



**Massachusetts Department of Public Health
Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency**

Guidance for Ebola Personal Protective Equipment for First Responders

Updated: November 17, 2015

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) and the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA), in consultation with emergency medical services, fire services, and law enforcement officials, have developed recommendations for minimum levels of personal protective equipment (PPE) for first responders who have direct physical contact with, or will be within six feet of, an individual who has been assessed as being at risk for having Ebola Virus Disease (EVD). These recommendations are consistent with the advisory [EMS Management of Suspected Ebola Virus Disease \(EVD\) Patients and Point of Entry](#), issued by the DPH Office of Emergency Medical Services on November 2, 2014 and last updated on November 17, 2015.

Please note: Only people who are actively sick with EVD can spread the infection to others. Transmission of EVD is possible only through direct contact with blood or other body fluids from a person who is actively sick with Ebola. Accordingly, while assessing the situation to determine if the individual is at risk for EVD, maintain at least a six-foot distance from that individual.

PPE is necessary only when an initial assessment determines that the person is at risk for having EVD. (First responders should contact DPH at 617-983-6800 to assist with this assessment). A person is at risk of having EVD if an assessment of recent travel history and symptoms reveals the following risk factors:

- Travel in the past 21 days to Guinea or other country that has been designated by CDC as presenting a risk of exposure (see [CDC](#) and [DPH](#) guidance)

AND/OR

- Direct contact with the blood or body fluids of someone with Ebola virus disease or who has died with Ebola virus disease

AND

- Fever of 100.4° F (38° C) or higher; and symptoms such as headache, muscle pain, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain or unexplained bleeding.

If the individual has these risk factors, first responders who will have direct physical contact with, or will be within six feet of the person, should don the following levels of PPE (at a minimum) to minimize the risk of the sick individual's blood and/or body fluids coming into contact with the first responder's skin and mucus membranes:

- Non-permeable coverall with hood/head covering that meets one of the following standards:
 - Splash protection standards of NFPA 1992-2013
 - NFPA 1999-2013
 - American Society of Testing and Materials (ASTM) F1671 material with sealed or taped seams
 - NFPA 1994-2012 (CBRN protective ensembles certified to Class 2, Class 3 or Class 4)
- Gloves:
 - Inner gloves: double layer of Nitrile gloves, equating to at least 10ml thickness
 - Outer gloves: over-the-cuff length Nitrile gloves, preferably 21 ml or greater thickness
- Shoe covers: calf-length booties/covers
- N95 respirator or PAPR
- Full Face Shield

PPE must be donned and doffed in an appropriate manner to limit risk of exposure. All individuals donning and doffing PPE should be appropriately trained for and have demonstrated competency in donning and doffing PPE, and should be monitored by a trained observer to ensure PPE is donned properly, doffed properly, and bagged and disposed of properly.