

Samuel Merritt University

Protocol: Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

PPE for the campus environment

SMU's COVID-19 policies and practices related to PPE follow the most current CDC guidelines and are vetted for the University's specific teaching settings by our infectious disease and public health expert¹, who is familiar with the SMU campus environments and the types of learning activities allowed during pandemic restrictions.

A plethora of evidence and rationale is available in the scientific literature to support the requirement to wear masks. [This UCSF article](#) summarizes the science behind how face masks prevent the spread of coronavirus and provides links to several recent studies about mask efficacy.

[Eye protection](#) is required for health care workers in the clinical setting to protect the wearer from potentially contracting the virus through respiratory droplets to the mucous membranes of the conjunctiva. Our on-campus PPE policy adopts this same level of protection for students and faculty during lab or simulation sessions since periods of proximity of < 6 feet are possible in these settings and PPE for the eyes will afford an added barrier for this mode of virus transmission. Therefore:

1. Each person is provided a new, **disposable procedure**² mask each time one arrives on campus, which must be worn throughout the day while on campus. You may use personal cloth masks while in general campus areas, but everyone is required to use the [new procedure mask](#) when engaging in in-person learning activities on campus (lab/simulation/other).
2. **Eye protection**, in the form of face shields, goggles, or safety glasses is required at all times when engaging in on campus, in-person learning activities (lab/simulation/other).
 - a. A face shield that covers to the chin is the preferred equipment for eye protection as, in concert with a properly worn mask, it will also provide a second barrier to the spread of aerosolized particles or droplets from your nose or mouth.
 - i. SMU provides face shields for all students, faculty, and staff for use during in-person learning activities. This equipment is distributed according to a process established by your particular program--your course faculty will know what the process is.
 - ii. The face shield provided by SMU is reusable (as are most face shields) if cleaned properly with disinfectant. In the interest of maintaining adequate supplies of this PPE product, users are strongly encouraged to plan on multiple use of a single shield. When a face shield is in disrepair or cannot be satisfactorily cleaned and requires replacement, a new shield will be provided according to the procedure established by your program.
 - b. Goggles or safety glasses are acceptable forms of eye protection provided the specific product has been approved by the HS&O Committee³.
 - i. Each program's lead administrator⁴ is responsible for a) obtaining HS&O approval, b) determining the product volume required for purchase; c) ordering and paying for the products, and d) determining the method for initial and any subsequent distribution to students, faculty or staff.
 - ii. Goggles and glasses are re-usable if cleaned properly with disinfectant. If goggles or glasses are in disrepair or cannot be satisfactorily cleaned and requires replacement, new equipment will be provided according to the procedure established by your program or department.

¹ John Swartzberg, M.D., clinical professor emeritus (Infectious Diseases and Vaccinology) at UC Berkeley's School of Public Health; chair of the editorial board of the School of Public Health's Health & Wellness Publications; member, SMU Board of Regents.



² The definition of procedure (or procedural) mask for the purpose of this protocol is equivalent to the definition of *surgical* mask on the [COVID19.CA.GOV webpage for Masks and face coverings](#). This definition aligns with the [CDC's distinction](#) between a surgical mask and a N95 respirator. Surgical masks with four ties attached, (as opposed to ear loops) are specifically used in perioperative settings – these are NOT the masks used for PPE while individuals are on campus.

³ Approval provided by HS&O Committee Co-Chairs. CDC, OSHA, and Sutter Health PPE guidelines will form the basis for approval

⁴ Dean (or their designate) or department Chair

- c. You may purchase your own face shield, goggles or glasses provided the specific product has been approved by the HS&O Committee – approval is facilitated through the program lead administrators (see footnote 7).
 - d. You are responsible for cleaning (see next section), storing, bringing and wearing your eye protection equipment throughout every in-person learning session you attend. If you do not have your eye protection equipment with you when you arrive at your session, you will not be allowed to participate until you have the required equipment. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in disciplinary action.
3. Other appropriate PPE for each on-campus learning activity (**e.g., gloves, gowns**) will be provided for you.

Cleaning protocols for eye protection equipment⁵

PPE	CLEANING PROTOCOLS
<p>SAFETY GOGGLES or GLASSES</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wear clean gloves. • Hold the goggles by the side and wipe the back and front parts of the lens as well as the bridge with an approved disinfectant wipe. • Switch your hold to the bridge of the goggles and then wipe down the side shields (if applicable) and straps. • Keep damp for contact time • Dampen gauze with water and wipe off dried disinfectant on inner area facing eyes • Leave cleaned/disinfected goggles on a clean surface or in a clean storage container • Remove gloves and clean hands with soap & water or hand sanitizer
<p>FACE SHIELDS</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Porous sponge headbands must be removed prior to disinfection, if applicable. • Wear clean gloves • Wipe down the outer and inner side of the face shield including the non-porous headband with an approved disinfectant wipe • Keep damp for contact time • Dampen gauze with water and wipe off dried disinfectant on inner side • Leave cleaned/disinfected goggles on the isolation cart • Remove gloves and clean hands with soap & water or hand sanitizer

PPE for the clinical environment

Guidelines for provision of PPE for students and faculty in the clinical setting are delineated [in the compendium](#). In essence, the SMU contracts with clinical agencies for student experiences are expected to stipulate the provision of appropriate PPE for students.

If you require **eye protection** for your clinical assignment and the clinical agency is not providing this for you, your face shield/goggles/glasses can be used for this purpose as well. That is, SMU will provide eye protection for students who are required to wear it during clinical assignments when the clinical agency is unable to provide that eye protection for students.

If students or faculty are not being provided adequate PPE according to their specific agency guidelines, see the guidelines ([PPE in the clinical environment](#)) for actions to take.

⁵ Sutter Health Employee PPE Guidebook (November 2, 2020 update)