



Key Messages

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Medical Supplies

Canada's supply of PPE and medical supplies:

- We are aware of the shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE) and medical supplies across Canada and are committed to doing what is necessary to protect the health of Canadians, especially frontline healthcare workers, from COVID-19.
- The Government of Canada is coordinating with provincial and territorial governments to quickly assess needs for PPE items such as N95 respirators, surgical masks, face shields, nitrile gloves, gowns and other protective clothing, as well as medical supplies such as sanitizer, ventilators, swabs and testing kits.
- To meet these needs, we are purchasing large quantities of equipment and supplies, working with Canadian companies to increase their manufacturing capacity to produce additional supplies, and investing in COVID-19 testing.
- We have also received donations from international and domestic organizations.
- Canada is working to rapidly allocate PPE and medical supplies to the provinces and territories as per an approach agreed upon by federal-provincial-territorial (FPT) Ministers of Health.
- The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) is also deploying PPE and ventilators from its National Emergency Strategic Stockpile (NESS) to provinces and territories submitting requests for assistance.
- Canada's NESS contains supplies that provinces and territories can request in emergencies, such as infectious disease outbreaks. The purpose of the NESS is to help supplement provincial and territorial resources through the provision of surge support.

Regulatory Measures to improve access to medical devices including PPE

- To support the Government wide response to COVID-19, in recent weeks we have:
 - allowed expedited access to COVID-19-related medical devices such as test kits.
 - expedited licensing of establishment and product licences.
 - addressed shortages by permitting the importation and sale of medical devices that are not approved in Canada, subject to certain requirements.
 - facilitated access to products that may not fully meet current regulatory requirements, such as bilingual labelling, including personal protective equipment (such as masks and gowns), swabs, hand sanitizers, and hard-surface disinfectants.
 - amended the *Food and Drugs Act* and the *Patent Act* to support efforts to help prevent and alleviate shortages.



- Health Canada will monitor and assess the safety, quality, and efficacy of all products allowed for import and sale under these special measures.

Procurement contracts to increase supplies in Canada:

- Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada and Public Services and Procurement Canada continue to galvanize Canadian industries to increase domestic manufacturing capacity, including re-tooling facilities to produce equipment and supplies including portable ventilators, surgical masks, and rapid testing kits.
- Through these efforts, the Government of Canada has signed new procurement agreements with Canadian companies such as Thornhill Medical, Medicom, and Spartan Bioscience.
- The Government has also signed letters of intent with companies such as Precision Biomonitoring, Fluid Energy Group Ltd., Irving Oil, Calko Group, and Stanfield's to produce test kits, hand sanitizer, and protective apparel, including masks and gowns.
- Throughout this process, PHAC, Health Canada and National Research Canada are playing a critical role, conducting technical reviews to verify that the products meet the Government of Canada technical specifications for COVID-19 as available on the Public Services and Procurement Canada's [buy and sell website](#).
- The Government of Canada has also awarded a contract to Amazon to manage the logistics of distributing PPE and supplies to support the COVID-19 response.
- Amazon will work directly with Canada Post to provide warehousing, and leverage its current third-party delivery channels, through Canada Post and Purolator, to deliver the products to provincial and territorial health authorities, across the country, for the frontline healthcare response.

Procured and Donations of PPE:

- Personal protective equipment and medical supplies received by the Government of Canada, whether donated or procured, is verified by PHAC that it meets the Government of Canada technical specifications for COVID-19 as available on Public Services and Procurement Canada's buy and sell website.
- The process for verification varies depending on the medical device. For example, KN95 respirators, as an accepted alternative to N95 respirators, are visually inspected to verify for defects in design and construction, and tested to assess that flow rate, pressure drop and penetration meet specifications for filtering face pieces. Gowns are visually inspected and tested for fluid penetration.
- Recognizing that some of the supplies might not be familiar to our healthcare providers, items that meet the appropriate technical specifications will be deployed to provinces



and territories with accompanying documentation that confirms that the products meet specifications and offers instructions for use.

- For example, items received from China might have labeling in Mandarin. To ensure rapid deployment, PHAC is not able to re-label each individual item. To that end, provinces and territories are advised to follow the PHAC instructions provided with the supplies, conducting the appropriate training with frontline healthcare workers.
- Another example is the KN95 mask. Normal procedure for an N95 mask is to conduct a fit test; however, the KN95 cannot be tested this way; therefore, PHAC will be instructing provinces and territories to conduct facefit testing. This process may be unfamiliar to healthcare workers; therefore, instructions will be provided.
- The Government of Canada appreciates the donations of PPE generously provided by international and domestic organizations, including the Jack Ma Foundation/Alibaba, Home Depot, Apple, CBC/Radio-Canada, Shell, AstraZeneca, and many others.
- We are pleased to see so many Canadians stepping up and lending support to those who need it most.

Coordinated Government of Canada response to purchasing equipment and supplies:

- The Government of Canada is leading a coordinated approach to provide needed supplies and equipment across the country:
 - **Public Services and Procurement Canada:** PSPC is leveraging existing supply arrangements, as well as engaging with the broader domestic and international supply communities to identify and purchase required products.

The department is asking all suppliers to come forward with products and/or services they could offer to support Canada's response.

- **Public Health Agency of Canada:** PHAC is leading collaboration with federal partners, provinces and territories to identify needs and requirements for the COVID-19 response. The Agency is also overseeing Canada's [National Emergency Strategic Stockpile](#), which contains supplies that provinces and territories can request for surge support.
- **Health Canada:** As the regulatory body for health products, Health Canada is expediting access to the health products Canadians need to help limit the spread of COVID-19.

On March 18, the Minister of Health signed an [Interim Order](#) to allow expedited



access to COVID-19-related medical devices. Health Canada also introduced an [interim measure](#) to facilitate access to certain products, such as PPE.

Under the Interim Order, a medical device licence or authorization is needed to sell and import higher risk medical devices to Canada.

Health Canada will review all COVID-19-related submissions and applications as quickly as possible while maintaining standards for patient safety.

- **Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada:** ISED is leading Canada's [Plan to Mobilize Industry to fight COVID-19](#) by introducing new measures to directly support businesses to rapidly scale up production or re-tool their manufacturing lines to develop products made in Canada that will help in the fight against COVID-19. On March 20, ISED issued a [call to action](#) for manufacturers and business.
- **National Research Council of Canada:** The NRC's [Industrial Research Assistance Program](#) is building on its existing relationships with thousands of Canada's most innovative small and medium-sized businesses to issue challenges to the marketplace for innovative solutions to fight COVID-19.