



Hood Canal Coordinating Council

Jefferson, Kitsap & Mason Counties; Port Gamble S'Klallam & Skokomish Tribes

Hood Canal Regional Pollution Identification and Correction Program

Field Guide Addendum: COVID-19 Field Work Guidance

The following information is intended to be used as guidance for returning to PIC field work activities while maintaining safe working conditions during the COVID-19 pandemic. This information does not supersede your workplace’s policies. Always follow Center for Disease Control (CDC) and your local County guidelines. Links to further resources are provided below:

- [Centers of Disease Control](#)
- [WA State Governor’s office](#)
- [Kitsap County](#)
- [Jefferson County](#)
- [Mason County](#)

The health and safety of staff and our local communities is the number one priority. If you or your staff/volunteers do not feel safe continuing fieldwork or have concerns about putting yourself, a family member or others at risk, please inform your supervisor.

Basic guidelines:

- **Stay home if you feel sick, if anyone in your household is sick, or you believe you may have encountered an infected individual**
- **If you begin to feel unwell while in the field, contact your supervisor, avoid any contact with other staff and once your team member is safely out of the field, go home asap**
- **Act as if you have it and could spread it**

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Self-screening Before Starting Work

Prior to starting field work, perform a self-screen and continually self-monitor for potential COVID-19 symptoms. Immediately report to your supervisor/coordinator if you are experiencing any of the symptoms outlined below:

COVID-19 Health Symptoms

- A new fever (100.4 degrees F or higher), or a sense of having a fever
- A new cough that you cannot attribute to another health condition
- New shortness of breath that you cannot attribute to another health condition
- A sore throat that you cannot attribute to another health condition
- New muscle aches that you cannot attribute to another health condition
- Chills or repeated shaking with chills
- Headache
- A loss of smell or taste
- Swollen or purple toes
- Vomiting
- Gastroenteritis

What to Do if You Become Ill

If you appear to have symptoms upon arrival at work or you become sick during the day immediately separate yourself from other staff, or members of the public, and return home. Always dial 911 for yourself or a co-worker when an emergency response is needed. Follow CDC and local government guidelines for self-isolation and the advice of your healthcare provider.

If you have a sick family member at home with confirmed or suspected COVID-19, notify your employer and co-workers and follow government-recommended precautions.

If you have tested positive for COVID-19, notify your supervisor and stay home. Your supervisor will then notify others with whom you may have come in contact (without disclosing your name) and the local health department.

Contact your supervisor before returning to work after illness or testing positive, or after coming into contact with someone who has tested positive.

Illness Prevention

The best way to avoid the COVID-19 virus is to practice good hygiene:

- WASH YOUR HANDS OFTEN; use soap and water and scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds
- Use something other than your hand and fingers (a paper towel/napkin, your elbow, forearm, knuckle, etc.) to touch objects, open doors, push buttons, etc.
- Do not shake anybody's hand
- If handwashing is not available, use hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol); this is not as effective as handwashing
- Cough or sneeze into a tissue or your elbow; and then wash your hands
- Try to touch your face as little as possible

Take extra precautions to reduce your risk:

- Stay at least 6 ft away from any other person (10-12 ft is better)

- Identify choke points and high-risk areas on field work sites where it may be challenging to maintain social-distancing and adapt your movements accordingly
- Wear a face mask when around other people
- Do not share food

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Your employer will supply you with PPE. Ensure you have a sufficient supply of PPE while out in the field. Notify your supervisor/coordinator if you need additional supplies.

