

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

At a Glance

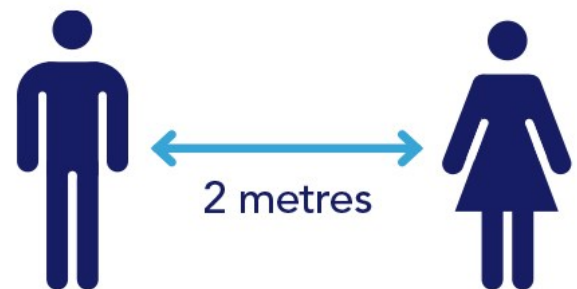
For most elections, a significant amount of the work lies in procurement. From office supplies to ballots, ballot boxes and marking devices, an election is a tremendous exercise in procurement. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, election management bodies must devote considerable resources to reducing the risk of transmission. The procurement of personal protective equipment plays a vital role in ensuring safer voting for all.

What is Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)?

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) are items worn to provide a barrier to help prevent potential exposure to infectious diseases. This may include gloves, gowns, masks, respirators, and eye protection.

What kinds of PPE should be considered for elections during COVID-19?

COVID-19 is primarily spread through the air and to a lesser extent on surfaces. The main vulnerabilities then at voting opportunities are voters and workers being in direct contact with each other and with surfaces.



When planning for an election, administrators should first institute appropriate measures to avoid any opportunities for infection. Then, they should consider the use of PPE to further stop transmission, in particular in those limited cases where physical

distancing cannot be maintained. Primarily, there are two main types that should be considered: gloves and masks.



1. Masks

While not mandatory at present, the Chief Medical Health Officer of Saskatchewan has advised the use of masks indoors in locations where physical distancing cannot be maintained. However, electoral experts have also advised that it is best practice for all election workers to wear non-medical grade masks throughout the electoral process.

2. Gloves

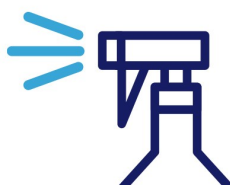
Surgical gloves may be worn as a way to reduce transmission. However, administrators should keep in mind the kinds of duties that election workers are asked to perform and whether or not gloves represent the optimal solution. It is possible that the procedures at the polling location can be redesigned

to minimize direct transfer of materials and hence regular hand sanitizer may be sufficient. However, for certain tasks like the manual counting of ballots, gloves may provide a better solution.

What other kinds of COVID-19 supplies should I procure for my election?



1. Hand Sanitizer. It is important to have bottles of hand sanitizer for each election worker as well as for voters.



2. Cleaning Spray. Surfaces should be sanitized whenever needed as well as on a schedule. The worker designated for the scheduled cleaning should have a checklist of areas that they are to clean and specified times for doing so.



3. Single-Use Pencils. In order to avoid shared contact, it makes good sense to provide single-use

pencils for voters to mark their ballot. If single-use pencils cannot be procured, voters can be encouraged to bring their own marking device or marking devices can be sanitized between voters.

Where can I find more information?

Information regarding municipal elections can be found from the Ministry of Government Relations.

306-787-2680

Further information on electoral best practice during the COVID-19 pandemic can be found here:

<https://www.ifes.org/publications/guidelines-and-recommendations-electoral-activities-during-covid-19-pandemic>

<https://www.idea.int/publications/catalogue/elections-and-covid-19>

About Elections Saskatchewan

Elections Saskatchewan is the province's impartial, independent, election management body. Given a mandate from the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, it organizes, manages and oversees provincial electoral events

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