



DAR 2020-04: COVID-19 and Revised Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Guidance

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From: Michael J. Huerkamp, DVM, DACLAM
Director, Division of Animal Resources

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In response to the recommendation from the CDC, the DAR has revised PPE guidance in support of research and DAR operations.

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In response to new CDC guidance, the DAR will provide one face mask per person per week, one disposable yellow gown per person per week per room, and a storage container. This practice aligns with Emory Healthcare and aims to protect staff while conserving personal protective equipment (PPE). Persons may use their own cloth mask, as well. Laboratory coats that are not visibly soiled may now be worn in and out of the DAR facilities and also when handling animals. DAR facility leaders are coordinating with research staff to schedule animal care and research procedures during separate time intervals to promote social distancing and enable maximal isolation.

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The CDC guidance issued on April 3, 2020 encourages the wearing of face masks in public areas where social distancing measures may be difficult to achieve. In support of this instruction, the DAR has revised personal protective equipment (PPE) guidance for persons in DAR facilities. These changes align with those used by Emory Healthcare. The goals are to maximize protection of persons in DAR facilities while at the same time conserving PPE.

DAR-issued Face Masks

1. In general, each DAR employee and researcher actively engaged in an essential research project involving one or more DAR facilities will be issued one disposable mask per week.
 - a. Persons engaged in activities such as DAR soiled side cage wash, large animal husbandry, and those involved in biocontainment research will be issued a week's worth of masks.
 - b. Personally-supplied cloth masks are also allowed and encouraged.
 - c. Disposable masks should be stored in a plastic or paper bag or a clean filter top cage provided by DAR and discarded when a replacement has been issued.
2. The masks do not need to be worn when working alone or distant from others. Masks should be donned when social distancing may be compromised.
 - a. Current data suggest that being within 6 feet of a shedder for 10 or more minutes creates risk for infection.
 - b. Being in areas of high, close traffic, such as grocery stores, has likewise been deemed a risk.

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3. When wearing a mask still keep a safe, 6+ foot away distance from other persons at work, home, or in public.
4. This program will only be effective if all persons now wear masks when in nearby contact.
5. Masks continue to remain in short supply worldwide so please properly use, care for, and store your masks.

DAR-issued Disposable Gowns

1. The DAR will issue one yellow disposable gown per person per room accessed per week.
 - a. These gowns should be labeled with the name of the user, date of issue, facility, and room.
 - b. The DAR will provide a clean filter top cage for in-room storage of the gown and mask combination.
2. As an alternative, laboratory coats that are not visibly soiled may be worn in and out of the DAR facility and also when handling animals.

Scheduled Social Distancing: DAR facility leaders are coordinating with research staff to schedule animal care and research procedures during separate time intervals to support social distancing and enable maximal isolation among persons within DAR facilities.

Link to the CDC new guidance about masks: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html>.

Please direct any questions to Dr. Michael Huerkamp: 7-3248; mhuerka@emory.edu.