- **Face mask:** Your employer will supply workers with the appropriate face masks for the task (see guidance [linked here](#)). A cloth face mask may also be used. A cloth face mask is a covering that fits snugly but comfortably against the side of the face, is secured with ties or ear loops, includes multiple layers of fabric while still allowing breathing without restriction and can be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape; see WA State Department of Health's face mask guidance ([linked here](#)) and Figure 1 below for instructions on how to make your own cloth mask using a bandana or square cloth.
 - Remove face mask by grasping ties or elastics of the mask and remove from face **without touching the front of the mask**. Individuals should be careful not to touch their eyes, nose, and mouth when removing their face mask
 - Place face mask in zip lock bag for washing later, or keep in a paper bag to dry out between uses
 - Immediately wash or sanitize hands after removing face mask and securing in bag
 - Masks should be routinely washed depending on frequency of use, a washing machine should suffice
 - Staff should use a minimum of 1 clean face mask per day
- **Disposable gloves:** Gloves that can be discarded after each use such as nitrile and latex gloves.
 - Please note: Some doctors and healthcare providers say gloves do not give you an added layer of protection; wearing gloves can provide a false sense of security; gloves are helpful if they remind you to not touch your face
 - Gloves should always be worn while doing field work and handling equipment or samples; wear gloves when out in public when handwashing or sanitizing is not readily available
 - When removing gloves remember glove to glove, skin to skin
 - Using a gloved hand, grasp the palm area of the other gloved hand (not the edge) and peel off first glove
 - Hold removed glove in gloved hand
 - Slide fingers of ungloved hand under remaining glove at wrist and peel off second glove over first glove
 - Discard used gloves in PPE disposal bag
 - Immediately wash or sanitize your hands after removing glove
- **Hand sanitizer:** An alcohol-based hand sanitizer (greater than 60% alcohol)
- **Disinfecting wipes:** Wipes containing disinfectants that kill germs on surfaces.
 - If disinfectant wipes are not available, diluted household bleach solutions can be used if appropriate for the surface; *remember that bleach will impact fabric colors and to use caution when applying
 - See Table 1 below for guidance on use of various cleaners and solutions
- **Eye protection:** safety glasses, goggles, face shields may be used, as appropriate
- **Tissues:** soft, absorbent, disposable facial tissue used for covering your mouth and nose when nose-blowing, coughing, or sneezing; if tissues are not available, use the inside of your elbow.

- **PPE disposal bags:** A plastic garbage bag to dispose of used PPE
- **Hand soap:** A bar or container of soap for handwashing
- **PPE field kit:** A sealable plastic box or small tote with all necessary PPE in sufficient quantities for multiple days' worth of field work
- **Portable hand washing system (optional):** 5-gallon bucket with lid, water container with spicket, hand soap in sealable bag or container, disposable paper towels or napkins for drying

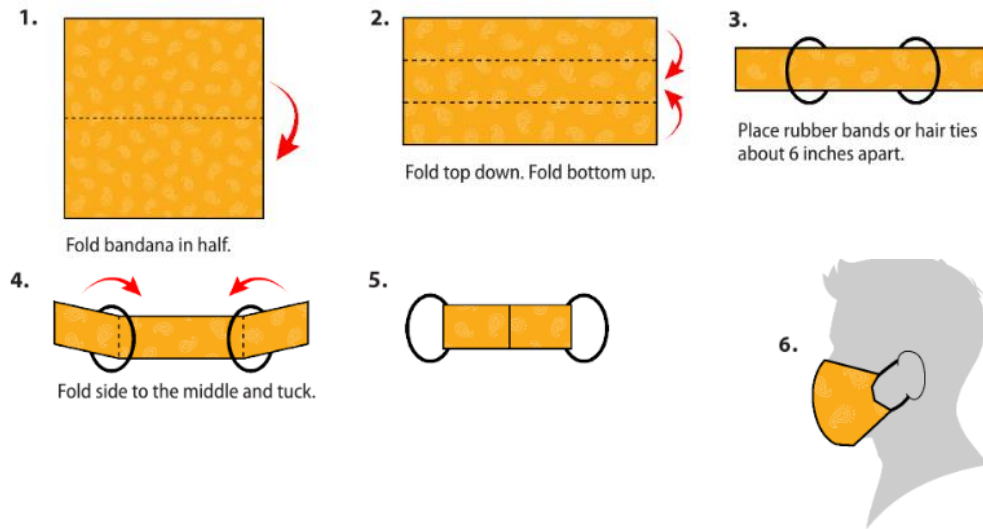


Figure 1: Do-It-Yourself Cloth Mask Instructions

Field Work Guidelines

Vehicles

- Individuals should travel alone to field work sites; multiple individuals from the same household may share vehicles
- Ensure a sufficient supply of PPE is included in the vehicle
- Avoid unnecessary stops; use extra precautions at fueling stations and interacting with the public
- Sanitize high-touch areas on both the exterior and interior of the car between uses (keys, handles, knobs, steering wheel, seat belt, etc.)

