

CT State Community College
Tunxis
Respiratory Protection Program
N95 Respirators used for airborne infectious agents.

I. OBJECTIVE

The CT State Community College Tunxis Respiratory Protection Program is designed to protect employees by establishing accepted practices for respirator use, providing guidelines for training and respirator selection, and explaining proper storage, use and care of respirators. This program also serves to help the employer and its employees comply with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) respiratory protection requirements as found in 29 CFR 1910.134.

II. ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY

A. Employer

CT State Community College Tunxis is responsible for providing respirators to employees when they are necessary for health protection. CT State Community College Tunxis will provide respirators that are applicable and suitable for the intended purpose at no charge to affected employees. Any expense associated with training, medical evaluations, and respiratory protection equipment will be borne by the company.

B. Program Administrator

The Program Administrators are Jessica York McKinney and John Lodovico are Program Administrators and are responsible for administering the respiratory protection program. Duties of the program administrator include:

1. Identifying work areas, processes, or tasks that require workers to wear respirators.
2. Evaluating hazards.
3. Selecting respiratory protection options.
4. Monitoring respirator use to ensure that respirators are used in accordance with their specifications.
5. Arranging for and/or conducting training.
6. Ensuring proper storage and maintenance of respiratory protection equipment.
7. Conducting qualitative fit testing.
8. Administering the medical surveillance program.
9. Maintaining records required by the program.
10. Evaluating the program.
11. Updating written program, as needed.

C. Supervisors

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that the respiratory protection program is implemented in their particular areas. In addition to being knowledgeable about the program requirements for their own protection, supervisors must also ensure that the program is understood and followed by the employees under their charge. Duties of the supervisor include:

1. Ensuring that employees under their supervision (including new hires) receive appropriate training, fit testing, and annual medical evaluation.
2. Ensuring the availability of appropriate respirators and accessories.
3. Being aware of tasks requiring the use of respiratory protection.
4. Enforcing the proper use of respiratory protection when necessary.
5. Ensuring that respirators are properly cleaned, maintained, and stored according to this program.

6. Ensuring that respirators fit well and do not cause discomfort.
7. Continually monitoring work areas and operations to identify respiratory hazards.
8. Coordinating with the Program Administrator on how to address respiratory hazards or other concerns regarding this program.

D. Employees

Each employee is responsible for wearing his or her respirator when and where required and in the manner in which they are trained. Employees must also:

1. Care for and maintain their respirators as instructed, guard them against damage, and store them in a clean, sanitary location.
2. Inform their supervisor if their respirator no longer fits well, and request a new one that fits properly.
3. Inform their supervisor or the Program Administrator of any respiratory hazards that they feel are not adequately addressed in the workplace and of any other concerns that they have regarding this program.
4. Use the respiratory protection in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and the training received.

III. APPLICABILITY

This program applies to all employees who are required to wear respirators during normal work operations, as well as during some non-routine operations.

In addition, any employee who voluntarily wears a half mask air purifying respirator (APR) when one is not required is subject to the medical evaluation, cleaning, maintenance, and storage elements of this program, and will be provided with necessary training. Employees who voluntarily wear filtering face pieces (dust masks) are not subject to the medical evaluation, cleaning, storage, and maintenance provisions of this program.

IV. PROGRAM

A. Hazard Assessment and Respirator Selection

The Program Administrator will select respirators to be used on site, based on the hazards to which workers are exposed and in accordance with the OSHA Respiratory Protection Standard. The Program Administrator will conduct a hazard evaluation for each operation, process, or work area to determine which tasks may expose staff to airborne infectious agents.

The following tasks may expose staff to airborne infectious agents:

Dental procedures creating aerosols	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Employees with the following job titles may be required to wear N95 respirators when doing these tasks.

<u>Dental hygiene faculty & educational assistants</u>	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

A list of employees included in the respirator program and the specific respiratory protection selected will be maintained by the Program Administrator.

