Purpose

This plan is designed to help reduce employee exposure to air-borne contaminants such as dust, fumes, mists, gasses, vapors, and microorganisms by providing information about the appropriate use of a NIOSH approved N95 air-purifying respirator.

This program shall be administered pursuant to the requirements of OSHA Respiratory Protection Standard, 29CFR 1910.134 (revised April 8, 1998).

Respiratory Program Administrator

The Respiratory Program Administrator(s) (RPA) for will be The Deputy Chief of Quality Management and Education or other appropriate personnel designated by the Medical Director.

The RPA (or designee) will develop detailed written standard operating procedures governing the selection and use of respirators, using the OSHA regulations and the NIOSH Respirator Decision Logic as guidelines. Outside consultation, manufacturers assistance, and other recognized authorities will be consulted if there is any doubt regarding proper selection and use of respirators. These detailed procedures will be included as appendices to this respirator program. Only the RPA may amend these procedures.

Respirator Selection, Storage and Disposal

Respirators will be selected on the basis of CDC guidelines. All selections will be made by the RPA (or designee). Only NIOSH certified respirators will be selected and used.

Respirators will be stored, whether on the ambulance or in a supply storage room, in a manner so as to protect them from dust, sunlight, heat, damaging chemicals, or excessive cold or moisture and will be stored in a manner so as to prevent them from deformity.

Non-disposable respirators are for single patient/provider use and will be discarded as per the manufactures direction.
Record Keeping

29 CFR 1910.34 requires the employer to establish and maintain documentation of this plan, medical evaluations and fit testing. This information will be maintained by the Program Administrator and/or assigned personnel.

Medical Evaluation

All employees subject to exposure requiring respiratory protection shall complete a medical questionnaire. (See attached Appendix A.) This questionnaire must be reviewed by a Physician or Licensed Health Care Professional (PLHCP) before issuance of an N95 respirator. Medical examinations may be given to an employee at the discretion of the PLHCP.

Physician or other licensed health care professional (PLHCP) means an individual whose legally permitted scope of practice (i.e., license, registration, or certification) allows them to independently provide, or be delegated the responsibility to provide, some or all of the health care services required by paragraph (e) of 29 CFR 1910.134.

The medical evaluation(s) shall be administered confidentially during the employee’s normal working hours or at place and time convenient to the employee. The employee shall also be given the opportunity to discuss with the health care professional the results of the medical evaluation.

Persons will not be assigned to tasks requiring use of respirators unless it has been determined that they are physically able to perform the work and use the equipment. The Medical Director or their other designated physician/physician assistant/nurse practitioner will determine what health and physical conditions are pertinent. The respirator user’s medical status will be reviewed annually.

Fit Testing

Only NIOSH certified respirators will be used.

Before any employee is allowed to wear a respirator, the employee shall be fit tested with the same make, model, style and size of respirator that will be used. The fit test shall be administered using OSHA accepted protocols.

The Respiratory Program Administrator or their designee shall ensure that all employees using an N95 respirator pass an appropriate qualitative and/or quantitative fit test as defined by 29 CFR 1910.134 on an annual basis or whenever a different respirator face piece (size, style, model, make) is used.

The Respiratory Program Administrator or their designee shall conduct additional fit tests whenever an employee reports a problem, or when it is recognized that a change has occurred in the employee’s physical condition that could affect respirator fit.

Training

The Respiratory Program Administrator will provide training that is comprehensive, understandable, and practical. This training will occur at least annually and at any time that it becomes apparent that additional training will prove beneficial. The user will be instructed and trained in the proper use of respirators and their limitations. Both supervisors and workers will be trained by the RPA (or designee). The training should provide the employee an opportunity to handle the respirator, have it fitted properly, test its face piece-to-face seal, wear it in normal air for a long familiarity period, and finally to wear it in a test atmosphere. Every respirator wearer will receive fitting instructions, including demonstrations and practice in how the respirator should be worn, how to adjust it, and how to determine if it fits properly.

Respirators should not be worn when conditions prevent a good face seal. Such conditions may be a growth of beard, sideburns, and a skull cap that projects under the face piece or temple pieces on glasses. At this facility, facial hair of any type that prevents the respirator from making a proper seal will be required to shave/trim affected areas.
until a proper seal is obtained. No employees of this facility, who are required to wear tight fitting respirators, may wear beards. Also the absence of one or both dentures can seriously affect the fit of a face piece. The workers diligence in observing these factors will be evaluated by periodic checks. To assure proper protection, the user seal check will be done by the wearer each time she/he puts on the respirator. The manufactures instructions will be followed.

Specific training will include, but is not limited to the following:

- Why a respirator is necessary and how improper fit or usage can compromise the protective effect of the respirator.
- Limitations and capabilities of the respirator.
- How to effectively use the respirator.
- What to do if the respirator malfunctions.
- Procedures for maintenance and storage of the respirator.
- How to recognize medical signs and symptoms that may limit or prevent the effective use of respirators.
- The specific requirements of the respiratory protection plan and OSHA 29 CFR 1910.134.

**Employee Responsibility**

Employees shall wear respirators when and where required and in the manner in which they were trained.

Respirators shall be inspected prior to each use. If a defect is discovered the respirator shall be disposed of immediately. Employees are responsible to check their respirators for fit by performing negative and positive checks as described in 29 CFR 1910.134, Appendix B-1. If these checks are not successful, the respirator should not be used.

If a defect develops during use, the wearer shall remove themselves from the contaminated area and notify the proper authority of potential exposure. Employees shall care for and store their respirator as instructed. Employees shall inform the Respiratory Program Administrator should they have difficulty when wearing or using a respirator.

Non disposable respirators will be regularly cleaned and disinfected. Those issued for the exclusive use of one worker will be cleaned after each days use, or more often if necessary. Those used by more than one worker will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected after each use. The RPA will establish a respirator cleaning and maintenance facility and develop detailed written cleaning instructions.

Disposable respirators will be discarded if they are soiled or are no longer functional. See the manufacturers’ instructions.

Each county department will be responsible for respirator cleaning and maintenance and will store respirators in a clean and sanitary location.

Respirators used routinely will be inspected during cleaning. Worn or deteriorated parts will be replaced.

Employees shall inform the Respiratory Program Administrator of any concerns regarding the program.

**Program Evaluation**

This written program will be evaluated at least annually to determine if it is still effective and current. As part of this evaluation, all applicable federal and state standards will be reviewed to ensure that this plan is in compliance.

There will be regular (e.g., annually) inspections and evaluations to determine the continued effectiveness of the program. The RPA will make frequent inspections of all areas where respirators are used to ensure compliance with the respiratory protection programs.