

## Healthcare Worker Attire and COVID-19 Care

The SARS-CoV-2 virus which causes COVID-19 is primarily spread from person-to-person through respiratory droplets. There is currently no data to support fomite transmission, although the virus can survive on surfaces such as plastic and steel. Porous surfaces such as clothing are less likely to harbor the virus for long periods of time. Additionally, clothing has not been associated with transmission of other respiratory viruses such as influenza. Finally, the PPE worn when encountering patients with possible or defined COVID-19 includes gloves and a gown which is impervious to fluids. Worn correctly, PPE prevents contamination of skin and clothing, and current evidence supports that use of appropriate PPE is highly effective at preventing transmission of the virus. Based on this evidence we make the following recommendations regarding clothing worn at work.

- Those encountering patients with suspected or proven COVID-19 infection should wear the appropriate PPE.
- If your job requires the wearing of scrubs you should continue to do so. Scrubs are not required in the care of those with suspected or proven COVID-19 infection. If you did not routinely wear scrubs as part of your work routine prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, you should not require scrubs now.
- Shoe covers and head coverings are not recommended PPE as transmission is via respiratory droplets and direct contacts with infectious secretions.
- Per the Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Control Plan (Policy IC-13) if employee clothing becomes soiled through exposure to blood or other potentially infectious body fluids it can be changed and laundered using the following process.
  - Contaminated clothing should be placed into soiled laundry bag along with a completed special handling form (form can be found on unit or calling linen distribution 22304 for questions). Take to the linen special handling cart located on Clarkson loading dock or Werner 1st floor loading dock soil room. If the employee wishes to wash contaminated clothing at home it is best to wash individually in hot water.