(Note: This hazard assessment can be expanded by the Program Administrator to include other hazardous materials or other respirator types)

B. Updating the Hazard Assessment

The Program Administrator must revise and update the hazard assessment as needed. If an employee feels that respiratory protection is needed during a particular activity, he/she is to contact his/her supervisor or the Program Administrator. The Program Administrator will evaluate the potential hazard, and arrange for outside assistance as necessary. The Program Administrator will then communicate the results of that assessment to the employees. If it is determined that respiratory protection is necessary, all other elements of the respiratory protection program will be in effect for those tasks, and the respiratory program will be updated accordingly.

C. Training

The Program Administrator will provide training to respirator users and their supervisors on the contents of the CT State Community College Tunxis Respiratory Protection Program and their responsibilities under it, and on the OSHA Respiratory Protection Standard. All affected employees and their supervisors will be trained prior to using a respirator in the workplace. Supervisors will also be trained prior to supervising employees who must wear respirators.

The training course will cover the following topics:

1. The CT State Community College Tunxis Respiratory Protection Program;
2. the OSHA Respiratory Protection Standard (29 CFR 1910.134);
3. respiratory hazards encountered at CT State Community College Tunxis College and their health affects;
4. proper selection and use of respirators;
5. limitations of respirators;
6. respirator donning and user seal (fit) checks;
7. fit testing;
8. maintenance and storage; and
9. medical signs and symptoms limiting the effective use of respirators.

Employees will be **retrained annually** or as needed. Respirator training will be documented by the Program Administrator and the documentation will include the type, model, and size of respirator for which each employee has been trained and fit tested.

D. NIOSH Certification

All respirators must be certified by the **National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health** (NIOSH) and shall be used in accordance with the terms of that certification. The label must not be removed or defaced while the respirator is in use.

E. Medical Evaluation

Employees who are either required to wear respirators, or who choose to wear a half face piece APR voluntarily, **must pass a medical exam provided by a Physician or other Licensed Health Care Professional (PLHCP) located at Concentra Urgent Care, 972 West Main Street, New Britain, CT 06053, Phone: 860-827-0745** before being permitted to wear a respirator on the job. Employees are not permitted to wear respirators until a physician has

determined that they are medically able to do so. Any employee refusing the medical evaluation will not be allowed to work in an area requiring respirator use.

Concentra Urgent Care will provide the medical evaluations. Medical evaluation procedures are as follows:

1. The medical evaluation will be conducted using the questionnaire provided in Appendix C of the OSHA Respiratory Protection Standard. The Program Administrator will provide a copy of this questionnaire to all employees requiring medical evaluations.
2. To the extent feasible, the employer will provide assistance to employees who are unable to read the questionnaire. When this is not possible, the employee will be sent directly to the physician for medical evaluation.
3. All affected employees will be given a copy of the medical questionnaire to complete, along with a stamped and addressed envelope for mailing the questionnaire to the PLHCP. Employees will be permitted to complete the questionnaire on company time.
4. Follow-up medical exams will be granted to employees as required by the Standard, and/or as deemed necessary by the evaluating PLHCP.
5. All employees will be granted the opportunity to speak with the PLHCP about their medical evaluation, if they so request.
6. The Program Administrator shall provide the evaluating PLHCP with a copy of this Program, a copy of the OSHA Respiratory Protection Standard, the list of hazardous substances by work area, and the following information about each employee requiring evaluation:
 - a. his or her work area or job title;
 - b. proposed respirator type and weight;
 - c. length of time required to wear respirator;
 - d. expected physical work load (light, moderate or heavy);
 - e. potential temperature and humidity extremes; and
 - f. any additional protective clothing required.
7. Positive pressure air purifying respirators will be provided to employees as required by medical necessity.
8. After an employee has received clearance to wear his or her respirator, additional medical evaluations will be provided under the following circumstances:
 - a. The employee reports signs and/or symptoms related to their ability to use the respirator, such as shortness of breath, dizziness, chest pains or wheezing.
 - b. The evaluating PLHCP or supervisor informs the Program Administrator that the employee needs to be reevaluated.
 - c. Information found during the implementation of this program, including observations made during the fit testing and program evaluation, indicates a need for reevaluation.
 - d. A change occurs in workplace conditions that may result in an increased physiological burden on the employee.

