



Cherie K. Berry
Commissioner

MEMORANDUM

TO: Secretary Many Cohen
N.C. Department of Health and Human Services

FROM: Commissioner Cherie Berry *Scott Mabey for*
N.C. Department of Labor

DATE: March 13, 2020

RE: NCDOL Interim Guidance on COVID-19 use of filtering facepiece respirators after their expiration date

Given the current status of events associated with the State's response to the presence of COVID-19 and at the request of the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services, the N.C. Department of Labor offers the following interim guidance.

Although it may be possible to use certain N95 respirators past their expiration date, some expired respirators may not provide the protection for which they were certified. Components such as the strap and filtering material may degrade over time.

To ensure non-expired respirators are used in higher-risk encounters as much as possible, the following priority should be followed:

- Clinicians not performing high-risk procedures (aerosolized procedures) with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 patients should use expired respirators as needed to conserve respirator supplies. Expired respirators cannot be used in surgical settings.

In addition, all employers must comply with the following requirements before permitting the use of expired N95 respirators to ensure proper protection:

- Ensure the expired respirators and all their components are visually inspected to confirm proper condition before use.
- Ensure the expired respirators were stored in accordance with the manufacturer-recommended conditions.
- Ensure the expired respirator is listed by National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) as providing the expected level of protection to the user. See [Release of Stockpile N95 Filtering Facepiece Respirators Beyond the Manufacturer-Designated Shelf Life: Consideration for the COVID-19 Response](#). The list as of March 13, 2020 includes the following respirators:

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- 3M 1860
- 3M 1860S
- 3M 1870
- 3M 8000
- 3M 8210
- 3M 9010
- Gerson 1730
- Medline/Alpha Protech NON27501
- Moldex 1512
- Moldex 2201

This guidance will remain in effect until sufficient supplies of compliant respirators are available.

Please consult these additional resources for reference:

- National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [Recommended Guidance for Extended Use and Limited Reuse of N95 Filtering Facepiece Respirators in Healthcare Settings](#)
- National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [Release of Stockpile N95 Filtering Facepiece Respirators Beyond the Manufacturer-Designated Shelf Life: Consideration for the COVID-19 Response.](#)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [Strategies for Optimizing the Supply of N95 Respirators](#)
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/release-stockpiled-N95.html>

cc: Michael Lees, Director of Intergovernmental Affairs, NC DHHS
Kevin Beauregard, Director, Division of Occupational Safety and Health, NC DOL

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