

From: US Department of Veterans Affairs <US.VA@va.gov>
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To: VHAALLEXOMailboxes <VHAALLEXOMailboxes@va.gov>
Subject: COVID-19: An Update on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

MESSAGE FROM THE VHA EXECUTIVE IN CHARGE
April 15, 2020

COVID-19: An Update on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Although there is no video due to technical difficulties, today's message is about our system's use of personal protective equipment, or PPE. We are working hard to ensure that each and every one of you has what you need to stay safe. There have been a lot of rumors about PPE, including our ability to have a sufficient supply of what is needed for our employees, so let me very clear: your safety is the most important thing I am responsible for – every employee needs to be safe. That is my commitment to you, and your facility leaders take this extremely seriously as well.

Prior to COVID-19, VA always had a contingency supply of PPE. However, when this crisis started to face every healthcare organization in the nation, it became more difficult to project our incoming supply chain. For this reason, and out of an abundance of caution, we implemented austerity measures to ensure that every person working with COVID-19 patients had the equipment they needed. Those employees not working directly with COVID-19 patients received a mask each week, [per the CDC guidelines](#).

Today, we once again have full visibility of our supply chain, which enables us to see what we currently have as well as our contingency resources. So, all employees in a community living center, spinal cord injury unit or inpatient mental health unit will receive one mask a day to support their duties. We will continue providing N95 masks to those directly in contact with COVID-19-positive patients.

Your safety is the most important thing to us – we need to protect you. I give you my word that we are doing everything to help you continue to take care of our Veterans. Once again, I thank you for your commitment to our mission, and all you are doing for the nation.

Richard A. Stone, MD
Executive in Charge
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