

Frequently Asked Questions for Local Public Health Authorities and Tribal Health Authorities

Personal Protective Equipment

Do you have a list of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) suppliers in Oregon? Hospitals, clinics, and other health care providers may find PPE at the following suppliers:

- Cardinal Health (www.cardinalhealth.com)
- Grainger (www.grainger.com)
- McKesson (www.mckesson.com)
- HenrySchein (www.henryschein.com)

Many online retailers may have PPE available, though ordering and supplies can be unreliable. Before ordering, you should verify that the product is from a certified manufacturer.

Does the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) have sample policies for extending the life of PPE for public works staff and/or hospitals?

OHA recommends the following resources for optimizing antiviral N95 respirators:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/respirators-strategy/index.html>
- [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/respirators-strategy-conventional-capacity-strategies.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/respirators-strategy/conventional-capacity-strategies.html)
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/respirators-strategy/contingency-capacity-strategies.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/respirators-strategy/crisis-alternate-strategies.html>

At what point would state PPE supplies be released to LPHAs, providers, and others who need them?

OHA is developing a decision tree for this question that should be available by March 6.

Is there an algorithm to determine the quantity of PPE to request for partners, when submitting a request to OPSCenter?

OHA is developing detailed guidance on how to order the correct amount of PPE, which should be available by the end of the week of March 2.

Information for Employers and Worksites

I need sample policies for employers, for example on alternative work arrangements and flexibility in use of sick or vacation time.

The CDC has posted guidance for businesses and employers to plan for and respond to COVID-19. This guidance is available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/guidance-business-response.html>.

What are remote options for local public health work, for example, administering WIC benefits or doing inspections?

OHA Public Health Division will be working on this request for guidance about use of technology as well as guidance on prioritizing work within program elements. This work will take some time to complete.

What new or revised tools and resources for LPHAs will be released soon? What is the tentative timeline for the release to help LPHAs plan local communications?

- **K-12 Partners:** The Oregon Department of Education (ODE) and OHA are working on FAQs for K-12 partners.
- **School Districts:** ODE issued updated guidance to school districts on 2/29/2020, which was also shared with LPHA and Tribal partners via the Health Alert Network (HAN).
- **Higher education:** Guidance for higher education and FAQs will follow.
- **Emergency Medical Services (EMS):** EMS guidance has been posted at <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/DISEASESCONDITIONS/DISEASESAZ/Pages/emerging-respiratory-infections.aspx>.

Do you expect the EMS guidance to be updated soon?

EMS guidance has been posted at

<https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/DISEASESCONDITIONS/DISEASESAZ/Pages/emerging-respiratory-infections.aspx>.

When will school guidance be released?

- **K-12 Partners:** The Oregon Department of Education (ODE) and OHA have posted FAQs for families and schools on their websites. www.healthoregon.org/coronavirus and <https://www.oregon.gov/ode/students-and-family/healthsafety/Pages/COVID19.aspx>
- **School Districts:** ODE issued updated guidance to school districts on 2/29/2020, which was also shared with LPHA and Tribal partners via the Health Alert Network (HAN).
- **Higher education:** Guidance for higher education and FAQs will follow.

Guidance and Technical Assistance for Local Public Health Authorities and Tribal Health Authorities

Can LPHAs get the 211 talking points and FAQs in case LPHAs open up a local call center to support their operations?

All partners (211, LPHA/tribes and state partners) are receiving the same master set of talking points. Joint Information Center (JIC) Staff are updating 211 info talking points and sharing with LPHAs once they are approved.

How do LPHAs make resource requests to the state?

Before making resource requests, LPHAs need to exhaust all local county and regional resources. If the LPHA needs resources, they should first make a verbal notice to OHA of the request. Then, LPHA resource requests should go through their Emergency Management Office staff, who will enter it into OPSCenter. Oregon Emergency Management or your Public Health Emergency Preparedness Liaison can help if you need support entering the request into OPSCenter.

How should LPHAs track decisions on resource requests?

OHA is developing an allocation decision tree, for PPE at a minimum. LPHAs must keep complete and thorough records of their decisions and processes for looking for resources, including notes from conversations.

Can LPHAs expect future potential reimbursement for COVID-19 expenditures?

At this time OHA does not have funds to reimburse for COVID-19 expenditures. If funds become available, OHA will work with its local and tribal partners through the usual processes to determine funding. In the meantime, it is essential that local and tribal partners carefully document their activities, time spent and expenditures on the COVID-19 response.

