

# Personal Protective Equipment

## 705.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy identifies the different types of personal protective equipment (PPE) provided by the Department as well the requirements and guidelines for the use of PPE.

This policy does not address ballistic vests or protection from communicable disease, as those issues are addressed in the Body Armor and Communicable Diseases policies.

### 705.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

**Personal protective equipment (PPE)** - Equipment that protects a person from serious workplace injuries or illnesses resulting from contact with chemical, radiological, physical, electrical, mechanical, or other workplace hazards.

**Respiratory PPE** - Any device that is worn by the user to protect from exposure to atmospheres where there is smoke, low levels of oxygen, high levels of carbon monoxide, or the presence of toxic gases or other respiratory hazards. For purposes of this policy, respiratory PPE does not include particulate-filtering masks such as N95 or N100 masks.

## 705.2 POLICY

The Columbia Heights Police Department endeavors to protect members by supplying certain PPE to members as provided in this policy.

## 705.3 OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES

Members are required to use PPE as provided in this policy and pursuant to their training.

Members are responsible for proper maintenance and storage of issued PPE. PPE should be stored in an appropriate location so that it is available when needed.

Any member who identifies hazards in the workplace is encouraged to utilize the procedures in the Workplace Accident and Injury Reduction Policy to recommend new or improved PPE or additional needs for PPE.

## 705.4 HEARING PROTECTION

Approved hearing protection shall be used by members during firearms training.

Hearing protection shall meet or exceed industry standards for use at firing ranges (29 CFR 1910.95; Minn. R. 5205.0010).

## 705.5 EYE PROTECTION

Approved eye protection, including side protection, shall be used by members during firearms training. Eye protection for members who wear prescription lenses shall incorporate the

# Columbia Heights Police Department

## Policy Manual

### *Personal Protective Equipment*

---

prescription (e.g., eye protection that can be worn over prescription lenses). Members shall ensure their eye protection does not interfere with the fit of their hearing protection.

The Firearms Instructor shall ensure eye protection meets or exceeds consensus standards set by the American National Standards Institute (29 CFR 1910.133; Minn. R. 5205.0010).

#### **705.6 HEAD AND BODY PROTECTION**

Members who make arrests or control crowds should be provided head protection with an attachable face shield.

Padded body protection consisting of chest, arm, leg, and groin protection should be provided as required by any collective bargaining agreement.

#### **705.7 RESPIRATORY PROTECTION**

The Captain is responsible for ensuring a respiratory protection plan is developed and maintained by a trained and qualified member. The plan shall include procedures for (29 CFR 1910.134; Minn. R. 5205.0010):

- (a) Selecting appropriate respiratory PPE based on hazards and risks associated with functions or positions.
- (b) Fit testing, including identification of members or contractors qualified to conduct fit testing.
- (c) Medical evaluations.
- (d) PPE inventory control.
- (e) PPE issuance and replacement.
- (f) Cleaning, disinfecting, storing, inspecting, repairing, discarding, and otherwise maintaining respiratory PPE, including schedules for these activities.
- (g) Regularly reviewing the PPE plan.
- (h) Remaining current with applicable National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), American National Standards Institute (ANSI), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Environmental Protective Agency (EPA), and state PPE standards and guidelines.

##### **705.7.1 RESPIRATORY PROTECTION USE**

Designated members may be issued respiratory PPE based on the member's assignment (e.g., a narcotics investigator who is involved in clandestine lab investigations).

Respiratory PPE may be worn when authorized by a scene commander who will determine the type and level of protection appropriate at a scene based upon an evaluation of the hazards present.

Scene commanders are responsible for monitoring members using respiratory PPE and their degree of exposure or stress. When there is a change in work area conditions or when a member's degree of exposure or stress may affect respirator effectiveness, the scene commander shall

# Columbia Heights Police Department

## Policy Manual

### *Personal Protective Equipment*

---

reevaluate the continued effectiveness of the respirator and direct the member to leave the respirator use area when the scene commander reasonably believes (29 CFR 1910.134; Minn. R. 5205.0010):

- (a) It is necessary for the member to wash his/her face and the respirator facepiece to prevent eye or skin irritation associated with respirator use.
- (b) The member detects vapor or gas breakthrough, or there is a change in breathing resistance or leakage of the facepiece.
- (c) The member needs to replace the respirator, filter, cartridge, or canister.

