial masks or homemade cloth masks/face coverings) as an additional measure that you can take to protect other people around you in an otherwise low risk environment.

If CAF members are unable to maintain a 2 metre physical distance from others due to work or close living circumstances, the following guidance applies:

- a. On Duty. Where no specific PPE requirements already exist as per the table below, CAF recommended masks (see para 5) shall be worn for the periods of time that you are unable to physically distance yourself from others (i.e., onboard military transport, etc); and
- b. Off Duty. Non-medical masks that meet PHAC or CDC specifications (see para 5) should be worn for the short periods of time that you are unable to physically distance yourself from others while off duty in public spaces (i.e., grocery shopping, traveling in elevators, etc).

Risk	COA	TTP	Respiratory	Eye/Face	Hands	Body
HIGH	Direct or close contact	Hand hygiene and distancing where possible	Surgical mask	Ballistic eyewear, safety glasses or safety goggles	Gloves (nitrile) or any impervious gloves e.g. latex, butyl rubber gloves, dishwashing gloves, waterproof gloves	Disposable commercial coveralls
MED	Handling of contaminated material or contact w/ people not employing counter measures	Hand hygiene and distancing where possible	Surgical mask	Ballistic eyewear, safety glasses or safety goggles	Gloves (nitrile) or any impervious gloves e.g. latex, butyl rubber gloves, dishwashing gloves, waterproof gloves	Disposable commercial coveralls
LOW	Not able to maintain 2m physical distance	Hand hygiene and distancing where possible	CAF recommended mask	Nil required	Nil required	Uniform/environmental clothing
	Physical distancing is maintained	Hand hygiene and 2 m distancing	Nil required	Nil required	Nil required	Uniform/environmental clothing

5. CAF Recommended Facemasks. As national stocks of surgical and medical masks remain under pressure and must be allocated as a priority to health care workers, the following viable options exist for members when donning a mask is recommended:

- a. Commercial, industrial, hobby dustmask and cloth mask;
- b. Improvised mask using a scarf, neck gaiter, balaclava or sewn according to Public Health Agency of Canada or the US Centres for Disease Control specifications <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>. As much as is possible, CAF issue clothing should be used for improvised masks; and

- c. Surgical mask (should be reserved for MEDIUM to HIGH risk activities and medical personnel, if possible, but can be used for LOW risk activities if no other options exist).
6. Facemask Guidance. Masks alone will not prevent the spread of COVID-19 and should be used in combination with handwashing and physical (social) distancing.
- a. Masks should be well-fitted (non-gaping). These masks can become contaminated during use. You must avoid moving the mask around or adjusting it often. Also, masks should not be shared with others;
  - b. Cloth masks should be changed as soon as they get damp or soiled. They should be placed directly into a washing machine or a bag that can be emptied into a washing machine and then disposed of. Cloth masks can be laundered with other items using a hot cycle, and then dried thoroughly. Non-medical masks that cannot be washed should be discarded and replaced as soon as they get damp, soiled or crumpled; and
  - c. Remember that used masks should be considered as potentially contaminated. Do not touch the front of the mask or the inside of the mask, instead removing it by the ties or straps. Carefully place disposable masks and gloves in regular garbage containers and immediately conduct handwashing.