

August 2020

UN Medical Directors Policy on Organisations' Provision of Cloth Masks and Other PPE for UN Personnel in the Context of COVID-19

Regarding the provision and use of cloth masks and other personal protective equipment (PPE) for UN personnel in context of COVID-19, the UN Medical Directors (UNMD) provide the following consensus advice:

1. Recognized (e.g. CE marked) PPE and cloth masks shall only be provided by the Organization for personnel undertaking tasks where PPE is required, based on a workplace risk assessment and guided by the **UNMD COVID-19 Risk Mitigation Plan** https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/coronavirus_unmdrmp.pdf
2. Employing organizations may be able to provide only a limited supply of PPE and cloth masks to staff not identified as requiring it following the workplace risk assessment, and dependents, depending on local customs and subject to logistic and financial constraints. There is no UN staff entitlement to these items in this situation. Under no circumstances should PPE and cloth masks be provided outside the framework of the **UNMD COVID-19 Risk Mitigation Plan** (https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/coronavirus_unmdrmp.pdf). Where there are local shortages affecting healthcare workers, in those locations UN stocks should be reviewed with a view to supplying local healthcare facilities through an appropriate mechanism.
3. Staff are encouraged to take all measures seen as reasonable and as recommended by local health authorities in their location to manage exposure such as working from home, physical distancing, hand hygiene and the use of non-medical cloth masks.
4. For further guidance regarding the use of cloth masks and PPE in the context of COVID-19, please review the most recent DHMOSH and WHO guidance available here: https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/ddcoronavirus_ppeforwardfacingstaff.pdf and [https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/advice-on-the-use-of-masks-in-the-community-during-home-care-and-in-healthcare-settings-in-the-context-of-the-novel-coronavirus-\(2019-ncov\)-outbreak](https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/advice-on-the-use-of-masks-in-the-community-during-home-care-and-in-healthcare-settings-in-the-context-of-the-novel-coronavirus-(2019-ncov)-outbreak)