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# Respiratory Protection Program

## **1023.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

This program applies to all commissioned and non-commissioned employees or members that may require the use of respirators for operational tasks. This policy applies to all respirator use regardless of whether it is required or voluntary.

## **1023.2 POLICY**

The Kitsap County Sheriff's Office, as part of their Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) program, will provide the appropriate respirators to those members who may have a need for them in the course of their duties.

It is also the intent of this policy that the Kitsap County Sheriff's Office policy must meet or exceed the requirements specified in WAC 296-842 and the Respiratory Protection Program of Kitsap County.

## **1023.3 PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

The Office will insure that all measures will be taken to prevent contamination leading to occupational diseases caused by breathing air contaminated with harmful dusts, fogs, fumes, mists, gases, smokes, sprays, vapors, or aerosols. Whenever feasible, engineering control measures (for example, enclosure or confinement of the operation, general or local ventilation and substitution of less toxic materials) will be installed and used.

When effective engineering controls are not feasible or in place, NIOSH-approved respirators that are applicable and suitable will be provided, when required or necessary, to protect the health of employees against recognized hazards including any exposures in excess of the permissible exposure limit. Respirators, training, medical evaluations, and fit testing will be provided, at no cost, to the all employees that are required to use them.

## **1023.4 RESPIRATOR PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR**

The Training Coordinators are responsible to oversee the overall program, update the program to reflect those changes in workplace conditions, and conduct the required evaluations of program effectiveness. The administrators will ensure compliance with the L&I regulations and the Kitsap County program.

## **1023.5 RESPIRATOR SELECTION**

Respirators will be provided that are adequate to protect the health of the employee and ensure compliance with all other WISHA statutory and regulatory requirements for routine, non-routine, and reasonably foreseeable emergency and rescue situations.

The Office will provide negative pressure, full-face air-purifying respirators to those fully commissioned officers engaged in law enforcement operations and those members who may have a need depending on assignment or duties. Certification is required for these types of respirators.

# Kitsap County Sheriff's Office

## *Respiratory Protection Program*

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The Office will also provide filtering face-piece (dust mask) to those members who may have a need for infection control or pandemic events. Certification is not required for filtering face-piece (dust masks) however training will be provided when appropriate.

Only office supplied respirators will be used by members of this office.

### **1023.6 ASSIGNMENT AND USE OF RESPIRATORS**

All fully commissioned officers will be assigned a full face respirator contingent on passing the medical standards requirement and all fully commissioned officers will be required to attend mandatory training for respirator use. All fully commissioned officers will be required to go through the medical screening. The medical screening consists of a medical evaluation which includes a questionnaire and in some cases an in-person medical evaluation may be required.

The medical screening is confidential and answers to the questionnaire or medical information obtained during in-person medical visitations is not shared with the employer. The information provided back to the employer does not include medical information. The medical provider will only provide guidance to the employer that the employee can or can not wear a respirator or can but with limitations. One of the limitations may indicate that the employee has to complete ongoing medical evaluations to wear a respirator. (WAC 296-842-14005, 296-842-22005).

The medical screening for the respirator is not a general Fitness for Duty examination and failure to pass the medical screening requirement for respirator use will not result in a general Fitness for Duty medical examination being required. Those fully commissioned officers who can not pass the medical standards requirement will not be issued respirators until they are medically cleared. However, selection and continued involvement in some assignments may require that the officer be able to wear a respirator (i.e. S.W.A.T., Riot Control Team, drug task force member).

Other officers or members of this Office may be issued a respirator depending on assignment.

In operations, in most cases the officer or member will determine when it will be appropriate to use the respirators. In circumstances where the supervisor believes it is appropriate, the supervisor may order the use of respirators. A typical scenario would be in a crowd control or tactical situation where CS/CN or Oleoresin pepper spray may be deployed.

### **1023.7 USE OF RESPIRATORS**

Respirators protect against airborne contaminants when properly selected and worn. Respirator use by members, even when the exposure to contaminants is below the exposure limit(s), can provide an additional level of comfort and protection for workers. However, if a respirator is used improperly or not properly maintained, the respirator itself can become a hazard to you. Sometimes, workers wear respirators to avoid exposures to hazards, even if the amount of hazardous contaminants (chemical & biological) does not exceed the limits set by DOSH standards.

Respirator use requires certain precautions to be followed. These precautions are listed below and must be followed to be sure that the respirator itself does not present a hazard.

