

Manager's Guide to Respiratory Protection

Environmental Health & Safety (EH&S) offers training for PCC employees that are required to use respiratory protection as a function of their job duties. The following must be complete in order for such employees to wear respiratory protection, per Oregon OSHA :

1. Annual training; and,
2. Annual fit-testing; and,
3. Medical evaluation

This guide will inform managers what must be done to meet all three of these requirements.

Two important distinctions must be made before any further discussion on the topic. First, face masks, face coverings, and face shields required for the prevention of transmission of airborne diseases, such as COVID-19, are not respiratory protection. The only recognized use of respiratory protection due to COVID-19 occurred within the Dental department due to their high-risk status per OR OSHA. Second, there are a limited number of documented tasks performed by PCC employees in select departments that use respiratory protection on a voluntary basis. This guide will also inform managers what must be done to meet the OR OSHA requirements for voluntary respirator use. Questions about respiratory protection or this guide can be addressed by contacting EH&S.

PCC's Health & Safety Manual Chapter 17 is titled *Respiratory Protection Plan*, which can be found on the EH&S webpage via the link below:

[Health & Safety Manual](#)

Specialized terms used in this guide as well the *Respiratory Protection Plan* can be found in H&SM Ch 17 Appendix A – *Definitions*.

Departments that use respiratory protection, either required or voluntary include: Arts (Ceramics & Photography), Athletics, Auto Collision, Automotive Repair, Aviation, EH&S, Fire Science, Facilities Management Services (Custodial, Grounds & Maintenance), Think Big, and Welding (Ref. H&SM Ch 17 Appendix B – *Respiratory Selection Table*).

Required Use of Respiratory Protection

Medical Evaluation: Managers should complete the first four sections of H&SM Ch 17 Form 1: *Medical Clearance Request for Respirator User* for each employee that will use respiratory protection. With respect to the section titled *Check Respirator Type(s) to be Used*, managers should inquire of their employees that have previously been issued respirators to determine their continued needs.

Managers should distribute to each employee required to wear respiratory protection a copy of H&SM Ch 17 Form 2: *OSHA Medical Evaluation Questionnaire*. Employees should complete the following sections of the questionnaire:

- Part A: All questions in Section 1 and questions 1 - 9 in Section 2
Questions 10 – 15 in Section 2 must be completed by employees selected to wear either full-face respirators or self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA). The completion of these questions by employees selected to wear other respiratory protection is voluntary.
- Part B: These questions are not currently required by PCC's occupational health providers to be completed. Completion of these questions is voluntary.

Each employee should fold their completed questionnaire and seal it in an envelope that legibly shows the employee's name. Managers should gather all sealed questionnaires and forward them to EH&S at SY CSB 314 along with copies of the completed Form 1: *Medical Clearance*

Request for Respirator User.

EH&S will contact one of PCC's occupational health providers and submit the completed forms to the provider for evaluation. The provider will review each questionnaire and form and either approve or reject the use of the noted respiratory protection by the employee. In some instances, the provider may allow the use of the noted respiratory protection with restrictions. The provider will then return the signed Form 1: *Medical Clearance Request for Respirator Use* to EH&S, who will in turn, forward the form(s) to the manager.

EH&S is responsible for the payment of services associated with the review of the medical evaluations.

Under most circumstances, medical evaluations should take place prior to training.

Fit-Testing: The requirements for respiratory selection and fit-testing are covered in Section IV.C. of the *Respiratory Protection Plan*. Fit-testing of each employee using respiratory protection should occur at least annually per OR OSHA.

Managers should complete the top portion of H&SM Ch 17 Form 3: *Respirator Assignment and Fit Record* for each employee that will use respiratory protection. Managers should interview employees that have previously been issued respiratory protection regarding the make, model, and size of such equipment and/or the types of filters or cartridges needed.

Managers should schedule fit-testing for their employees at one of the approved providers listed in H&SM Ch 17 Appendix D: *Occupational Health Providers*. Employees undergoing fit-testing should bring their partially completed H&SM Ch 17 Form 3: *Respiratory Assignment and Fit Record* to the provider location determined by their manager. Employees should also bring their assigned respirator and any filters or cartridges that they use to the fit-testing session.

The provider will perform the fit-test and complete the middle section of H&SM Ch 17 Form 3: *Respiratory Assignment and Fit Record*. The employee and provider will each sign and date the form at the bottom. The employee should return the completed form to their manager.

Fit-testing can also be performed for new respirator users selected by their manager to use respiratory protection. Managers should arrange for such fit-testing by contacting EH&S and then ensuring their employees attend the established fit-test date/time. In such cases, EH&S will provide the employee undergoing fit-testing with a new respirator. EH&S will sign and date the bottom portion of H&SM Ch 17 Form 3: *Respiratory Assignment and Fit Record* in lieu of the occupational health provider. EH&S will forward the completed form to the department manager.

Employees using loose-fitting respirators, such as a helmet-hood or some powered air purifying respirators are not required to undergo fit-testing.

Training: EH&S provides training curricula on the subject of respiratory protection. These trainings consist of online materials covering the OR OSHA requirements as well as PCC's *Respiratory Protection Plan*. One curriculum covers the essentials of respiratory protection and air-purifying respirators. A second, more specialized training is available for users of atmosphere-supplying respirators who are also required to complete the curriculum on air-purifying respirators. Managers can assign the training to their employees on MyCareer@PCC. Annual training is required by OR OSHA.

Other requirements: Each employee using respiratory protection regardless of the type must receive and sign a copy of H&SM Ch 17 Form 5 – *Cleaning & Storage*. The manager has primary responsibility for distributing and signing this form; EH&S can also perform these functions.

Voluntary Use of Respiratory Protection

Medical Evaluations: Medical evaluations are required for employees using all types of respiratory protection on a voluntary basis with one exception. Employees using filtering facepieces aka dust masks (N95, N99, N100, R95, R99, R100, P95, P99, or P100) do not have to undergo medical evaluations so long as the filtering facepiece is the only respiratory protection that the employee utilizes on a voluntary basis.

The process for obtaining the medical evaluation is the same as what is described above and requires the completion of the same forms.

Fit-testing: Fit-testing is not required for employees using respiratory protection on a voluntary basis.

Training: Oregon OSHA does not require training for employees using respiratory protection on a voluntary basis. However, due to numerous misunderstandings associated with this topic, EH&S has developed a training curriculum on the voluntary use of respirators which is applicable to both employees and management.

Other requirements: Each employee using respiratory protection on a voluntary basis must receive and sign copies of H&SM Ch 17 Form 5 – *Cleaning & Storage* and Form 6 – *Respirator Voluntary Use*. The manager has primary responsibility for distributing and signing these forms; EH&S can also perform these functions.