

Respiratory Protection Program Academy School District

I. OBJECTIVE

The Academy School District Respiratory Protection Program is designed to protect staff members by establishing accepted practices for respirator use, providing guidelines for training and respirator selection, and explaining proper storage, use and care of respirators.

II. ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY

A. Employer

Academy School District is responsible for providing respirators to staff members when they are necessary for health protection. Academy School District will provide respirators that are applicable and suitable for the intended purpose at no charge to affected staff members. Any expense associated with training, medical evaluations and respiratory protection equipment will be borne by the district.

B. Program Administrator

The Program Administrator for Academy School District is the Director of Risk Management. The Program Administrator is responsible for administering the respiratory protection program. Duties of the program administrator, or designee, include:

1. Identifying work areas, process or tasks that require workers to wear respirators.
2. Evaluating hazards.
3. Selecting respiratory protection options.
4. Monitoring respirator use to ensure that respirators are used in accordance with their specifications.
5. Arranging for and/or conducting training.
6. Ensuring proper storage and maintenance of respiratory protection equipment.
7. Conducting qualitative fit testing.
8. Administering the medical surveillance program.
9. Maintaining records required by the program.
10. Evaluating the program.
11. Updating written program, as needed.

C. Supervisors

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that the respiratory protection program is implemented in their particular areas. In addition to being knowledgeable about the program requirements for their own protection, supervisors must also ensure that the program is understood and followed by the staff members under their charge.

Duties of the supervisor include:

1. Ensuring that staff members under their supervision (including new hires) receive appropriate training, fit testing, and annual medical evaluation.
2. Ensuring the availability of appropriate respirators and accessories.
3. Being aware of tasks requiring the use of respiratory protection.
4. Enforcing the proper use of respiratory protection when necessary.
5. Ensuring that respirators are properly cleaned, maintained, and stored according to this program.
6. Ensuring that respirators fit well and do not cause discomfort.

7. Continually monitoring work areas and operations to identify respiratory hazards.
8. Coordinating with the Program Administrator on how to address respiratory hazards or other concerns regarding this program.

D. Staff Members

Each staff member is responsible for wearing his or her respirator when and where required and in the manner in which they are trained. Staff members must also:

1. Care for and maintain their respirators as instructed, guard them against damage, and store them in a clean, sanitary location.
2. Inform their supervisor if their respirator no longer fits well, and request a new one that fits properly.
3. Inform their supervisor or the Program Administrator of any respiratory hazards that they feel are not adequately addressed in the workplace and of any other concerns that they have regarding this program.
4. Use the respiratory protection in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and the training received.

III. APPLICABILITY

This program applies to all staff members who are required to wear respirators during normal work operations, as well as during some non-routine operations.

Staff members who voluntarily wear respirators such as are not subject to the medical evaluation, cleaning, storage, and maintenance provisions of this program.

IV. PROGRAM

A. Hazard Assessment and Respirator Selection

The Program Administrator will select respirators to be used on site, based on the hazards to which workers are exposed. The Program Administrator will conduct a hazard evaluation for each operation, process, or work area to determine which tasks may expose staff to airborne infectious agents.

The following tasks may expose staff to airborne infectious agents:

- Supervising or tending to students who are placed in isolation for displaying COVID-19 related symptoms.

Staff members with the following job titles may be required to wear N95 or KN95 respirators when doing these tasks.

- School Nurses
- Health Room Paraprofessionals
- Other staff members who are assigned these duties.

B. Updating the Hazard Assessment

The Program Administrator must revise and update the hazard assessment as needed. If a staff member feels that respiratory protection is needed during a particular activity, he/she is to contact his/her supervisor or the Program Administrator. The Program Administrator will evaluate the potential hazard, and arrange for outside assistance as necessary. The Program Administrator will then communicate the results of that assessment to the staff members. If it is determined that respiratory protection is necessary, all other elements of the respiratory protection program will be in effect for those tasks, and the respiratory program will be updated accordingly.

C. Training

The Program Administrator will provide training to respirator users and their supervisors on the contents of the Academy School District Respiratory Protection Program and their responsibilities under it. All affected staff members and their supervisors will be trained prior to using a respirator in the workplace. Supervisors will also be trained prior to supervising staff members that must wear respirators.

The training course will cover the following topics:

1. The Academy School District Respiratory Protection Program;
2. respiratory hazards encountered at Academy School District and their health affects;
3. proper selection and use of respirators;
4. limitations of respirators;
5. respirator donning and user seal (fit) checks;
6. fit testing;
7. maintenance and storage; and
8. medical signs and symptoms limiting the effective use of respirators.

Staff members will be retrained annually or as needed. Respirator training will be documented by the Program Administrator and the documentation will include the type, model, and size of respirator for which each staff member has been trained and fit tested.

D. NIOSH Certification

All respirators must be certified by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) and shall be used in accordance with the terms of that certification. Also, all filters, cartridges, and canisters must be labeled with the appropriate NIOSH approval label. The label must not be removed or defaced while the respirator is in use.

E. Medical Evaluation

Staff members who are either required to wear respirators, or who choose to wear a half face piece APR voluntarily, must pass a medical exam provided by a Physician or other Licensed Health Care Professional (PLHCP) before being permitted to wear a respirator on the job. Staff members are not permitted to wear respirators until a physician has determined that they are medically able to do so. Any staff member refusing the medical evaluation will not be allowed to work in an area requiring respirator use.