Can OHA staff review county protocols and flowcharts?

OHA can be a resource for LPHAs, but it is not mandatory for OHA to review local protocols and flowcharts. Due to staff capacity, OHA recommends LPHAs check the OHA or CDC websites on the COVID-19 response for resources first. If there are unanswered questions, LPHA staff can reach out to the Health Care Branch for questions about infection control (Rebecca Pierce at Rebecca.A.Pierce@state.or.us) and the Public Health Lab for questions about testing (Sarah Humphrey at Sarah.M.Humphrey@state.or.us).

If a healthcare facility contacts OHA directly for testing, how will OHA coordinate with the LPHA on testing and sharing information?

Special note 3/4/20: Changes are coming soon in response to CDC guidance changes today. Watch for a HAN alert.

Will there be briefings for Tribal Health Departments?

OHA will provide assistance to Tribes as requested. The Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board is also hosting weekly calls with Tribes and Tribes are invited to the OHA weekly LPHA and Tribes call.

What will the protocols be for staff returning from offsite assignments? For example, an RN commissioned officer returning post-deployment at Travis Air Force base next week or staff deployed for repatriation and quarantine efforts?

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is notifying responders' employers as to their health status and whether or not the person requires monitoring or exclusion from work. HHS is responsible for monitoring symptoms with responders if that is needed.

In this example, if the RN returns and is considered to be at any risk of exposing others, HHS will notify the RN and their employer.

For health care workers who were assisting with repatriation or quarantine efforts and had contact with COVID-19 patients without appropriate PPE, they would be asked to quarantine for 14 days after that exposure. If they develop symptoms, they would need to be tested for COVID-19.

Does OHA have sample plans for vulnerable populations, such as people experiencing homelessness, without insurance, or who otherwise don't have a doctor or established Primary Care Provider (PCP)?

LPHAs can refer people without regularly established care to where they would usually be referred for safety net medical services. For more information on LPHA guidance and responsibilities, please refer to the OHA Interim Investigative Guidelines at:

<https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/DISEASES/CONDITIONS/COMMUNICABLEDISEASE/REPORTING/COMMUNICABLEDISEASE/REPORTINGGUIDELINES/Documents/Novel-Coronavirus-2019.pdf>.

With whom do we coordinate if closures or quarantines are imminent?

Guidance for quarantines is available on the OHA COVID-19 response website at www.healthoregon.org/coronavirus. Guidance on closures will be forthcoming.

What is my role in this situation?

LPHAs and Tribal Health Authorities can find information about their role on www.healthoregon.org/coronavirus under "For Local Public Health Authorities and Tribes".

Can LPHAs acquire a small number of testing kits from OHA or elsewhere to test potential isolated cases?

Yes. LPHAs may request specimen collection kits from OSPHL. OSPHL will do its best to fulfill your order within our available supplies.

Please complete the OSPHL Stockroom Order Request Form, available at www.bitly.com/phl-forms. Under “For LPHAs, Outbreaks, and Public Health Partners,” choose the Respiratory collection kits needed.

What is the best way for LPHAs to get updates on testing, Persons Under Monitoring (PUM), investigative guidelines, and messaging?

The best way for LPHAs to get updates on testing, Persons Under Monitoring (PUM), investigative guidelines, and messaging is to check the OHA COVID-19 response website daily at www.healthoregon.org/coronavirus.

How can LPHAs and health clinics get masks for people who come into the clinic with symptoms?

Hospitals, clinics, and other health care providers may find PPE at the following suppliers:

- Cardinal Health (www.cardinalhealth.com)
- Grainger (www.grainger.com)
- McKesson (www.mckesson.com)
- HenrySchein (www.henryschein.com)

Many online retailers may have PPE available, though ordering and supplies can be unreliable. Before ordering, you should verify that the product is from a certified manufacturer.

Are travelers returning from an affected geographic area with symptoms considered PUM if they do not require hospitalization?

A PUM is an asymptomatic person with exposure to the COVID-19 virus. Specific definitions for who is considered a PUM is available in OHA’s interim investigative guidelines:

<https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/DISEASES/CONDITIONS/COMMUNICABLEDISEASE/REPORTING/COMMUNICABLEDISEASE/REPORTINGGUIDELINES/Documents/Novel-Coronavirus-2019.pdf>.

Are there any agency, state, or federal resources on standards and recommendations for staff with compromised immune systems?

