

KN95 Use

Face coverings must be worn by all faculty, staff, contractors, visitors and students while inside a University facility or otherwise inside a building on University Grounds or on any University property when in the presence of others (e.g., common workspaces, meeting rooms, etc.). In University buildings with laboratory and research spaces, a face covering must be worn at all times regardless of whether in the presence of others or not. Facemasks must also be worn on University transit buses. Appropriate use of face coverings or facemasks is critical in minimizing risks to others near you. COVID-19 can be spread to others even if no symptoms are being displayed. [Note: A face covering is not a substitute for social distancing or other COVID-19 protocol.]

All University of Virginia-Facilities Management employees who are required to wear a respirator to limit exposure must be enrolled in the Facilities Management Occupational Health and Safety (FM-OHS) Respiratory Protection Program. Employees who are not required to wear respiratory protection may request permission for voluntary use from FM-OHS. Employees who receive permission to voluntarily use respiratory protection are responsible for maintaining the requirements of this *Voluntary Use of Respiratory Protection Agreement*.

Appendix-D to Sec. 1910.134 (Mandatory): Information for Employees Using Respirators or KN95's When Not Required under the Standard

KN95 filtering face piece respirators are supposed to provide 95% protection against all particles that are greater than 0.3 μm in diameter. This means that the mask may to protect you from bacteria, viruses, pollution particles, fine particles, dust, smog, pollen, and reduce the risk of bacterial and viral infections. **Do not wear your KN95 respirator into work environments, which have been previously identified as requiring a respirator.**

There are currently not enough studies on the effectiveness of a KN95 and Coronavirus. However, they can be worn as part of the protective measure strategy in regards to infection transmission. Wearing a KN95 does not eliminate the need to physical distance.

Respirators are an effective method of protection against identified hazards when properly selected and worn. Respirator use is encouraged, even when exposures are below the exposure limit, to provide an additional level of comfort and protection for workers. However, if a respirator is used improperly or not kept clean, the respirator itself can become a hazard to the worker. Sometimes, workers may choose to wear respirators to minimize exposures, even if the level of hazardous substance does not exceed the limits set by OSHA standards. If your employer provides respirators for your voluntary use, or if you provide your own respirator, you need to take certain precautions to be sure that the respirator itself does not introduce a hazard.

You should do the following:

1. Read and heed all instructions provided by the manufacturer on use, maintenance, cleaning and care, and warnings regarding the respirators limitations.
2. Choose respirators certified for use to protect against the contaminant of concern. NIOSH (National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health) is part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and is the agency that certifies respirators. A label or statement of certification should appear on the respirator or respirator packaging. It will tell you what the respirator is designed for and how much it will protect you.
3. Do not wear your respirator into atmospheres containing contaminants for which your respirator is not designed to protect against. For example, a respirator designed to filter dust particles will not protect you against gases, vapors, or very small solid particles of fumes or smoke. **Do not wear your KN95 respirator into atmospheres that a Respirator in which you have been fit tested for is required.**
4. Keep track of your respirator so that you do not mistakenly use someone else's respirator.
5. To put the KN95 mask properly, make sure to do as follows; you should wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water or alcohol-based sanitizer before putting the mask. Hold the ear loop mask and nosepiece facing up and place the mask under your chin. Stretch the ear loops over each ear.

The following requirements should be reviewed by both the Supervisor and their Employee:

- Employees approved to voluntarily use respiratory protection are permitted to wear a NIOSH-approved filtering face piece only. A filtering face piece means a negative pressure particulate respirator with a filter as an integral part of the face piece or with the entire face piece composed of the filtering medium. FM-OHS allows filtering face pieces which have an N designation and are 95-99% efficient (ex: N-95, N-99). Other respirators such as elastomeric half or full-face respirators are not permitted for voluntary use.
- By agreeing to voluntarily use respiratory protection, the employee is ensuring that they are medically healthy enough to use a filtering face piece.
- The employee must inspect the KN95 or filtering face piece for damage and contamination before each use. It is their responsibility to ensure the filtering face piece is clean, stored, and maintained so that its use does not present a health hazard. If the filtering face piece becomes damaged or soiled, it must be disposed of.
- If the employee experiences issues, such as difficulty breathing, while wearing a filtering face piece, they should leave the area, discontinue using the respirator, and contact their supervisor and FM-OHS before proceeding with the task.
- When modifications to a job task involving the use of a respirator occur or if new hazards are introduced into the work area, the employee must contact their supervisor and FM-OHS to evaluate these changes before proceeding.

By signing below, you are indicating that you have read and understand the information provided on this form, and are accepting responsibility for the requirements of this agreement for voluntary use of respiratory protection. This form must be signed by both the supervisor and their employee. Retain a completed copy of this form for both the supervisor and employee's records, and return a copy to FM-OHS for recordkeeping.

Employee Name (Print)

Employee Signature

Date

Supervisor Name (Print)

Supervisor Signature

Date