



Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Update – December 8, 2020

According to the [Re-Open Saskatchewan Plan](#), audiologists and speech-language pathologists may continue to offer services.

Private Sector

Please review the Re-Open Saskatchewan Plan in detail as it includes very useful information, such as general business operating guidelines, mask guidelines, and Medical Professionals Guidelines. The Medical Professionals Guidelines contain patient and client considerations as well as cleaning and disinfecting information.

Throughout all five phases of the Re-Open Saskatchewan plan, individuals are required to continue to follow the current Public Health Order. Please check the Saskatchewan.ca COVID-19 [website](#) for the most recent Public Health Orders.

SASLPA recommends that registrants follow the Government of Saskatchewan's advice to assess the risk of exposure and transmission for themselves, any staff and clients, and make operational decisions accordingly. Keep in mind that many of the clients seen by AUDs and S-LPs are in the high-risk category for COVID-19 (e.g., immune compromised and elderly). This is especially important when considering which patients/clients must be seen directly, which patients/clients can be served virtually and if a patient's/client's intervention can be delayed.

When seeing clients face-to-face, **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** is a key element in preventing the transmission of disease-causing microorganisms. However, if not used properly, not only will PPE fail to prevent transmission, it may in fact, contribute to the spread of disease.

PPE requirements vary based on risk of exposure and activities being performed. As a regulated professional in **private practice**, it is your responsibility to assess your workplace, consider the services you will be providing as well as your clientele, and based on those assessments, choose the proper PPE to be used by you, your staff, and your clients.

As a minimum, SASLPA recommends that registrants in private practice follow the below PPE guideline:

- **Wear a surgical/procedural mask.** This recommendation is based on the current Public Health Order (November 27, 2020):
 - Individuals providing direct patient care or working in patient care areas must wear a surgical/procedure mask continuously, at all times and in all areas of the Facility, if they are either involved in direct patient contact or cannot maintain adequate physical distancing (2 meters) from patients and other Individuals.

- Consider wearing a face shield or goggles if you are at increased risk of being exposed to respiratory droplets (e.g., work in close proximity to a client who may or may not be wearing a mask such as when completing an oral mechanism exam or making ear mold impressions).
- Given the fact that someone who is asymptomatic may be positive for COVID-19, you may choose to follow COVID-19 positive PPE guidelines for all your clients. If this is your decision, the guideline can be found [here](#).
- According to the Governments of Saskatchewan's [Indoor Mandatory Masking Requirements](#) masks are not required for your clients in the following circumstance:
 - It is necessary for the individual to uncover their nose, mouth, or chin for the purposes of receiving a health or personal service, for the duration of the treatment or service only.
 - In the case of a minor or an individual with diminished decision-making abilities, it is recommended that you obtain informed consent from a legally authorized/appointed representative before removing the mask.

The Government of Saskatchewan has multiple PPE guidelines to help you assess what types of PPE are required for the services you provide. The PPE resources can be found [here](#). It is also essential that PPE be put on and taken off safely. Please find resources for donning and doffing PPE [here](#).

The PPE information available on the website is continuously being updated so it is highly recommended that you check back frequently to make sure you are following the most up to date guidelines.

According to [Work Safe Saskatchewan](#):

In order to limit exposure to COVID-19, all employers are required to develop and implement an exposure control plan for their workplace. Section 85 of the Government of Saskatchewan's [Occupational Health and Safety Regulations](#) specifies the informational elements that must be included in your exposure control plan.

Public Sector

For those professionals in the public sector, you are required to follow your employers' PPE guidelines. If your employer does not have any guidelines, please follow the above guidelines for private practice.

If you feel that your employer's policies or guidelines contravene the SASLPA Code of Ethics (see below), you are required to address your concerns with them. For example, requiring clients to wear masks when receiving services may impact their ability to participate in the session and therefore impact their wellbeing.

Safety

Members shall

- a) take every precaution to avoid harm to the client and themselves. This includes following applicable health and safety practices and ensuring that equipment is appropriately calibrated and in proper working order.
- b) use appropriate channels, in a timely manner, to address errors and/or issues of concern which may have an impact on the wellbeing of clients, other service providers, and themselves during the provision of services.