



DESPITE HOSPITAL INDUSTRY NURSES WIN ON EBOLA

The state of California — at the insistence of CNA registered nurses — has set an Ebola safety standard for the nation. In the face of the disease known as “nurse killer,” CNA/NNU has defeated efforts by the hospital industry to limit the protection of nurses to the voluntary, unenforceable guidelines put forth by the Centers for Disease Control. Instead, we have collectively ensured an optimal standard for personal protective equipment (PPE) and respiratory protection that will enable nurses to safely treat Ebola patients. This new standard, which is effective immediately, is mandatory and enforceable in every California hospital, and includes:



- For any nurse in direct contact with a suspected or confirmed Ebola patient, mandatory, enforceable requirements under Cal-OSHA on hospitals, including emergency departments, to provide coverall PPE full-body suits, along with nitrile gloves and non-slip cover boots.
- Requirement that hospitals provide a powered air-purifying respirator (PAPR) with a full hood or cowl for any nurse in contact with a suspected or confirmed Ebola patient.
- PPE and PAPR requirements apply to employees providing care to suspected or confirmed Ebola patients, employees cleaning contaminated areas, and staff assisting employees with the removal of contaminated protective gear in all hospital departments, including the ER.
- All PPE must meet or exceed the NNU-supported ASTM standards on blood and blood-borne pathogen penetration.
- Continuous, hands-on interactive training is required for nurses and other healthcare workers, with demonstrated competency, on donning and doffing, transmission, and other procedures, before treating any suspected or confirmed Ebola patient. Computer-based learning does not meet the training requirement.
- Hospitals are required to actively involve nurses in the development of the exposure control plan.
- Nurses have the protected right to express their health and safety concerns without fear of retaliation, and hospitals must investigate and report back on any reported concern.
- Nurses exposed to potential infection may be relieved of work duties, or placed in an alternative job, but otherwise must receive full pay and preserve all benefits and seniority rights until incubation period ends and they are returned to their original position.

If your hospital is not following the mandate above, please contact your labor representative.

The National Voice for Direct-Care RNs