

TOPIC: PPE will be a critical component of any return to work plan, but where will your business acquire it?

STATE OF PLAY: WHAT'S THE LATEST

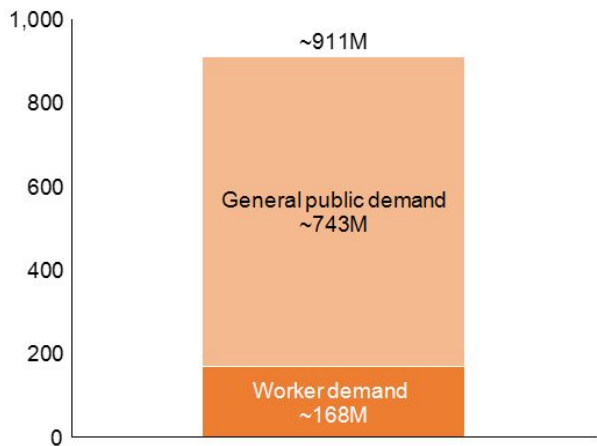
Shortages of personal protective equipment, or PPE, have [been in the headlines](#) since the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis, and while manufacturers have taken steps to [increase their production](#), hospitals continue to [report shortages of critically needed PPE](#). To help alleviate the supply shortage, non-medical PPE has been rapidly shifted to hospitals, but the demand remains high.

States like [New York](#) and cities like [LA](#) are beginning to mandate the wearing of cloth masks in public places, and the [CDC recommends](#) all Americans wear masks in public to reduce the spread of COVID-19. We estimate that it may take as many as 900 million face masks to meet the new U.S. demand for both non-medical workers and the general public.

Many businesses are [coming under fire](#) for providing inadequate PPE for their employees working in critical needs areas outside of healthcare settings, with the resulting spread of COVID-19 [forcing shutdowns](#) of their business operations. It is likely that more employees, and even customers, will come to expect businesses to provide PPE and shy away from employers or establishments that fail to do so.

Non-medical Mask Demand in the US

Number of Masks Required (in millions)



- Estimates of mask use in some countries show **a person uses an average of 3 masks/month**
- General public demand **exceeds ~700M** masks assuming 25% of the US population has sufficient masks and each person requires 3 masks
- Worker demand **exceeds ~160M** masks assuming workers in non-healthcare industries will require masks while on the job

Note: Assumes each person requires 3 non-medical grade masks for repeated use and 25% of the US population already have sufficient supply
Source: US census, Online Lit.

This information is confidential; it is not to be relied on by any 3rd party without prior written consent.



THE BIG PICTURE: WHY IT MATTERS, WHAT MIGHT BE NEXT?

As businesses seek out sources of PPE for their employees and customers as a part of ensuring a safe “re-opening”, they will be stepping into a marketplace that has been ravaged by [shortages](#), [fraud](#), [price gouging](#) and [a proliferation of new suppliers](#) providing poor quality PPE. Businesses in need of PPE for their employees are likely to turn to traditional PPE providers (3M, Honeywell, etc...) - unintentionally putting them in competition with hospitals, nursing care facilities, and government institutions. Increased competition may further drive up prices - already as high as [1000%](#) above normal levels for certain items - placing increased financial strain on [cash-strapped hospitals](#).

Before the COVID-19 crisis, it was estimated that [86%](#) of N95 masks were used in non-medical settings - demand that has decreased as the economy has ground to a halt, but will return as we seek to re-open. Painters, construction workers, and other employees operating in environments with high particulate inhalation risk will still need access to this PPE, and their employers are likely to find their pre-COVID suppliers unable to support their needs.

If we are to re-open without seeing a spike in COVID-19 related cases, it will be critical that our healthcare and other frontline workers remain the priority for receiving desperately needed PPE. Businesses purchasing PPE for their employees and customers should make conscious efforts to vet their suppliers to ensure that their purchases do not displace those of hospitals or other medical facilities. All of this means that any business, whether buying masks and face shields for the first time, or long-time purchasers of common industrial PPE, will need to seek out “net new” supplies of non-medical grade PPE as a part of their plans to re-open.

Businesses seeking PPE for their employees should commit the following actions:

- Do not purchase or seek “medical grade” PPE in alignment with state and national guidelines, especially if your operating situation does not require it - just as the CDC asked the public to avoid buying up medical grade equipment, the same standard should apply to businesses.
- Ensure your order will not displace those of a hospital or other medical facility - this will require diligence on suppliers to ensure they are not integrated into the existing medical supply chain...including back to the original manufacturer.
- Get what you need, don't just use what you can get - develop a plan for what PPE your employees will need based on exposure risk and acquire necessary protective equipment, rather than work with whatever is quick or easy to access in the short term.

The good news: there are plenty of companies navigating the “pivot to PPE” - from [Brooks Brothers](#) making masks to [American Airlines](#) making face shields, companies across the United States have restarted idle manufacturing capacity to produce PPE to meet new demand. But a common hurdle many of the producers face is capital to support retooling and purchasing raw materials. This is where many businesses seeking PPE can step in. By supplying cash, up-front, to new producers for PPE, businesses in need of PPE can partner with potential suppliers to bring reliable, sustainable, “net-new” PPE into production without pitting their employees PPE needs against those of healthcare workers fighting on the frontlines.



POTENTIAL IMPACT FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION / THE QUESTIONS WE'RE ASKING

Your Organization And Workers	Government Institutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What PPE is most appropriate to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 spreading through your workplace?• How will you acquire and utilize PPE in your workplace, in a way that is sustainable and does not create additional shortages for healthcare facilities?• If your previous supplier cannot provide PPE for your business because they have shifted to supplying the medical community, are you prepared with a “backup” plan as a part of your reopening strategy?• Have you identified a potential new “PPE partner” that your business can financially support getting into production?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What regulations can be relaxed to ensure companies in need of PPE for operations do not put them in competition with hospitals for scarce, medical-grade PPE?• Should the CDC issue guidance, similar to how it did for the public, to dissuade employers from purchasing medical-grade PPE for their non-medical employees?• Are there financial incentives, in the form of tax deductions or loans, that can be extended to businesses to alleviate the financial burden of providing PPE to their employees?

WHAT STS IS DOING ABOUT IT

- Stop the Spread is working to help manufacturers produce PPE to meet the growing need for businesses and individuals both inside, and outside, of healthcare settings.
- To date, we have helped multiple retailers, including [Brooks Brothers](#) and [Rent the Runway](#), to begin manufacturing PPE.
- If you are a manufacturer producing or looking to produce PPE, or a business in need of PPE for your business or customers, please visit our [website](#) for more information on how to [contact us](#).

LEARN MORE: OTHER EXPERTS AND SOURCES

- [CDC guidance on public use of PPE](#)
- [FDA guidance allows for use of non -medical grade PPE for medical settings](#)