#### 705.7.2 MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES FOR RESPIRATORY PROTECTION

Members shall not use self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA), full-face respirators, or cartridge respirators unless they have completed training requirements for the equipment.

Members exposed to environments that are reasonably known to be harmful due to gases, smoke, or vapors shall use respiratory PPE.

Members using respiratory PPE shall (29 CFR 1910.134; Minn. R. 5205.0010):

- (a) Ensure that they have no facial hair between the sealing surface of the facepiece and the face that could interfere with the seal or the valve function. Members also shall ensure that they have no other condition that will interfere with the face-to-facepiece seal or the valve function.
- (b) Not wear corrective glasses, goggles, or other PPE that interferes with the seal of the facepiece to the face, or that has not been previously tested for use with that respiratory equipment.
- (c) Perform a user seal check per department-approved procedures recommended by the respirator manufacturer each time they put on a tight-fitting respirator.
- (d) Leave a respiratory use area whenever they detect vapor or gas breakthrough, changes in breathing resistance or leakage of their facepiece and ensure that the respirator is replaced or repaired before returning to the affected area.

#### 705.7.3 GAS MASK

Full-face air-purifying respirators, commonly referred to as gas masks, may be fitted with mechanical pre-filters or combination cartridge/filter assemblies for use in areas where gases, vapors, dusts, fumes, or mists are present. Members must identify and use the correct cartridge based on the circumstances (29 CFR 1910.134; Minn. R. 5205.0010).

A scene commander may order the use of gas masks in situations where the use of an SCBA is not necessary. These incidents may include areas where tear gas has or will be used or where a vegetation fire is burning. Gas masks shall not be used if there is a potential for an oxygen-deficient atmosphere.

Members shall ensure their gas mask filters are replaced whenever:

- (a) They smell, taste, or are irritated by a contaminant.

# Columbia Heights Police Department

## Policy Manual

### *Personal Protective Equipment*

---

- (b) They experience difficulty breathing due to filter loading.
- (c) The cartridges or filters become wet.
- (d) The expiration date on the cartridges or canisters has been reached.

#### **705.7.4 RESPIRATOR FIT TESTING**

No member shall be issued respiratory PPE until a proper fit testing has been completed by a designated member or contractor (29 CFR 1910.134; Minn. R. 5205.0010).

After initial testing, fit testing for respiratory PPE shall be repeated (29 CFR 1910.134; Minn. R. 5205.0010):

- (a) At least once every 12 months.
- (b) Whenever there are changes in the type of SCBA or facepiece used.
- (c) Whenever there are significant physical changes in the user (e.g., obvious change in body weight, scarring of the face seal area, dental changes, cosmetic surgery, or any other condition that may affect the fit of the facepiece seal).

All respirator fit testing shall be conducted in negative-pressure mode.

#### **705.7.5 RESPIRATORY MEDICAL EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE**

No member shall be issued respiratory protection that forms a complete seal around the face until (29 CFR 1910.134; Minn. R. 5205.0010):

- (a) The member has completed a medical evaluation that includes a medical evaluation questionnaire.
- (b) A physician or other licensed health care professional has reviewed the questionnaire.
- (c) The member has completed any physical examination recommended by the reviewing physician or health care professional.

#### **705.8 RECORDS**

The Captain is responsible for maintaining records of all:

- (a) PPE training.
- (b) Initial fit testing for respiratory protection equipment.
- (c) Annual fit testing.
- (d) Respirator medical evaluation questionnaires and any subsequent physical examination results.

1. These records shall be maintained in a separate confidential medical file.

The records shall be maintained in accordance with the department records retention schedule, 29 CFR 1910.1020, and Minn. R. 5205.0010.

# Columbia Heights Police Department

## Policy Manual

### *Personal Protective Equipment*

---

#### **705.9 TRAINING**

Members should be trained in the respiratory and other hazards to which they may be potentially exposed during routine and emergency situations.

All members shall be trained in the proper use and maintenance of PPE issued to them, including when the use is appropriate; how to put on, remove, and adjust PPE; how to care for the PPE; and the limitations (29 CFR 1910.132; Minn. R. 5205.0010).

Members issued respiratory PPE shall attend annual training on the proper use of respiratory protection devices (29 CFR 1910.134; Minn. R. 5205.0010).