**CHECKLIST FOR RESPIRATORY PROTECTION PROGRAMS FROM MAINE DOL**

*This standard checklist for developing a Respiratory Protection Program (RPP) from Maine DOL is annotated for purposes of developing an RPP for the COVID-19 response. Explanations are in red.*

**Check to ensure that your facility has a written respirator protection program that is specific to your workplace and covers the following:**

If employees need to wear a respirator to protect them from an airborne hazard, their employer is required by OSHA (private sector) and Maine DOL (public sector) to have a Respiratory Protection Program. If the only respirator to be used is an N95 filtering facepiece respirator, the program can use the simplified N95 respiratory protection program model from Maine DOL. This model can also be adapted slightly to include other types of filtering facepiece respirators (KN95, N99, etc.) Although originally designed for public sector employers, this model would also be appropriate for private sector employers. For more information click here: <https://www.maine.gov/labor/docs/2020/covid19/PublicSectorN95FitTest.pdf>

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| **Check:** | **Requirement:** | **Explanation:** |
|  | **Procedures for selection of respirators** | Respiratory protection for COVID19 requires protection against airborne infectious agents. An N95 filtering facepiece respirator meets these requirements. For many organizations, the actual model utilized will be dictated by availability from the state and federal stockpiles. |
|  | **Medical evaluations of employees required to wear respirators** | Since a respirator may place some stress on an individual’s heart or lung capacity, employees must be medically cleared to wear a respirator. An employee who is required to wear an N95 or other filtering facepiece respirator only needs to complete Sections 1 and 2 of Part A of the OSHA “Medical Evaluation Questionnaire for Respirator Use”. The questionnaire is then reviewed by a physician or “other licensed healthcare provider” to determine if the individual can be cleared to wear a respirator. In Maine, a physician, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or registered nurse can review the form and perform the medical evaluations. The medical evaluation requires at a minimum a review of the medical evaluation form and clarification of any “yes” responses, which can be over the phone. If it cannot be determined based on review of the the form and clarification of any “yes” responses that an individual can be definitely cleared or definitely not cleared to use a respirator, then an in-person evaluation is appropriate. A copy of the medical questionnaire is included in the model program on the Maine DOL website linked above.  Completed medical questionnaires are considered protected health information and must be kept in a secure fashion by the healthcare provider reviewing them. Medical information may not be shared with the employer. The clearance form, indicating whether or not an individual has been cleared to wear the designated respirator and whether there are any restrictions on use, is provided to both the employee and employer and should not contain any medical information.  Individuals who cannot be cleared to wear a respirator may not work in a setting potentially exposing them to a respiratory hazard. |
|  | **Fit testing procedures** | Individuals who have been medically cleared to wear an N95 or other filtering facepiece respirator must be fit tested in order to determine the make and model, of those available, that is the best fitting choice. Fit testing for filtering facepiece respirators is usually performed in a “qualitative” fashion. A plastic hood is place over the individual wearing the respirator and then a saccharin (sweet) or bitrex (bitter) solution is sprayed under the hood. When the respirator is properly fitted, the individual should not be able to taste or smell the solution. An individual should only use a make and model to which that individual has been fit tested. At the time of fit testing an individual should learn to perform a seal check on themselves which is performed every time the respirator is put on.  Under normal conditions, fit testing is required to occur annually. For purposes of the COVID19 response, both OSHA and Maine DOL have waived the requirement for *annual* fit testing. |
|  | **Routine use procedures and emergency respirator use procedures** | Employees should be instructed on which circumstances require wearing a respirator. |
|  | **Procedures and schedules for cleaning, disinfecting, storing, inspecting, repairing, discarding, and maintaining respirators** | Typically, N-95 filtering facepiece respirators are discarded after a single use, but in the case of a shortage, CDC has provided guidance on extended use and re-use, <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/hcwcontrols/recommendedguidanceextuse.html> as well as on the developing options for sterilization of N95 respirators <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/decontamination-reuse-respirators.html> |
|  | **Procedures for ensuring adequate air quality for supplied air respirators** | N/A |
|  | **Training in respiratory hazards** | Employees should understand the risks associated with exposure to COVID19. |
|  | **Training in proper use and maintenance of respirators** | During fit testing, employees should be trained on donning and doffing (putting on and removing) their respirators. They should also be trained on performing a seal check. Maine DOL has posted a link to this video for training purposes: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=05wyH1-mLGk&feature=youtu.be> |
|  | **Program evaluation procedures** | Employers should periodically solicit feedback from employees regarding the employees’ perceptions on the functioning of the components of the program. |
|  | **Procedures for ensuring that workers who voluntarily wear respirators (excluding filter facepieces) comply with the medical evaluation, cleaning, storing and maintenance requirements of the standard** | N/A |
|  | **A designated program administrator who is qualified to administer the program** | Although an administrator should be familiar with respirators, the administrator can delegate most of the activities such as medical clearance, fit testing, and training. The primary function of the administrator is to keep track of medical clearances, fit testing, training, and program evaluations and updates. None of this documentation is considered PHI, unlike the medical clearance questionnaire. |
|  | **Updated the written program as necessary to account for changes in the workplace affecting respirator use** | Periodic updates as work conditions change. |
|  | **The provided equipment, training, and medical evaluations are at no cost to employee** | N/A |