

Guidance for Iowans to sew homemade masks for healthcare providers

March 28, 2020

There is a national shortage of commercially-produced PPE including face masks, and public and private officials are working to address national and global supply challenges. Due to the current limitations on supplies of face masks, there may come a time during this response when commercially manufactured masks are no longer readily available. Iowans who would like to support healthcare providers can use this guidance document to construct homemade cloth masks that can be worn by Iowa healthcare providers during patient care.

Iowans who would like to donate homemade masks need to call their local hospital, medical clinics, or long-term care facility prior to making a donation. The facility will provide guidance on where to drop off donations outside of the health care facility.

Please construct masks as requested by the health care facility where you plan to donate. If the health care facility does not have a specific plan, please construct masks using the following specifications:

- 100% cotton fabric, tightly woven, minimum of 160 thread count per square inch
- Ties and tape – 100% cotton – white or natural color – minimum ¼ inch thick
- Nose piece – minimum 4 inches long – plastic coated wire twist ties
- Mask size when complete – 7 inches wide by 3.75 inches long
- 3 pleats per mask facing upward (from outside view)
- The mask should have two layers of fabric

There are many different patterns available on the internet, please choose one that meets the specifications above or one that meets the requirements provided by the facility where you are making a donation.