The most up-to-date guidance for employers is available from the CDC here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/guidance-business-response.html>. LPHAs and Tribal Health Authorities may find the section for Pregnant Women

and Children most helpful for staff with compromised immune systems:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/pregnant-women.html>.

During the disease investigation process are LPHAs required to deliver thermometers to a PUM if they do not have one?

Investigative guidance for LPHAs are available at www.healthoregon.org/coronavirus under “For Local Public Health Authorities and Tribes”.

Has the state considered guidance yet for correctional facilities?

OHA is developing guidance for congregate settings. Please continue to check the OHA website www.healthoregon.org/coronavirus and the CDC website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> for updated population-specific guidance.

Response Levels and Decision Points

What triggers (e.g., volume or severity of disease) will OHA and Local Public Health use to recommend the next level of prevention? For example, is the decision to advise canceling mass gatherings, recommending N95 use for all clinic visits, and other escalations based on the volume or severity of disease?

OHA is performing continual risk assessments and will communicate with LPHAs and the public if stricter preventive measures are warranted.

Recommendations for External Communications

What are the three to five things County Commissioners should be doing?

- Contact your local public health administrator and learn what your LPHA staff are doing for the response.
- Be in touch with your local public health administrator to understand the current status in your jurisdiction.
- Find out if the LPHA has everything it needs.
- Be a resource for calm, factual, science-based messaging for the general public.

What are the three to five messages County Commissioners should be sharing?

- We know that many people are following the story of novel coronavirus disease, now known as COVID-19. New illnesses and cases in Oregon can lead to fear and concern for some.
- The situation is evolving. We are working closely with our local public health department to stay informed. I have confidence our local and state public health officials. They have been trained for exactly this kind of situation. Here are the ways I've seen them taking action in the last several weeks.
- It is a rapidly changing environment, it's important to know where to find accurate information so people can protect themselves and their families. You can sign up for alerts on the Oregon Health Authority website at www.healthoregon.org/coronavirus for information on COVID-19 in Oregon and how to stay healthy.
- For now, it's important to remember that most cases of this virus are mild and the best way to protect yourself is through basic, everyday precautions like washing your hands, covering coughs and sneezes, and staying home if you feel sick. The Oregon Health

Authority and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are reliable resources for the most up-to-date information on COVID-19 risks and advice.

Is there a one-page fact sheet to reference, post, or share?

Both the Oregon Health Authority and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have a variety of fact sheets and media resources available on their websites. Many of these materials have been translated.

- Oregon Health Authority: www.healthoregon.org/coronavirus
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

If commissioners have questions who should they call?

Commissioners should reach out to their local public administrators.

Can the League of Oregon Cities facilitate with getting information out to my community?

OHA is working closely with the League of Oregon Cities to provide them information they can distribute to their communities.

What is the best way to reach all our residents, including at risk?

OHA recommends using your usual channels to communicate with residents. Channels will vary based on the audience you are trying to reach. Please work with your Public Information Officer to identify communications channels for at-risk populations. Social media cards and other resources are available at www.healthoregon.org/coronavirus.

There are a lot of media channels with different information. What's the best source?

The best sources of information about the status of the outbreak and the investigation are the Oregon Health Authority and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

- Oregon Health Authority COVID-19 response updates: www.healthoregon.org/coronavirus
- U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Is there a single point of contact at OHA for both media inquiries to LPHAs and hospitals or clinics involved in caring for cases?

All general media inquiries should go to the OHA External Relations Division. Contact information is available at: <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/ERD/Pages/Media-Contacts.aspx>. Questions about local investigations should be coordinated with local Public Information Officers. Hospitals and clinics looking for information should reach out to their LPHA.

What is OHA's preference for funneling media inquiries, and how is OHA Communications reaching out to the media?

All general media inquiries should go to the OHA External Relations Division. Contact information is available at: <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/ERD/Pages/Media-Contacts.aspx>. OHA Communications is in continual communication with the media through press releases, press advisories, and media requests.

What is OHA's preference for joint OHA and LPHA communications with the media?

LPHAs and Tribes can connect all media inquiries with the OHA External Relations Division. Contact information is available at: <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/ERD/Pages/Media-Contacts.aspx>.

What talking points are available for LPHAs to use during routine media interviews, specifically about cases under investigation?

For developing talking points, LPHAs may find helpful fact sheets, templates, and social media guidance on the Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication webpage: <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/Preparedness/Partners/Pages/riskcommunicationtools.aspx>.