

## N95 Respirator Mask Guidance

### **Respirator Masks without Fit Testing**

OSHA requires that employers establish a comprehensive respiratory protection program for employees that are exposed to hazardous particulates, vapors, or other airborne contaminants. Features of such a program include annual fit testing, medical clearance, and training to ensure that the employee is receiving the proper style and mask to complete their job safety while protecting their respiratory system.

Response during a crisis may not provide the time to establish this protocol for every person that requires respiratory protection in the workplace, and a recent blog post from the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) on the CDC website has provided some guidance for “Fit Under Fire” which can be accessed here:

<https://blogs.cdc.gov/niosh-science-blog/2020/03/16/n95-preparedness/>

In the post, it advises that even without “fit testing,” use of a respirator mask is better protection than using a basic facemask or no mask, and that literature and training material should be made available to properly use the mask.

After reading the above blog post, you can reference several materials that have been made available in VOCUS, by going to

[Document Library > Safety > Coronavirus Precautions and Preparedness > N95 Respirator Masks](#)

Here you will find the following resources:

- Donning, Doffing, and Seal Check Video, which is best viewed on your iPad or iPhone in the VOCUS App.
- A copy of this document
- The full 13-page Instructions for 3M Model 8511 Respirator Masks, which Aviation is currently utilizing (if a new brand or model is acquired, additional documentation will be provided).
- Several promotional flyers from the CDC to highlight proper mask usage

### **Donning, Doffing, and Seal Checking**

The video and 3M instructions (snippet below) will provide proper guidance on how to put on (don), remove (doff), and seal check your respirator mask. The following is from the referenced blog post (edited) and includes proper mask handling protocol:

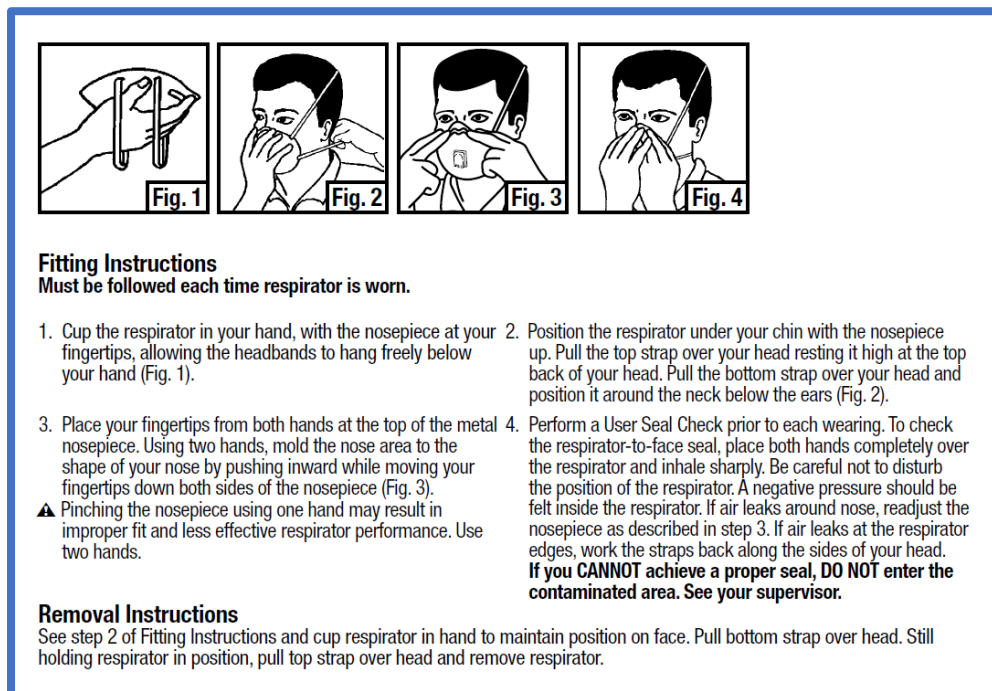
- Place the respirator over your nose and under your chin. If the respirator has two straps, place one strap below the ears and one strap above.
- If you're wearing a hat, it should go over the straps.
- Use your fingertips from both hands to mold the nose clip (a thin metal bar at the top of the device) firmly against your nose and face. Do not pinch with one hand.

- Conduct a user seal check every time you put on the respirator. (see graphic below)
- Facial hair will cause the respirator to leak, so users should be clean-shaven. Some types of facial hair are acceptable as long as the facial hair does not lie along the sealing area of the respirator.
- If you feel dizzy, lightheaded, or nauseated, [find a safe place], remove your respirator, and get medical attention.
- Discard the respirator when:
  - (1) it becomes more difficult to breathe through it,
  - (2) if it becomes dirty or
  - (3) the respirator becomes damaged.
- Do NOT TOUCH the front of the respirator! It may be contaminated.
- Keep your respirator clean and dry.
- Ensure that your hands are clean prior to touching the front of the mask
- Replace your mask anytime it is soiled

Additionally, consider the following during flight operations:

- Wash your hands before donning or doffing the mask
- Do not touch the mask with gloves on, your gloves are probably contaminated
- Place the mask in the provided zipper lock bag after doffing if it is to be re-used

Figure 1: 3M Model 8511 Respirator Mask Instructions



If you're interested in the instructions for other brands and models of masks, you can find them for many mask types here:

[https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/npptl/topics/respirators/disp\\_part/default.html](https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/npptl/topics/respirators/disp_part/default.html)