

# COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA

## Office of the Sheriff

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Laurie Smith  
Sheriff

### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** All Custody Staff  
**FROM:** COVID-19 Incident Command Center  
**SUBJECT:** ICC Directive 21-14, (COVID-19 Update, N95 Respirators for Custody Staff)  
**DATE:** December 23, 2021

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The purpose of this memorandum is to reiterate and reinforce prior trainings and guidance regarding COVID-19 as an Aerosol Transmissible Disease, and when and why an N95 is required under certain circumstances. The Sheriff's Office is committed to keeping all staff safe while making every effort to mitigate the effects of the pandemic.

#### COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a worldwide effect. The virus often produces cold and flu like symptoms which can range from mild to severe and in some cases it can cause death. However, some people may exhibit no symptoms and yet are still at risk to transmit the virus to others.

COVID-19 transmissions are primarily through the air. An infected person may transmit the viral particulates through coughing, sneezing, talking or even just breathing particulates into the air where others can unknowingly intake the virus.

Face coverings, including surgical masks, and particularly N95 respirators, are a critical component of mitigating the spread of COVID-19, and are in place to protect you from others and others from you. Accordingly, the County and the Sheriff's Office require that all Custody staff wear a mask at all times and in certain circumstances require a well-fitted N95 respirator to be worn.

#### Face Masks and N95 Respirators

Surgical masks are loose-fitted, disposable devices that create a physical barrier between the mouth and nose and potential contaminants in the immediate environment. An N95 Respirator is a respiratory protective device designed to achieve a very close facial fit and it is a very efficient filtration system for airborne particles. An N95 respirator offers more protection than a surgical mask because it filters out at least 95% of airborne particles including both large and small particles. N95 users should ensure these devices are properly fitted and donned, and should perform a seal check each time it is worn.

The Sheriff's Office is in the process of creating an N95 annual fit test for all custody staff. The purpose of the fit test is to ensure that employees who either choose to wear an N95 or are directed to wear an N95 will be provided with the appropriate size to ensure their safety.

## **When N95 Respirators Are Required for Custody Staff**

For your protection and for the protection of others, all Custody staff must wear an N95 Respirator when:

- Handling, supervising, escorting, or transporting COVID-19 confirmed patients or persons under investigations (PUIs) including when entering a negative airflow room or a room with an airborne precaution sign which houses a COVID-19 confirmed patient or PUI.
- Working in units(s) that house COVID-19 patients.
- Working in booking.
- In any situation, in close proximity to a COVID-19 confirmed patient or persons under Investigations (PUIs) for COVID-19.