



# CALIFORNIA CORRECTIONAL HEALTH CARE SERVICES



## MEMORANDUM

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**Date:** April 6, 2020

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**To:** California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) All Staff  
California Correctional Health Care Services (CCHCS) All Staff

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**From:**

*Original Signed By*  
Connie Gipson  
Director, Division of Adult Institutions  
California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

*Original Signed By*  
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Director of Health Care Operations and Statewide Chief Medical Executive  
California Correctional Health Care Services

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**Subject:** **STAFF USE OF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)**

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We understand the importance and urgency surrounding the availability and use of personal protective equipment (PPE), particularly masks, for CDCR/CCHCS staff and the incarcerated population. Our top priority is doing everything we can to provide appropriate protection to slow the spread of COVID-19 within our institutions.

We must face the reality that during this global pandemic, CDCR and CCHCS are not immune from the unprecedented demand for more PPE to protect those on the frontlines. While we are not the only organization impacted by this shortage, we are working every day to increase our supplies, including reusable barrier cloth masks manufactured by the California Prison Industry Authority (CALPIA). While we work to expand our supply, we all need to do our part to make sure that PPE, especially masks, are utilized in the most appropriate and efficient way possible. We need a mutual understanding of PPE and develop innovative solutions to help increase our supply.

See [COVID-19 Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\) Guidance and Information](#) from CDCR/CCHCS Public Health.

PPE including “medical grade” masks (N95 and surgical) should only be used by both CDCR and CCHCS staff as recommended in the memo above. The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) and [California Department of Public Health \(CDPH\)](#) issued guidance recommending face cloth covering in the general public and in close quarters. We understand that additional facial protection can potentially limit “droplet” transmission while also offering some peace of mind to our staff,

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their families, stakeholders and our population. To help address this moment of need, CALPIA has started manufacturing two-ply, cotton, reusable barrier masks that we will start distributing to our population in quarantine settings this week. Distribution of the masks will begin for inmates in quarantine and medically fragile inmates. As CALPIA continues to expand the production of these masks, we will also make them available to the general population and staff who do not have access to face coverings as a precautionary measure as supply allows. CALPIA is making 800 masks per day between two locations and will continue to ramp up to full production to meet the expected needs.

CALPIA also began ramping up their brand new production of hand sanitizer, which has already started arriving at most institutions and locations. We are extremely grateful for CALPIA and our population workers providing these valuable services in such a short time frame.

## **FACE COVERINGS (REUSABLE BARRIER CLOTH MASKS)**

While we continue internal production and procurement of PPE, CDCR and CCHCS will also follow the recently released [guidance](#) from The Joint Commission (TJC), a trusted health care accreditation organization, by allowing staff to bring in a personal supply of reusable barrier (cloth) masks and approved medical masks if supply is not readily available. Any personally provided mask must be appropriate for the workplace and cannot contain any inherently offensive logos, graphics or text. Designer face masks that have skulls, "gate keeper," "punisher," logos, etc. on them (motorcycle type) would not be appropriate and employees will not be permitted to wear while on duty. The Department assumes no responsibility for personally owned face coverings. Staff will be required to remove face coverings for identification purposes at entry points.

**Recommended PPE as described should be utilized first; if recommended PPE is not available use the most comparable coverage.**

## **EXPANDING SUPPLY**

The CDCR and CCHCS procurement teams are rigorously searching for PPE supplies, especially masks, to purchase. If you have a lead, please send the information to [COVID19@cdcr.ca.gov](mailto:COVID19@cdcr.ca.gov). We are looking into innovative solutions we may never have considered before, such as smaller supply vendors and more. Our top priority is the safety of all those who live and work in our facilities, and we are doing all we can to get you the protection you need.

Please continue to provide feedback to the local leadership at your facility, headquarters and the CDCR/CCHCS COVID-19 Department Operations Center.

We truly appreciate all of our staff working hard on the front lines as we are making unprecedented changes to our operations to keep everyone healthy and safe. There are sure to be changes over the next several weeks, and so we thank you for the flexibility, patience and support for that you all have provided to each other. We are all CDCR Strong.

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