
Environmental Hazards

604.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy identifies the different types of personal protective equipment (PPE) provided by the Department as a defense against environmental hazards as well as the requirements and guidelines for the use of PPE.

This policy does not address ballistic vests or protection from communicable disease, as those issues are addressed in the Field Equipment and Communicable Diseases policies, the Aerosol Transmissible Diseases (ATD) Exposure Control Plan, the Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Control Plan, and the Respiratory Protection Program (RPP).

604.2 POLICY

The San Diego County Probation Department endeavors to protect members by supplying certain PPE to members as provided in this policy.

604.3 MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

Members are required to use PPE as provided in this policy and pursuant to their training.

Members are responsible for proper maintenance and storage of issued PPE. PPE should be stored in an appropriate location so that it is available when needed.

Any member who identifies hazards in the workplace should follow the procedures in the Illness and Injury Prevention Policy to recommend new or improved PPE or additional needs for PPE.

604.4 HEARING PROTECTION

Approved hearing protection shall be used by members during firearms training.

The Rangemaster shall ensure hearing protection meets or exceeds the requirements provided in 8 CCR 5098.

604.5 EYE PROTECTION

Approved eye protection, including side protection, shall be used by members during firearms training or during situations in which eye protection may be warranted (e.g., cleaning areas where bloodborne pathogens were spilled, urine sample collections with clients). Eye protection for members who wear prescription lenses shall incorporate the prescription (e.g., eye protection that can be worn over prescription lenses). Members shall ensure their eye protection does not interfere with the fit of their hearing protection.

The Rangemaster shall ensure eye protection meets or exceeds the requirements provided in 8 CCR 3382.

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604.6 RESPIRATORY PROTECTION

The Chief Probation Officer or the authorized designee is responsible for ensuring a respiratory protection program is developed and maintained by a trained and qualified member. The program shall include procedures for (8 CCR 5144):

- (a) Selecting appropriate respiratory PPE based on hazards and risks associated with functions or positions.
- (b) Fit testing, including identification of members or contractors qualified to conduct fit testing.
- (c) Medical evaluations.
- (d) PPE inventory control.
- (e) PPE issuance and replacement.
- (f) Cleaning, disinfecting, storing, inspecting, repairing, discarding, and otherwise maintaining respiratory PPE, including schedules for these activities.
- (g) Annually reviewing the PPE plan.
- (h) Remaining current with applicable National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), American National Standards Institute (ANSI), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Environmental Protective Agency (EPA), and state PPE standards and guidelines.

604.6.1 RESPIRATORY PROTECTION USE

Disposable particulate masks should only be used to protect the member from particulate contaminants and are not suitable in an oxygen-deficient atmosphere or where an unsafe level of gases or fumes exists. See also the Communicable Diseases policy. The use of respiratory protection, both voluntary and mandatory, requires department approval.

Designated members may be issued respiratory PPE based on the member's assignment (e.g., narcotics task force, transporting individuals with aerosol-transmitted diseases (ATDs), wildfires).

Respiratory PPE may be worn when authorized by a Division Chief or designee (scene commander) who will determine the type and level of protection appropriate at a scene based upon an evaluation of the hazards present.

Scene commanders are responsible for monitoring members using respiratory PPE and their degree of exposure or stress. When there is a change in work area conditions or when a member's degree of exposure or stress may affect respirator effectiveness, the scene commander shall reevaluate the continued effectiveness of the respirator and direct the member to leave the respirator use area when the scene commander reasonably believes (8 CCR 5144):

- (a) The member's face and respirator facepiece need to be washed to prevent eye or skin irritation associated with respirator use.
- (b) The member detects vapor or gas breakthrough, a change in breathing resistance, or leakage of the facepiece.
- (c) The member needs to replace the respirator, filter, cartridge, or canister.

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604.6.2 MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES FOR RESPIRATORY PROTECTION

Members shall not use self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA), full-face respirators, or cartridge respirators unless they have completed training requirements for the equipment.

Members exposed to environments that are reasonably known to be harmful due to gases, smoke, or vapors shall use respiratory PPE.

