

Position Statement: Staff Use of Their Own Personal Protective Equipment in Health Care Settings

Supplies of personal protective equipment (PPE) to protect health care workers from COVID-19 remain inadequate. The Joint Commission, in partnership with five other national organizations, has [called for action](#) at the federal level to address these

19 patients (e.g., during auscultation of the heart and chest) would have concerns about the adequacy of surgical masks.

[A recent study](#) provided strong evidence that there is significant risk of transmission of SARS-CoV-2 among asymptomatic or minimally symptomatic patients. Based on this, it is reasonable for health care workers who provide direct patient care to want to take universal precautions by wearing a surgical mask or even an N95 respirator with all patients. Another f

Frequently Asked Questions in Response to The Joint Commission's Position Statement on Use of Face Masks Brought from Home

The Joint Commission's Office of Quality and Patient Safety has received numerous complaints from health care workers about inadequate personal protective equipment (PPE). For example, staff have reported:

- Lack of N95 masks for performing aerosolizing procedures
- Having to wear a surgical mask for a prolonged period (up to a week)
- Not being allowed to wear a mask when exposed to a large number of patients who could have COVID-19 (i.e., concerns about caring for asymptomatic and minimally symptomatic when COVID-19 is prevalent)
- Working without routinely wearing masks even after an outbreak occurred among the medical staff