

Coronavirus (COVID-19): Disposing of PPE at home and in the workplace



Environment
Protection
Authority Victoria



Publication 1898 August 2020

Fact sheet

The State Government has a range of public health measures in place to slow the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). For the latest advice and updates on coronavirus in Victoria visit <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus>

Disposing of single-use personal protective equipment (PPE) items such as face masks, gloves and aprons will depend on where you have used them. This fact sheet tells you how to dispose of your PPE waste at home and in the workplace.

How to dispose of PPE from households



Single-use PPE worn during **regular daily activities**, such as exercise or buying groceries, should be placed in a general waste bin.



For households with **a suspected or diagnosed COVID-19 case**, place disposable PPE and tissues into a sealed plastic or paper bag, and then in your general waste bin.

Thoroughly clean your hands before and after carrying rubbish to your general waste bin or moving bins to and from the kerbside.



Don't place PPE in any recycling bins.

How to dispose of PPE from workplaces

Businesses in metropolitan Melbourne under Stage 4 restrictions must use a [COVIDSafe Plan](#). The government also advises all regional Victorian workplaces to use a COVIDSafe Plan.

For workplaces that are not high-risk industries, place disposable PPE in a tied-off bag and in your general waste bin. Don't place PPE in any recycling bins.

How to dispose of PPE from high risk industries

A [High Risk COVIDSafe Plan](#) is mandatory in metropolitan Melbourne for the following industries:

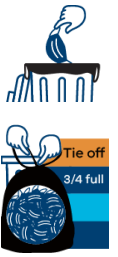
- abattoirs and meat processing facilities
- construction
- medical and pharmaceutical supply business
- seafood and poultry processing facilities
- supermarket distribution
- warehousing and distribution.



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The **industries** listed above should dispose of their PPE by following these steps:

- Put all single-use PPE items such as tissues, disposable masks, gloves in a rubbish bin that is lined with a plastic bag.
- When the bin is three-quarters full, tie-off the plastic bag. This will prevent the contents in the bag from spilling. Avoid touching the inside of the bag.
- Put the tied-off bag in the general waste bin.
- It is good practice to put the first plastic bag in a second bag. Tie off the second bag before putting it in the general waste bin.
- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds, using soap and water or use a hand sanitiser that contains at least 60 per cent alcohol.



How to dispose of PPE with blood or bodily fluids



Dispose of PPE which has been soiled by bodily fluids or blood, **in a clinical waste bin** where possible.

Many general workplaces will not have access to clinical waste bins. In this case, place soiled PPE in a sealed plastic bag. Put the first sealed plastic bag in a second bag. Seal or tie off the second bag before putting it in a secure general waste bin.



How to dispose of waste following a confirmed case and deep cleaning

Following a confirmed COVID-19 case at a workplace or facility, consider any waste generated by deep cleaning or cleanup processes connected with the persons to be infectious.

This waste should be **disposed as clinical waste**, as per [EPA publication IWRG612.1 Clinical and related waste – operational guidance](#) and [DHHS guidance](#).

How to dispose of waste from healthcare settings

You must store and process waste from clinical and healthcare services, including PPE, according to existing procedures for disposing clinical and cytotoxic waste, pharmaceutical, drug or medicine and sharps waste.

Clinical waste is a Prescribed Industrial Waste under EPA Regulations and must be [transported by a permitted vehicle](#) and disposed of at a licensed premises.

How to protect yourself and others

Further information on what individuals can do to prevent the spread of coronavirus can be found at www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus-covid-19-transmission-reduction-measures

For further information regarding storage, transport, treatment and disposal of virus-related wastes, please contact EPA on 1300 372 842.