

Guidelines for Agency Home Support Workers Using ASTM Masks

According to COVID-19 Outbreak Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Guidelines approved on April 15, 2020, Home Support Workers (HSWs) are essential health care workers and will require wearing an ASTM mask while providing direct care to clients in their home.

Based on information collected from the home care agencies, a supply of ASTM masks is being provided to the agencies for the HSWs in accordance with the PPE guidelines. Each HSW providing direct care to clients will be provided with one ASTM mask per 12 hour shift. The following conditions apply:

- The HSW is must follow donning and doffing guidelines. Please refer to links below for instruction and focus on the mask component only.
 - www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/publichealth/cdc/PPE_Putting_It_On.pdf
 - www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/publichealth/cdc/PPE_Taking_It_Off.pdf
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ww0Rf079MZ4> .

Can the mask be safely stored within the client's home when the HSW must remove it to eat, drink, during their shift?

Yes, masks can be safely stored in the client's home or in-between visits to client homes when the HSW must remove it to eat, drink, during their shift. Safely stored, means the mask is taken off and put on per donning and doffing guidelines and placed in a clean dry area where it will not touch any other item/surface/person. Hands must be washed with soap and water or sanitized per donning and doffing guidelines The HSW can wear the mask while travelling between clients/ homes.

Here are two examples of safely storing your mask during your shift or split shift.

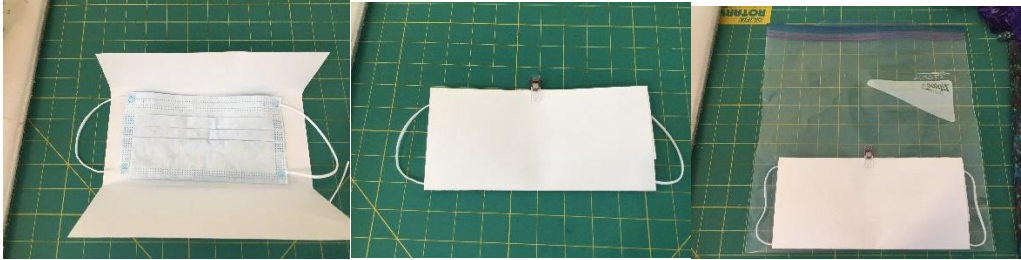
Example 1:

- Wash/sanitize hands
- After you take it off, place it flat, outside of the mask facing down, on a clean paper towel.
- Wash/sanitize hands

Example 2:

- Lay it flat on a piece firm material (e.g. card stock) that can be tri-folded over the mask keeping the front of mask from touching the inside of the mask. Then place it in a plastic bag for safe storage for next use during your shift.
- 8 1/2 x 11 card stock, folded down 3 inches from top, four inches up from bottom
- Write 'front of mask' on inside middle of card stock
- Wash/sanitize hands
- Carefully remove mask ear loops or ties
- Place mask with 'front of mask' facing down in middle of card stock
- Fold top down, bottom up, leaving loops and/or strings on the outside

- Clip using paper clip, clothes pin, or fabric clip, etc.
- Insert the now covered mask into a ziploc bag for storage
- Wash/sanitize hands
- Reverse procedure to reuse mask



- It is not recommended to place the mask directly in a bag as when it folds over, the outside touches the inside and contaminates it. Also, it's more difficult to take the mask out of the bag without contaminating yourself.

Can the mask be used in multiple client homes?

Generally, it is a foundational concept in infection prevention and control practice, that masks should not be re-worn. However, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and PPE shortages the mask can be used in multiple client homes. Masks should be disposed of and replaced when they become wet, damp, or soiled (from the wearer's breathing or external splash.)

At this time, wearing a face shield in addition to a mask for the full duration of visits is not recommended.

For clients with ILA or suspected/confirmed COVID-19, the HSW will don and doff PPE (mask, face shield, gown and gloves) between clients (do not wear for multiple clients) per droplet and contact precautions.