All examinations and questionnaires are to remain confidential between the employee and the physician. The Program Administrator will only retain the physician's written recommendations regarding each employee's ability to wear a respirator.

F. Fit Testing

Employees who are required to wear tight fitting air purifying respirators will be fit tested:

1. prior to being allowed to wear any respirator with a tight-fitting face piece;
2. annually; or
3. when there are changes in the employee's physical condition that could affect respiratory fit (e.g., obvious change in body weight, facial scarring, etc.).

Employees will be fit tested with the make, model, and size of respirator that they will actually wear. Employees will be provided with several models and sizes of respirators so that they may find an optimal fit.

Only approved individuals can conduct fit tests in accordance with the OSHA Respiratory Protection Standard. N95 respirators will be fit tested with a qualitative fit test protocol using an aerosol solution or either saccharin or Bitrex® or both. Other tight fitting face pieces will be fitted with one of the protocols outlined in Appendix A of 1910.134.

G. General Respirator Use Procedures

1. Employees will use their respirators under conditions specified in this program, and in accordance with the training they receive on the use of each particular model. In addition, the respirator shall not be used in a manner for which it is not certified by NIOSH or by its manufacturer.
2. Employees are not permitted to wear tight-fitting respirators if they have any condition, such as facial scars, facial hair, or missing dentures, that would prevent a proper seal. Employees are not permitted to wear headphones, jewelry, or other items that may interfere with the seal between the face and the face piece.
3. Before and after each use of a respirator, an employee or immediate supervisor must make an inspection of tightness or connections and the condition of the face piece, headbands, valves, filter holders and filters. Questionable items must be addressed immediately by the supervisor and/or Program Administrator.

H. Cleaning

N95 Respirators will be disposed of after use if worn in the presence of an individual who has a disease that could be transmitted person to person via an airborne route of exposure.

Non-disposable respirators, if used, (such as PAPRs) are to be regularly cleaned and disinfected. Respirators issued for the exclusive use of an employee shall be cleaned as often as necessary.

The Program Administrator will ensure an adequate supply of appropriate cleaning and disinfection materials at the workplace. If supplies are low, employees should notify their supervisor, who will inform the Program Administrator.

I. Maintenance

Respirators are to be properly maintained at all times in order to ensure that they function properly and protect employees adequately. Maintenance involves a thorough visual inspection for cleanliness and defects.

J. Storage

After inspection, cleaning, and necessary repairs, respirators shall be stored appropriately to protect against dust, sunlight, heat, extreme cold, excessive moisture, or damaging chemicals. The Program Administrator will store CT State Community College Tunxis supply of respirators and respirator components in their original manufacturer's packaging. Respirators will be stored in Location.

K. Respirator Malfunctions and Defects

Respirators that are defective or have defective parts shall be taken out of service immediately.

L. Program Evaluation

The Program Administrator will conduct periodic evaluations of the workplace to ensure that the provisions of this program are being implemented. The evaluations will include regular consultations with employees who use respirators and their supervisors, site inspections, air monitoring and a review of records. Items to be considered will include:

1. comfort;
2. ability to breathe without objectionable effort;
3. adequate visibility under all conditions
4. provisions for wearing prescription glasses;
5. ability to perform all tasks without undue interference; and
6. confidence in the face piece fit.

M. Documentation and Recordkeeping

1. A written copy of this program and the OSHA Respiratory Protection Standard shall be kept in the Program Administrator's office and made available to all employees who wish to review it.
2. Copies of training and fit test records shall be maintained by the Program Administrator. These records will be updated as new employees are trained, as existing employees receive refresher training, and as new fit tests are conducted.
3. For employees covered under the Respiratory Protection Program, the Program Administrator shall maintain copies of the physician's written recommendation regarding each employee's ability to wear a respirator. The completed medical questionnaires and evaluating physician's documented findings will remain confidential in the employee's medical records at the location of the evaluating physician's practice.