


# MEMORANDUM

LOUISVILLE METRO POLICE DEPARTMENT

GREG FISCHER  
MAYOR

STEVE CONRAD  
CHIEF OF POLICE

**TO:** All Personnel

**FROM:** Steve Conrad  
Chief of Police 

**DATE:** April 29, 2020

**RE:** Procedures for Respiratory Protection Reuse  
Special Order #20-020

With the existing COVID-19 pandemic, the Louisville Metro Police Department (LMPD) recognizes the need to modify the traditional methods of discarding personal protective equipment (PPE) to assist in the prevention of PPE depletion. Reuse refers to the practice of using the same N95 mask or air-purifying respirator (APR) filter for multiple encounters with individuals, who are not presumptive or confirmed COVID-19 cases, by removing it (i.e. doffing) after each encounter. The masks are stored between encounters to be worn again (i.e. donned) prior to the next encounter with an individual. Recommendations may be changed based on the Centers for Disease Control's (CDC's) guidance and the availability of supplies.

This pandemic has resulted in a nationwide shortage of N95 respirators available for the protection of first responders. In order to aid in the alleviation of the N95 respirator shortage and to conserve this critical resource, a process using vaporized hydrogen peroxide (VHP) to decontaminate/sterilize used (potentially contaminated) respirators is being initiated at the University of Louisville (UofL). This decontamination process is also in accordance with the CDC's National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) optimization of PPE supply.

Each division or specialty unit will be responsible for maintaining the N95 reuse collection point within their facility. The collection point will be a garbage can lined with a biohazard bag. Members should adhere to the following procedures:

## **Engineering Controls**

The following procedures apply to the use of masks and filters:

- It is recommended a cloth mask or N95 mask be worn for all contacts.
- An Avon APR (i.e. gas mask) shall be worn when contacting known COVID-19 positive person(s).
- An N95 mask can be reused, which HAS NOT been contaminated, within a tour of duty.
- Any N95 mask or APR filter that is obviously damaged will be discarded.
- N95 masks and APR filters will be placed in separate plastic Ziploc storage bags between each use.
- The Ziploc bag will be used until it becomes contaminated with an encounter with a known positive COVID-19 person(s), is damaged, or will no longer seal.
- Hands will be cleaned with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer before, and after, touching, or adjusting, the N95 mask or APR filter.
- A pair of clean (non-sterile) gloves will be used when donning a used N95 mask and performing a user seal check on the APR.
- A safety inspection will be performed, which will include a visual inspection of the mask for physical damage (e.g. checking the straps for stretching so they no longer provide an adequate seal to the face, nosepiece and fit enhancements, broken/damaged, etc.)

## **Secondary Exposure**

- Secondary exposures can occur from mask reuse if respirators are shared among users and at least one (1) of the users is infectious (symptomatic or asymptomatic). Thus, N95 masks must only be used by a single user.
- The most significant risk of contact transmission is from touching the surface of the contaminated mask then touching the face, mouth, nose, or eyes.
- The N95 mask should not be worn around the neck or placed on the head in-between runs. When the mask is placed around the neck or on the head after use it greatly increases the risk of the user contaminating themselves, others, and cross-contamination of equipment.

## **Intra-Departmental Procedures**

The N95 Mask will be used in accordance with the LMPD Procedure for Respiratory Protection Reuse. DO NOT throw away a used N95 mask!

- Responders will maintain the N95 mask in its protective wrapper in its original packaging until it is ready to use.

- Avoid touching the inside of the mask when removing it after each use.
- Place the used mask in a Ziploc bag.
- DO NOT touch your face when taking the mask on and off.
- Clean your hands after each use using soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- After the tour of duty, the N95 will be placed in the provided Ziploc bag and placed in the N95 reuse bag collection point located within each division or specialty unit.
- The officer will notify their commanding officer of the N95 use and seek an available replacement.
- A member of the logistics team will go to each division and pick up the used masks contained within the N95 reuse bag collection point.
- When masks are returned, they will be redistributed to the divisions.

### **LMPD Process – Reuse of Avon APR Filters**

- While wearing gloves, remove the mask.
- Remove the filter from the mask.
- Wipe the mask with soap and water.
- DO NOT immerse the filter in water. Wipe the outside of the filter with soap and water.
- Place the red cap back on the filter.
- Place the filter in a Ziploc bag.
- Wash your hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Allow the mask to air dry and then place it back in the carrier.
- Filters can be used until:
  - They become difficult to breathe through; or
  - The filter becomes damaged.

### **Use of Cloth Masks/Surgical Masks**

A cloth mask is any face covering, such as a surgical mask, scarf, or handmade mask, not manufactured to the N95 NIOSH filtration standard. The CDC recently updated its guidance on the use of cloth masks. Officers may wear a cloth mask per the CDC's guidance. The use of a cloth mask DOES NOT offer any respiratory protection to the officer. The CDC advises the use of simple cloth face coverings to slow the spread of the virus by reducing its transmission to others. Cloth masks are being provided to officers as they become available. Officers may wear their own cloth masks if they are of a tasteful design (no offensive pictures or wording).

## **Use of Cloth Masks/Face Coverings**

Cloth masks/face coverings should:

- Fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face.
- Be secured with ties or ear loops.
- Include multiple layers of fabric.
- Allow for breathing without restriction.
- Be able to be laundered and machine-dried without damage or a change to its shape.

In order to obtain new PPE, see your division command staff. If commanding officers have any questions, please page an on-call Health & Safety Officer (HSO).

All members having computer access are responsible for reading, understanding, and acknowledging receipt of this Special Order, using the PowerDMS Document Management System. Members without computer access will continue to sign an accountability roster, as they have in the past.

All commanding officers will ensure their personnel are made aware of this information.

This Special Order will be posted in each division, section, or unit for a period of ten (10) days. Please refer any questions through the appropriate chain of command.