UC Health will provide the medical evaluations. Medical evaluation procedures are as follows:

1. The medical evaluation will be conducted using the questionnaire provided in Appendix C of the OSHA Respiratory Protection Standard. The Program Administrator will provide a copy of this questionnaire to all staff members requiring medical evaluations.
2. To the extent feasible, the employer will provide assistance to staff members who are unable to read the questionnaire. When this is not possible, the staff member will be sent directly to the physician for medical evaluation.
3. All affected staff members will be given a copy of the medical questionnaire to complete. Academy School District will maintain an internal coordinator who will work with the PLHCP arranging for delivery of questionnaires.
4. Follow-up medical exams will be granted to staff members as required by the Standard, and/or as deemed necessary by the evaluating PLHCP.

5. All staff members will be granted the opportunity to speak with the PLHCP about their medical evaluation, if they so request.
6. The Program Administrator shall provide the evaluating PLHCP with a copy of this Program, the list of hazardous substances by work area, and the following information about each staff member requiring evaluation:
 - a. his or her work area or job title;
 - b. proposed respirator type and weight;
 - c. length of time required to wear respirator;
 - d. expected physical work load (light, moderate or heavy);
 - e. potential temperature and humidity extremes; and
 - f. any additional protective clothing required.
7. After a staff member has received clearance to wear his or her respirator, additional medical evaluations will be provided under the following circumstances:
 - a. The staff member reports signs and/or symptoms related to their ability to use the respirator, such as shortness of breath, dizziness, chest pains or wheezing.
 - b. The evaluating PLHCP or supervisor informs the Program Administrator that the staff member needs to be reevaluated.
 - c. Information found during the implementation of this program, including observations made during the fit testing and program evaluation, indicates a need for reevaluation.
 - d. A change occurs in workplace conditions that may result in an increased physiological burden on the staff member.

All examinations and questionnaires are to remain confidential between the staff member and the physician. The Program Administrator will only retain the physician's written recommendations regarding each staff member's ability to wear a respirator.

F. Fit Testing

Staff members who are required to wear tight fitting air purifying respirators will be fit tested:

1. prior to being allowed to wear any respirator with a tight-fitting face piece;
2. annually; or
3. when there are changes in the staff member's physical condition that could affect respiratory fit (e.g., obvious change in body weight, facial scarring, etc.).

Staff members will be fit tested with the make, model, and size of respirator that they will actually wear. Staff members will be provided with several models and sizes of respirators so that they may find an optimal fit.

The Risk Management Department, or designee, will conduct fit tests in accordance with the NIOSH Respiratory Protection Standard. N95 or KN95 respirators will be fit tested with a qualitative fit test protocol using an aerosol solution.

G. General Respirator Use Procedures

1. Staff members will use their respirators under conditions specified in this program, and in accordance with the training they receive on the use of each particular model. In addition, the respirator shall not be used in a manner for which it is not certified by NIOSH or by its manufacturer.

2. All staff members shall conduct user seal checks each time they wear their respirators. Staff members shall use a positive pressure check
 - a. Positive Pressure Test: This test is performed by closing off the exhalation valve with your hand. Breathe air into the mask. The face fit is satisfactory if some pressure can be built up inside the mask without any air leaking out between the mask and the face of the wearer.
3. Staff members are not permitted to wear tight-fitting respirators if they have any condition, such as facial scars, facial hair, or missing dentures, that would prevent a proper seal. Staff members are not permitted to wear headphones, jewelry, or other items that may interfere with the seal between the face and the face piece.
4. Before and after each use of a respirator, an staff member or immediate supervisor must make an inspection of tightness or connections and the condition of the face piece, headbands, valves, filter holders and filters. Questionable items must be addressed immediately by the supervisor and/or Program Administrator.

H. Change Schedules

Respirator cartridges shall be replaced as determined by the Program Administrator, supervisor(s), and manufacturers' recommendations.

I. Cleaning

N95 or KN95 Respirators will be worn for the amount of time allowed by manufacturer instructions and/or medical recommendation. Academy school district my utilize vendors to provide sterilization services for N95 or KN95 masks for a maximum of three times per mask. Masks which are beyond their usable life span, or when sterilization services are unavailable, will be disposed of after use.

J. Maintenance

Respirators are to be properly maintained at all times in order to ensure that they function properly and protect staff members adequately. Maintenance involves a thorough visual inspection for cleanliness and defects. Worn or deteriorated parts will be replaced prior to use. No components will be replaced or repairs made beyond those recommended by the manufacturer. All respirators shall be inspected routinely before and after each use.

K. Storage

After inspection, cleaning, and necessary repairs, respirators shall be stored appropriately to protect against dust, sunlight, heat, extreme cold, excessive moisture, or damaging chemicals. The Academy School District 20 supply of respirators will be stored at each site of use in their original manufacturer's packaging.

L. Respirator Malfunctions and Defects

Respirators that are defective or have defective parts shall be taken out of service immediately.

M. Program Evaluation

The Program Administrator will conduct periodic evaluations of the workplace to ensure that the provisions of this program are being implemented. The evaluations will include regular consultations with staff members who use respirators and their supervisors, site inspections, air monitoring and a review of records. Items to be considered will include:

1. comfort;
2. ability to breathe without objectionable effort;
3. adequate visibility under all conditions
4. provisions for wearing prescription glasses;
5. ability to perform all tasks without undue interference; and
6. confidence in the face piece fit.

N. Documentation and Recordkeeping

1. A written copy of this program shall be kept of the Risk Management intranet page and is available to all staff members who wish to review it.
2. Copies of training and fit test records shall be maintained by the Program Administrator. These records will be updated as new staff members are trained, as existing staff members receive refresher training, and as new fit tests are conducted
3. For staff members covered under the Respiratory Protection Program, the Program Administrator shall maintain copies of the physician's written recommendation regarding each staff member's ability to wear a respirator. The completed medical questionnaires and evaluating physician's documented findings will remain confidential in the staff member's medical records at the location of the evaluating physician's practice.