

A Guide to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for the Voluntary Sector

PPE is equipment a keyworker wears to protect themselves, and those they care for. This can include masks, aprons, gloves, and eyewear.

Different types of PPE are needed in different situations and should always reflect the level of care you are required to provide. PPE is used in settings where having close personal contact with someone is unavoidable, for example in care homes. **In general, most people working in a voluntary or community setting will not need to use PPE.**

Government guidance for non-health and social care settings states:

“For other workers and sectors, based on current evidence, there is very little scientific evidence of widespread benefit from PPE. Instead, practicing good hand hygiene and social distancing is key to minimising the risk of infection.”

Therefore, in the community, the most effective way to prevent the spread of COVID-19 is with effective social distancing, cough hygiene and hand washing.

PPE should only be needed to allow continued delivery of outreach services, where social distancing is not possible.

If required, PPE should only be worn in accordance with the national guidance, but it is only one aspect of infection control. Volunteers should understand how to put on and take off PPE properly, practice proper hand washing techniques before, and after, using PPE and have procedures in place for the disposal of PPE.

National guidance on PPE

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/878750/T2_poster_Recommended_PPE_for_primary_outpatient_community_and_social_care_by_setting.pdf

Guidance on using hand rub and handwashing

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/877529/Best_Practice_hand_rub.pdf

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/877530/Best_Practice_hand_wash.pdf

Guidance on putting on and taking off PPE

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/882069/Putting_on_PPE_home_carer.pdf

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/882070/Taking_off_PPE_home_carer.pdf

Disposal of PPE

Used PPE should be placed in a black bin bag, sealed, and set aside for 72 hours. After this time, it can be disposed of with the usual refuse collection.

National guidance can change at any time and you can keep up-to-date with the latest recommendations here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-infection-prevention-and-control/covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-ppe>

Ordering PPE from the Manchester and Trafford Mutual Aaid hub

The Manchester and Trafford mutual hub continues to operate an emergency service providing our keyworkers with access to the personal protective equipment (PPE) they need to protect themselves and those they care for.

The hub can be accessed by any provider of out of hospital care e.g. care and nursing homes, primary care, domiciliary care providers, local authority in-house or commissioned service and voluntary/third sector providers. The mutual aid hub is an emergency last resort for PPE.

VCSE organisations who think that they require PPE after reading the guidance above and have an urgent need for their frontline workers are asked to follow the process below:

Step one:

Work out how long your current PPE supplies will last, and what equipment you will need once current stock has finished. The stock of PPE should reflect the level of care you are required to provide.

Step two:

You must try and procure stock using your usual supply routes

Step three:

If this is not possible, check with other organisations or providers in your area to secure supplies.

Other alternatives

- You may be able to acquire PPE from [the suppliers listed here.](#)
- A company called Novo-K Procurement Solutions has built a Charity PPE Team made up of furloughed procurement professionals to help support the sector's requirements. Any charities needing PPE are asked to complete [this online form](#) to start the process.

Step four:

If there is still an urgent need (defined as stock for less than 4 days) that cannot be met elsewhere providers must contact their commissioners and service leads with their requirements who can place orders by emailing ppemutualaid@manchester.gov.uk or covid-19@trafford.gov.uk. **It is important that providers communicate their needs to their commissioners or service leads where possible, rather than directly to the hub. This is so that needs can be understood across the whole health and social care system.**

Step five:

Commissioners or service leads are asked to quality assure requests, and submit their orders to covid-19@trafford.gov.uk using an order form available from the same email. If you are in Manchester, submit your orders to ppemutualaid@manchester.gov.uk

When ordering please include a full delivery address, including postcode; and ensure there will be someone on site to take receipt of the order.

The PPE available from the Hub includes Fluid Resistant Surgical Masks (FRSMs), Eye Protection, Gloves, Aprons, Hand Sanitiser, FFP3 masks and Gowns/Coveralls.

We have limited supplies of all stock, with FFP3 masks and Gowns/Coveralls in particularly short supply. Providers should only order what they need, and ensure it reflects the level of care they are required to provide.

For example, FFP3 masks and gowns/coveralls are only required when performing Aerosol Generating Procedures, and thus most providers would not need to access this stock.

All providers should be risk-assessing and reviewing their practice, ensuring that all aspects of the infection control process are adhered to. PPE must be used in conjunction with effective hand hygiene to ensure proper infection control. Staff should also be aware of how to properly put on and take off PPE.

The mutual aid hub is an emergency service only, based on urgent need for PPE equipment. There are limited supplies of equipment, so it is vital you only order what you need, and it reflects the level of care you are required to provide.