

**May 4, 2020**

**Statement on the Use of Decontamination Systems for N95 Respirators**

The American Nurses Association (ANA) continues to advocate for access to new, unused PPE while providing patient care. With regard to the decontamination of PPE, ANA calls for stronger evidence regarding the safety of decontamination methods for the reuse of PPE by nurses and other health care professionals. In accordance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, ANA does not support the use of decontamination methods as a standard practice, however, we acknowledge this is a crisis capacity strategy in the time of supply shortage.

During pandemics, nurses and their colleagues must decide how much care they can provide to others while also taking care of themselves. Therefore, when decontamination systems are used, nurses should have the right to refuse use of a decontaminated N95 respirator.

If utilized, it is imperative that the employer know the N95 respirator materials are compatible with the decontamination system selected. Employers must fully understand and communicate any known risks to staff that are associated with use of these methods. Furthermore, it is the responsibility of the employer to continue developing strategies to address the limited supply and manufacture of PPE. Guidance from the CDC also notes that given the uncertainties on the impact of decontamination on respirator performance, these Filtering Facepiece Respirators (FFRs) should not be worn by healthcare personnel when performing or when present for an aerosol-generating procedure.

ANA calls on government and the health care industry to identify and offer strategies to address the limited manufacturing and supply chain of necessary PPE without compromising the health and safety of healthcare staff. This call to action is more urgent as states across the country reopen and demand for PPE for workers across all sectors and consumers increases. ANA continues to urge the Administration to use the Defense Production Act to increase the domestic production of medical supplies and equipment desperately needed by frontline healthcare personnel.