

Boston University Environmental Health & Safety

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To whom it may concern:

Based on the information provided to EHS from the Sourcing and Procurement office, EHS understands that your department has elected to purchase KN-95's. In order to better educate our BU colleagues, EHS has prepared this technical memorandum regarding usage of KN-95's at Boston University.

KN-95 Background:

- KN-95's is a filtering facepiece respirator, but it is often confused with an N-95 respirator.
- The design of a KN-95 uses ear loops, which does not lead to an effective and tight seal between the mask and the skin.
- Early in the pandemic, the US experienced a huge shortage of N-95 respirators for healthcare providers (HCP). The FDA issued a blanket emergency use authorization (EUA) for imported; non-NIOSH approved disposable filtering facepiece respirators. This includes KN-95's.
- However, the blanket EUA was [revoked](#) in the summer of 2021. KN-95's can no longer be sold as a respirator in the US.

KN-95 DO's:

- Meet the Back 2 BU [face covering requirements](#) face covering regulation.
- Do not require fit testing, training, medical questionnaires, or approval before use.
- Are most effective if there is direct skin to mask contact (no facial hair).
- With a close seal, can be more effective against particulate than a surgical mask or cloth face coverings.

EHS Guidance on KN-95's

- Please review all of the instructions of use, maintenance, cleaning, and care. These are likely single use respirators, so cleaning and care may not be covered in the instructions. Please make sure a copy of the instructions can be distributed to all staff.
- Inform staff these KN-95's **are not** certified by any US agency as respirators. The only contaminants that a KN-95 will protect the user against is particulate matter. NIOSH's recent testing of imported non-NIOSH approved respirators can be found [here](#).
- Discuss with staff that these are particulate respirators (e.g. dust masks). These will not protect the user against chemical vapors, mercury vapors, or even odors.
- Keep track of your respirator so that you do not mistakenly use someone else's respirator.

Although KN-95 is not a NIOSH-approved respirator, it does come with many of the same risks and warnings as a NIOSH-approved N-95. Please feel free to reach out to the EHS office (OEHS@bu.edu) with any further questions.