

# Eye Protection Guidelines & FAQ 4.6.21 1200

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- **Beginning April 6, 2021, eye protection guidelines at Spectrum Health have been updated to the following:**
  - Based on ongoing discussion and evaluation of CDC guidance, along with our current transmission rates of moderate to high and several variants and mutations in the community, **eye protection is moving back to required, effective immediately, for all patient encounters**. This includes all patient encounters in hospital and ambulatory settings, such as vaccine clinics, ED/urgent care, procedural, inpatient, exam room, or in corridors if providing assistance with ambulation or transport of patients.
  - Eye protection remains required for all COVID-19 positive or COVID-19 suspected patients.
  - Eye protection remains required for all patients receiving an aerosol generating procedure, regardless of COVID-19 status.
- Eye protection is defined as face shields, goggles, surgical eye wear, and safety glasses. Personal eyeglasses are not acceptable eye protection
- Face shields or goggles are required for the care of confirmed or suspected COVID-19 patients.
- Face shields, goggles, surgical eyewear, and safety glasses are provided by Spectrum Health and are [available through Workday](#).

Face shield video link: [www.vimeo.com/404347658/83242b2a81](https://www.vimeo.com/404347658/83242b2a81)

## Use the following guidelines for eye protection:

- Eye protection can be worn continuously and for multiple patient encounters
- Eye protection can be worn by multiple team members after disinfection
- Do not touch the outside of your eye protection, pull up over your head. Infection Prevention recommends against storing eye protection on top of the head.
- When eye protection is removed, perform hand hygiene, follow the [disinfection process](#), and place in a safe storage area (example: paper bag, hooks, or paper box)
- If not shared with other team members, label eye protection with your name and primary unit (or title, if applicable)
- Perform hand hygiene when re-donning eye protection
- Where available, disinfect eye protection using the [UV process](#), after care of patients with confirmed or suspected COVID-19
- Discard eye protection if signs of deterioration are found (straps compromised, difficult to see through, or visibly damaged).

## Eye Protection FAQ's

### Related to new safety glasses approval: Why was this change made now?

Spectrum Health closely monitors all recommendations from the CDC and State of Michigan. At this time, the number of new cases per 100,000 population and percent positive cases have consistently increased to a level where this change was considered necessary. Please see [Universal Eye Protection- Workday Ordering Information](#) for options.

**What eye protection should be worn?**

Face shields or goggles must be worn when providing care for any positive or suspected COVID-19 patients. Eye protection, including safety glasses, **must be worn when providing care for non-COVID-19 patients, and any patient receiving an AGP regardless of COVID-19 status.** In areas with large populations of positive or suspected COVID-19 patients (such as Emergency Departments, Urgent Care Centers, or designated COVID units), team members may choose to wear a face shield or goggles to provide adequate protection against all types of patients instead of switching back and forth.

**May I wear my own glasses/goggles with added side shields?**

No. Personal glasses, even with added side shields, continue to be unacceptable eye protection for any patient care encounter.

**Will traditional glasses be considered an acceptable form of eye protection?**

No. Regular eyeglasses (including those with added side shields) and contact lenses do not provide adequate eye protection and would not be considered PPE.

**Can I wear safety glasses for COVID-19 patient care?**

No. Safety glasses are ONLY for non-COVID-19 patient care.

**Can I store safety glasses in my pocket between uses?**

Yes. Safety glasses should be wiped clean with any hospital disinfectant, and then may be stored in a pocket.

**Can I store safety glasses on my head between uses?**

Wearing eye protection on the head increases the risk of contamination of the eyes/hair/hands. For this reason, Infection Prevention recommends against this practice.

**May I bring safety glasses from home?**

Any PPE from home must meet [PPE from Home](#) standards.

**Will all team members be required to wear eye protection, or is this requirement only for patient facing staff?**

Eye protection **must** be worn by patient facing team members while providing hands-on patient care, or by those who may come into close contact with patients (including, but not limited to; Nursing, EVS, Security, Respiratory Therapy, Physicians, Phlebotomy, Radiology, Students, **Guest Services, Patient Access Services**).