Members using respiratory PPE shall (8 CCR 5144):

- (a) Ensure that they have no facial hair between the sealing surface of the facepiece and the face that could interfere with the seal or the valve function. Members also shall ensure that they have no other condition that will interfere with the face-to-facepiece seal or the valve function.
- (b) Not wear corrective glasses, goggles, or other PPE that interferes with the seal of the facepiece to the face, or that has not been previously tested for use with that respiratory equipment.
- (c) Perform a user seal check per department-approved procedures recommended by the respirator manufacturer each time they put on a tight-fitting respirator.
- (d) Leave a respiratory use area whenever they detect vapor or gas breakthrough, changes in breathing resistance, or leakage of their facepiece and ensure that the respirator is replaced or repaired before returning to the affected area.

604.6.3 SELF-CONTAINED BREATHING APPARATUS

Scene commanders may direct members to use SCBA when entering an atmosphere that may pose an immediate threat to life, would cause irreversible adverse health effects, or would impair an individual's ability to escape from a dangerous atmosphere. These situations may include but are not limited to:

- (a) Entering the hot zone of a hazardous materials incident.
- (b) Entering any area where contaminant levels may become unsafe without warning, or any situation where exposures cannot be identified or reasonably estimated.
- (c) Entering a smoke- or chemical-filled area.

The use of SCBA should not cease until approved by a scene commander.

604.6.4 RESPIRATOR FIT TESTING

No member shall be issued respiratory PPE for mandatory use until proper fit testing has been completed by a designated member or contractor (8 CCR 5144).

After initial testing, fit testing for respiratory PPE shall be repeated (8 CCR 5144):

- (a) At least annually.
- (b) Whenever there are changes in the type of SCBA or facepiece used.
- (c) Whenever there are significant physical changes in the user (e.g., obvious change in body weight, scarring of the face seal area, dental changes, cosmetic surgery, or any other condition that may affect the fit of the facepiece seal).

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All respirator fit testing shall be conducted in accordance with 8 CCR 5144.

604.6.5 RESPIRATORY MEDICAL EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

When required for mandatory use, no member shall be issued respiratory protection that forms a complete seal around the face until (8 CCR 5144):

- (a) The member has completed a medical evaluation that includes a medical evaluation questionnaire.
- (b) A physician or other licensed health care professional has reviewed the questionnaire.
- (c) The member has completed any physical examination recommended by the reviewing physician or health care professional.

604.7 RECORDS

The Respiratory Protection Administrator and the Training Manager are responsible for ensuring records are maintained of all:

- (a) PPE training.
- (b) Initial fit testing for respiratory protection equipment.
- (c) Annual fit testing.
- (d) Respiratory medical evaluation questionnaires and any subsequent physical examination.

1. These records shall be maintained in a separate confidential medical file.

The records shall be maintained in accordance with the Department records retention schedule and 8 CCR 5144.

604.8 TRAINING

Members will be trained in the respiratory and other hazards to which they may be potentially exposed during routine and emergency situations.

All members shall be trained in the proper use and maintenance of PPE issued to them, including when the use is appropriate; how to put on, remove and adjust PPE; how to care for the PPE; and the limitations (8 CCR 3380).

Members issued respiratory PPE for mandatory use shall complete annual training on the proper use of respiratory protection devices (8 CCR 5144). Members issued respiratory PPE for voluntary use shall be provided with a copy of 8 CCR 5144 Appendix D.

604.9 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

Disposable particulate mask - A class of disposable respirators approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) as suitable for use where fluid or particulate resistance is a priority. Examples are N95 and N100 masks.

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Personal protective equipment (PPE) - Equipment that protects a person from serious workplace injuries or illnesses resulting from contact with chemical, radiological, physical, electrical, mechanical, or other workplace hazards.

Respiratory PPE - Any device that is worn by the user to protect from exposure to atmospheres where there is smoke, low levels of oxygen, high levels of carbon monoxide, or the presence of toxic gases or other respiratory hazards. For purposes of this policy, respiratory PPE does not include particulate-filtering masks such as N95 or N100 masks.

604.10 REFERENCES

For further guidance, see the Field Equipment and Communicable Diseases policies, the Respiratory Protection Program, the Illness and Injury Prevention Program, the Aerosol Transmissible Diseases (ATD) Exposure Control Plan, and the Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Control Plan.

[8 CCR 5144 Appendix D](#)