



# HOUSTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** All Officers and Members  
**From:** Justin Wells, Assistant Chief  
**Through:** Robert I. Garcia, Assistant Fire Chief  
**Subject:** N95 Respirator Reuse  
**Date:** April 9, 2020

**Mayor**  
Sylvester Turner

**City Council**

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**At-Large 5**  
Sallie Alcorn

**Controller,**  
Chris Brown

Based on CDC guidance, limited reuse of N95 masks has been approved in order to ensure continued supply of N95 masks for EMS calls. N95 masks may be reused under the following circumstances:

- The member wearing the N95 mask **did not** come within 6 feet of the patient.  
OR
- The member wearing the N95 mask **did** come within 6 feet of the patient for a total time of less than 6 minutes, and none of the following occurred:
  - High-risk procedures (Nebulized medication, intubation, CPAP, CPR)
  - Direct contamination (patient coughed on member, etc.)
  - Visible contamination/soiling (blood, vomit, etc.)
- OR
- The member wearing the N95 mask also wore a protective visor.

**Doffing and storing a N95 mask intended for reuse**

- If reusing an N95 mask, members shall wear gloves when doffing the N-95.
- The N95 shall be kept in a paper bag identified with the member’s name and payroll. Masks shall not be shared between members.
- After storing the mask, the member shall remove their gloves and utilize proper hand hygiene.

**Donning a reused N95 mask**

- Members shall wear gloves when donning a reused N95.
- After donning the N95, these gloves should be discarded and proper hand-hygiene performed.
- New gloves should be donned prior to making patient contact or donning eye protection.
- Members should make every effort to not touch the outside of the N95 with their clean gloves or bare hands.

Beginning **Thursday, April 9, 2020**, the HFD supply warehouse will begin delivering small paper sacks to District Stations. The small paper sacks will be for members to store their individual N95 masks when not in use. Paper sacks are the only acceptable storage medium. Plastic bags will reduce the filter capabilities and effectiveness of N95 masks if used as a storage mechanism. Any questions regarding this memorandum will be address through the chain of command.

**20-126**



**Samuel Peña, Fire Chief**  
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