All other team members may request eye protection as supplies allow.

**What types of eye protection are acceptable?**

Refer to [Universal Eye Protection- Workday Ordering Information](#) for acceptable eye protection available through Spectrum Health.

Refer to [PPE from Home](#) for acceptable eye protection that may be brought in from home.

Face shields or goggles are required for the care of confirmed or suspected COVID-19 patients.

**Where should eye protection be worn?** Eye protection should be worn continuously for multiple patient encounters following extended use guidelines. Eye protection may be removed in common areas

(including, but not limited to, nurses' stations, conference rooms, medication rooms, hallways, elevators). Disinfect when removed.

**What types of eye protection are available through Spectrum Health Supply Chain?**

Refer to the [Universal Eye Protection – Workday Ordering Information](#) for ordering details.

**Since this initiative would be to protect employees, would team members have the ability to opt out?**

This is a requirement from Spectrum Health following new recommendations from the CDC in order to ensure safe delivery of patient care. Contact your supervisor/manager with concerns.

**If we are telling the community that it is now safe to seek health care and we are instituting this to keep our employees safe, should we be offering eye protection to our patients and visitors to keep them safe?**

Currently, the CDC recommends eye protection for employees and providers involved in patient care.

**How many shifts can eye protection be reused?**

Eye protection can be worn continuously and for multiple patient encounters regardless of isolation status. Discard when product has signs of deterioration (cracking, clouding, loss of sheen, visible damage, strap damage). Eye protection may be specific to a single team member or shared among team members.

**When should eye protection be disinfected?**

Eye protection should be disinfected whenever it is removed from the team member's face, or if contaminated, following the [Disinfection of Eye Protection](#) standard work. Eye protection may be worn for multiple patient encounters regardless of isolation status.

**How should eye protection be stored?**

After being cleaned, eye protection can be stored on hooks, in bags, in isolation carts, or in any clean area that works for a specific space. Wearing eye protection on the head increases the risk of self-contamination of the eyes/hair/hands. For this reason, Infection Prevention recommends against this practice.

**Why aren't more options (including those included on the PPE from Home document) available through Spectrum Health?**

At this time, Supply Chain has sourced acceptable eye protection options that are available in large quantities. Other options, including most low-profile eye wear, are only available in limited small quantities that would be impossible to distribute across our large system. Spectrum Health will continue to source additional eye protection options if quantities and styles allow.

**Should face shields and goggles be worn together?**

Face shields and goggles may be worn together if the team member prefers, but only one type of eye protection is necessary.

**Are masks with attached face shields acceptable?**

No, these do not provide adequate eye protection due to gap above the brow. These are acceptable for use in surgical/procedural areas.

**Can plexiglass barriers be added to check-in areas?**

Due to supply, there are no current plans to add additional plexiglass barriers.

**What options are available for eye protection for staff who may be walking frequently and only have intermittent patient contact?**

Eye protection is encouraged to be worn throughout the day in between patient interactions. For team members who need to carry eye protection on their person, goggles may be an easier choice than face shields.

**What are options for skin protection?**

- Apply Cavilon No Sting Barrier Film Wipe (Workday ITM-1144109) to the face to reduce eye protection friction.
- Do not use petroleum jelly or mineral oil as a skin sealant.
- Ideally, if able to be out of patient care areas, remove eye protection for 15 minutes every 2 hours. If this is not possible, provide some pressure relief. Wash hands and apply gloves before after lifting eye protection.
- Use DuoDERM (Workday ITM-1149375) applied behind the ears.

**What are options to prevent eye protection from fogging?**

Anti-fog solution (Workday ITM-1024135) is available from supply chain and can be applied to all types of eye protection as well as personal glasses. Other tips include applying a small amount of dish soap or shaving cream to the lens or shield and use a cloth to scrub clean.

**Can face shields be cut down so they are not as long?**

No, face shields should not be altered in any way. If you are not able to wear a face shield utilization of goggles or safe view glasses is recommended.

References: [https://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus/0,9753,7-406-98178\\_98455---,00.html](https://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus/0,9753,7-406-98178_98455---,00.html)  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html>