

Respiratory Protection in Healthcare: U.S. OSHA Requirements for Respirator Use (29 CFR 1910.134)

The U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) governs workplace respirator use in the United States. The OSHA Respiratory Protection Standard ([29 CFR 1910.134](#)) specifies the requirements for employers assigning respiratory protection to workers. Under this standard, OSHA requires employers to develop and implement a written respiratory protection program that includes the procedures and elements for respirator use at their specific workplace. The written program must include all the elements required by OSHA including the following:

- Procedures for selecting respirators for use in the workplace
- Medical evaluations of employees required to use respirators
- Fit testing procedures for tightfitting respirators
- Procedures for proper use of respirators
- Procedures for cleaning, disinfecting, storing, inspecting, repairing, discarding and otherwise maintaining respirators
- Training of employees

It is the employer's responsibility to determine what specific applications require the use of respiratory protective equipment. Respirator selection is based upon the physical and chemical properties of the air contaminants and the concentration level to be encountered by the employee. When respiratory protection is needed to help reduce exposure to bioaerosols, the employers should select a certified particulate respirator according to recommendations from the U.S. Center for Disease Prevention and Control (CDC), World Health Organization (WHO) and/or applicable local agencies. Employers should designate a program administrator to oversee the respiratory protection program. The program administrator should be qualified by appropriate training or experience that is commensurate with the complexity of the program.

This document has an associated video. Click the link below to access the video.

Watch this short educational video for answers to some frequently asked questions and additional information respiratory protection programs.

[Respiratory Protection in Healthcare: U.S. OSHA 1910.13](#)

Additional 3M Resources

- [The 3M Administrative Respiratory Protection Program Brochure](#)
- [Respiratory Protection FAQ](#)

Other Available Resources

- [U.S. OSHA's Respiratory Protection Standard, 29 CFR 1910.134](#)
- [Hospital Respiratory Protection Program Toolkit](#)-joint effort of U.S. OSHA, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and U.S. National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)

3M Personal Safety Division Technical Service 1 (800) 243-4630