

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this document is to describe the personal protective equipment (PPE) and garments medical and dental healthcare workers may wear in the clinical setting when caring for patients. This document is intended to describe the protective equipment worn and what is appropriate for public areas.

Personal Protective Equipment

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is designed to prevent contamination of skin, mucous membranes, and clothing. Gowns, disposable gloves, safety glasses, face shields, and masks are types of PPE worn over personal clothing or hospital-type scrubs (scrubs). The PPE, such as isolation gowns are removed prior to leaving the clinical work area such as a patient isolation room, operating room, dental patient clinic, or other similar areas where contact from an infectious material is possible. Scrubs are typically comprised of a scrub top and a trouser worn under the PPE. According to the [Occupational Safety and Health Administration \(OSHA\)](#), scrubs are usually worn in a manner similar to street clothing, and normally should be covered by appropriate gowns, aprons or laboratory coats when splashes to skin or clothes are reasonably anticipated. If inadvertent contamination of scrubs occur, they are changed prior to leaving the work area. The PPE protects not only the person wearing it, but their clothing. The white coat typically worn by medical and dental personnel are a part of their normal outer wear. The coat is taken off and replaced with an appropriate gown before caring for patients.



For questions, please call Environmental Health and Safety at 617 358-7840.