# Kitsap County Sheriff's Office

## *Respiratory Protection Program*

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- (a) Read and follow all instructions provided by the manufacturer on use, maintenance, cleaning and care, and warnings regarding the respirators limitations.
- (b) Choose respirators certified for use to protect against the contaminant of concern. NIOSH, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health and Human Services, certifies respirators. A label or statement of certification should appear on the respirator or respirator packaging that will indicate the appropriate uses of the respirator and what level of protection it should provide.
- (c) Do not wear your respirator into atmospheres containing contaminants for which your respirator is not designed to protect against. For example, a respirator designed to filter dust particles will not protect you against solvent vapor or smoke (since smoke particles are smaller than dust particles).
- (d) Keep track of your respirator so that you do not mistakenly use someone else's respirator.

### **1023.8 MEDICAL EVALUATIONS**

To determine the ability of the member required to use a respirator, a documented medical evaluation must be conducted, prior to fit testing and issuance of a respirator. A physician or other licensed health care professional (PLHCP) shall perform the evaluation in accordance with the following:

- (a) A PLHCP will review the WISHA questionnaire that has been completed by the employee and provided confidentially to the medical institution. Medical evaluation will be conducted for positive responses to any question the PLHCP deems appropriate.
- (b) The employee will have an opportunity to discuss the questionnaire and examination results with the PLHCP.
- (c) The follow-up medical evaluation must include any consultations, medical tests, or diagnostic procedures that the PLHCP deems necessary to make a final determination.
- (d) Type and weight of respirators used, duration and frequency of use, expected physical work effort, any additional protective clothing and equipment to be worn, and any temperature and humidity extremes that may be encountered, will be supplied to the PLHCP.

Any member who does not meet the medical screening may be requested to be re screened if practicable at a later time.

### **1023.9 RESPIRATOR TRAINING**

Respirator training shall be conducted for supervisors and members designated to use or issue respirators. Members must be trained prior to initial use and annually of the previous training thereafter. Training is also required when a member is identified that hasn't retained the knowledge or skills or any changes in the worksite, there is a change in type

# Kitsap County Sheriff's Office

## *Respiratory Protection Program*

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of respirator, or when a Program Administrator or Supervisor deems it necessary through the evaluation process. All respirator training and fit testing shall be documented and retained for the duration of employment.

Training sessions will cover the following subjects, including demonstration and testing, at a minimum:

1. Kitsap County Sheriff's Office Respiratory Program and Policy
2. Type, make, and model of respirator used
3. Respirator capabilities and limitations
4. Inspection, maintenance, care, and storage requirements
5. Proper donning, adjusting, face seal testing, and removal procedures for use
6. Qualitative or Quantitative fit testing
7. Medical signs and symptoms that may limit or prevent the effective use
8. Training may include practical application or scenario based training

### **1023.10 RESPIRATOR FIT TESTING & ISSUANCE**

Facial and/or long hair that interferes with a proper respirator face seal shall be required to be trimmed to achieve a satisfactory face seal.

Each member required to use a respirator in the performance of their work shall be issued a respirator for them to use after they have successfully completed the following:

1. Medical questionnaire
2. Medical clearance for use
3. Respirator Training
4. Fit Testing
  - a. Testing masks are used to determine correct size and fit
  - b. While wearing the test mask, the member shall perform various physical movements that would emulate tasks required to be performed when wearing a respirator
  - c. At a minimum, each member being fit tested will be introduced to the irritant smoke in such a way to insure the member's reaction indicates a positive response
  - d. A Respirator Fit Test Record, signed by the member tested and the trainer conducting the fit test will be completed and maintained by the Training Coordinators.

# Kitsap County Sheriff's Office

## *Respiratory Protection Program*

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### **1023.11 RESPIRATOR MAINTENANCE PROCEDURES**

Each member that has been issued a respirator is required to comply with the cleaning, maintenance, and storage requirements listed below:

1. Respirator masks shall be cleaned with soap & water at the end of each shift worked that they are in use
2. Once cleaned, respirators shall be thoroughly dried and stored in an area free from possible contamination
3. Respirators shall be completely disassembled and inspected periodically and all defective, worn, or weak parts must be replaced
4. Respirator problems requiring more than basic maintenance must not be used until repair or replacement to fix the problem is accomplished.

### **1023.12 EVALUATION AND DOCUMENTATION**

Supervisors and Program Administrators should conduct periodic monitoring to insure that respirators are selected according to task, that the member is wearing the respirator properly, and that proper maintenance including cleaning is performed.

Copies of the PLHCP's written clearance recommendation for each member subject to medical evaluation will be maintained by the member's Training File. Medical Clearance forms, training documents and fit test records must be maintained by Kitsap County for a period of 30 years.

The written Kitsap County Respirator Program will be maintained in the Kitsap County Accident and Illness Prevention Program.

All written materials required to be maintained under the record keeping requirements will be made available, upon request, to the member who is subject of the records, the Program Administrators, and to the director or the director's designee of the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries for examination and copying.