Equipment Use

- If enough equipment is available, assign dedicated equipment to individual staff persons to avoid sharing
- Disinfect all equipment using disinfecting wipes or a cleaning solution before placing in car; if you have sufficient designated storage containers/bags, you may prefer to store equipment between sites and disinfect everything at the end of the day
 - **Cleaning** refers to the removal of germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces; it does not kill germs, but by removing them, it lowers their numbers and the risk of spreading infection
 - **Disinfecting** refers to using chemicals to kill germs on surfaces; this process does not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or removes germs, but by killing germs on a surface after cleaning it, it can further the risk of spreading infection
 - A list of products EPA-approved for use against the coronavirus can be found [linked here](#)

Table 1: Guidance for Use of Cleaners and Cleaning Solutions

Household Cleaners and Disinfectants, including Wipes	Bleach Solution	Alcohol Solutions	Hydrogen Peroxide
Follow the instructions on the label to ensure safe and effective use of the product.	10% ratio. Mix 5 tablespoons (1/3 rd cup) bleach per gallon of water or 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water. Scrub clean.	Solutions need at least 70% alcohol. Wipe surface wet and clean.	Household solutions are 3% and sufficient. Wipe surface wet and clean.
Follow the instructions	Let sit 1 min.	Let sit 30 sec.	Let sit 1 min.

- Store equipment in a designated bin/bag/location in your car or workplace where it will not be disturbed between uses
- Handling of water samples:
 - o Always use gloves to handle sample bottles
 - o Place bottles in plastic bag
 - o Assume every surface in cooler is contaminated
 - o Disinfect cooler after transfer

Physical Distancing

- Maintain at least 6 ft of distance between you and any other person (10-12 ft is better); if you cannot maintain this distance, wear a mask
- Identify choke points and high-risk areas on field work sites where it may be challenging to maintain social-distancing and adapt your movements accordingly

Interacting with the Public

- Wear a mask when interacting with the public
- Acknowledge immediately that you are practicing social-distancing and taking extra health precautions; it may be difficult to interact while wearing a mask, it helps to acknowledge this with the other person
- People may be excited to interact during this time and not cognizant of social-distancing throughout your interaction
- Stay outside
- Gauge individual's comfort level as you proceed

Sanitary Surveys

*These procedures may be adjusted as counties transition to re-opening. The following are best-practices to avoid risk to the employee and public.

- Contact owner or occupant by phone before visiting (if possible), and make an appointment to inspect the property
- Drive by the property ahead of time to determine if there is activity at the site and if violations can be verified from the vehicle in public right-of-way
- If no activity is visible, knock on the door; If no answer, leave materials with instructions to follow-up to discuss the concern
- If someone answers the door, introduce yourself and maintain at least 6 ft distance (see "Interacting with the public" section above). If they are not comfortable interacting, leave materials and ask them to call you to discuss the issue over the phone (this may be done immediately from the car so you could still inspect the site, if allowed by the homeowner)
- If you see someone outside while driving by, stop and ask if it is ok to speak with them from a distance regarding the issue
- If they are upset you are disturbing them during this time, politely leave the property and ask them to call you to discuss the issue; If you do not hear from them, but noticed violations while at the property, send

them a NOCV with a generous timeframe to correct

- Make every effort to obtain the person's contact information to contact them in the future without having to meet face-to-face
- Pre-package materials if you are distributing them to the public
- Indoor dye tests are not possible while not allowed to enter homes. Determine if there is a way to conduct a dye test outside the home.
- When responding to complaints of homeless camps, and verifying multiple people on a site, leave the site without making contact and notify the property owner through a letter about the conditions on their property

Shoreline or Stream Sampling

- Always wear gloves
- Wear a mask if working with others
- Avoid contact with the public. If approached, politely ask the member of the public to maintain social distance and explain why
- If the member of the public does not allow you to maintain social distance after requesting to do so, leave the area