

# Information, Instruction and Guidance on the Use of Non-Fit Tested N95 Respirators

The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) continues to implement multiple infection prevention and control measures during the COVID-19 pandemic. These measures are aligned with public health authorities. While the provision and use of medical mask to staff is mandatory, the TDSB is making available a limited supply of non fit tested N95 to staff who choose to wear as part of their personal protection.

Non Fit tested N95 respirators(masks) are approved NIOSH N95 masks that do not need to be fit tested as is required in high risk exposure areas, such as exposure health care sectors. This document will provide information, instruction, and guidance of the optimal use of non fit tested N95. The extended use and re- use of these masks is an accepted strategy when supply is limited.

## Allotment of Masks Issued to Staff

Due to current supply chain limitations, the TDSB is allotting two N95 masks per staff as an option, with the goal of providing two masks per staff per day when supply is stabilized. *Please note that medical grade masks (blue) are the standard respiratory protection for staff.*

## Factors that limit the use of N95 respirators include:

- User respiratory and circulatory health
- Fit/Seal on face
- Visible soiling of filter media
- Physical damage ie broken straps, loops

Should your mask become soiled or damaged, a replacement should be requested through your Principal/Supervisor.

## How to use a non fit tested N95:

Inspect the mask prior to use for any visible damage. Hand hygiene must be performed before putting on and prior to taking off the N95 mask.

1. Use one hand to place the respirator over your nose and under your chin. If the respirator has two straps, while holding the mask to your face, use your other hand to place one strap below the ears and one strap above. Ensure adequate strap tension- not overly tightened.

2. On some respirators, the fit can be improved by adjusting ties, bands or ear loops and the nosepiece.
3. If the respirator has a nose clip (a thin metal bar at the top of the device), use your fingertips from both hands to **mold** the nose clip firmly against your nose and face. Do not pinch with one hand.
4. Be sure to conduct a user seal check every time you put on the respirator. Place both hands over the mask and take a quick deep breath in and out to ensure there is no air leakage around the respirator.
5. Individuals must be clean-shaven when wearing an N95 mask, as facial hair will prevent a proper seal. Some facial hair may be acceptable provided that the facial hair does not lay along outer edge of the respirator.

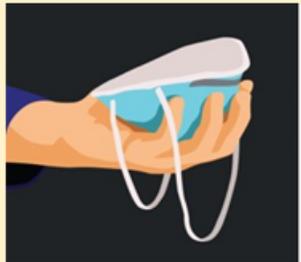


# Putting on a mask with head straps

**Inspect the mask.** Before putting on a mask, first inspect it for damage. Do not use a mask that appears damaged.



1. **Wash your hands** or use hand sanitizer before putting on your mask.



2. **Position the mask in your hand with the nose pieces at your fingertips.** (Most masks designed to seal to the face have a thin metal or plastic bar at the top of the device)



3. **Cup the mask in your hand** allowing the headbands to hang below your hand. Hold the respirator under your chin with the nosepiece up.



4. **The top strap (on single or double strap respirators) goes over and rests at the back of your head near the crown.** The bottom strap is then positioned around the neck and below the ears. Do not crisscross the straps.



5. **Place your fingertips from both hands at the top of the nose clip. Slide down both sides of the strip to mold the nose area to the shape of your nose.**

**Check the Seal.** Check the seal of the mask to the face. Place both hands over the mask, take a quick breath in to check the seal. Breathe out. If you feel a leak when breathing in or breathing out, there is not a proper seal.

Image credit: The CDC (<https://blogs.cdc.gov/publichealthmatters/2019/06/using-a-respirator/> )

### **Doffing/Removing of N95 Respirator**

- Clean hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer before and after touching or adjusting the mask.
- Do not touch the front of the mask, as it may be contaminated/soil the filter media
- Store mask for reuse or discard if appropriate

## Taking off a mask with head straps



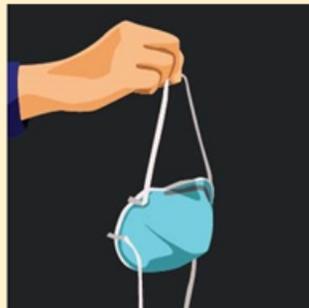
**Do NOT TOUCH** the front of the mask!  
It may be contaminated.



**1. Wash your hands** or use hand sanitizer before taking off your mask.



**2. Remove by pulling the bottom strap over the back of your head**, followed by the top strap. Remember, do not touch the facepiece of the mask.



**3. For reusable masks wash and safely store after use.** For single use masks, safely discard after removal.



**4. Wash your hands** or use hand sanitizer after taking off your mask.

Image credit: The CDC (<https://blogs.cdc.gov/publichealthmatters/2019/06/using-a-respirator/> )

**When to discard a N95 mask:**

1. becomes more difficult to breathe
2. becomes dirty
3. becomes damaged

N95 masks are to be discarded in a lined regular waste receptable, when appropriate.

**How to store N95 mask for reuse**

Public Health Ontario suggests that if a mask must be reused, it be kept from soiling by storing in a clean paper bag in a dry location.

**Video Support:**

1. Public Health Ontario Putting on a cone N95 respirator video  
<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/videos/ipac-n95respirator-cone-on>
2. Public Health Ontario Taking off a cone N95 respirator video  
<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/videos/ipac-n95respirator-cone-off>