



American Society of Radiologic Technologists

Dear Governor:

The American Society of Radiologic Technologists is the national medical organization representing medical imaging and radiation therapy professionals. ASRT's 156,000 members work on the frontline in hospitals and health facilities, performing imaging examinations on patients, including those suspected of having or who are diagnosed with COVID-19. Performing medical imaging examinations brings radiologic technologists into close personal contact with patients. During this global pandemic it is vital that radiologic technologists, in addition to all health care professionals, have access to personal protection equipment (PPE), including gowns, masks, gloves and eye protection.

Radiologic technologists are specially educated to perform chest x-rays and computed tomography (CT) examinations for patients experiencing respiratory symptoms from the coronavirus. Technologists work alongside other allied health workers in hospitals, such as respiratory therapists, nurses, medical laboratory technologists and physicians who provide immediate care to patients. In addition to performing examinations on COVID-19 patients, radiologic technologists perform diagnostic imaging examinations, such as magnetic resonance, nuclear medicine and ultrasound imaging tests, along with radiation therapy treatments. All examinations and treatments place radiologic technologists and the equipment they use in immediate proximity to patients, requiring appropriate protective apparatus and disinfecting agents.

In the hospital setting, PPE along with handwashing and other aseptic measures, is the best way to limit transmission of infection and disease within the facility. Radiologic technologists and all health care workers rely on the availability of PPE to protect themselves and others while treating patients. ASRT recommends using recognized procedures and guidelines from the World Health Organization and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention to protect health care workers and the public, but without readily available PPE and disinfection products the entire health care system is unable to meet the increased patient demand for care while slowing transmission of coronavirus. While the Food and Drug Administration has shared strategies to conserve masks and gowns, foregoing or reusing PPE while imaging a patient with unknown COVID-19 status may impede efforts to slow transmission of the virus. The Department of Health and Human Services readily admits that the Strategic National Stockpile supply of PPE is insufficient to meet projected needs.





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ASRT urges you to work with public health authorities to issue decisions that positively affect PPE supply chain demands and operations. Public interest in PPE has led to hoarding of supplies that may make resources scarce. Examining the feasibility of redirecting PPE from general over-the-counter outlets to clinical care settings during this crisis may alleviate shortages. Ensuring a strong distribution chain by working with transportation companies may be considered. Additionally, developing strong relationships with manufacturers and distributors in your state may help to keep the PPE supply chain operationally sound.

ASRT is concerned that the health care workforce, including radiologic technologists, will be significantly impacted during this pandemic. Exposure to infectious patients, lack of PPE and the stress of long hours and intense activity make health care workers vulnerable to disease. Efforts should focus on keeping health care workers healthy and on the job. Reviewing workers' compensation policies for health care personnel exposed to COVID-19, as well as measures for paid sick leave for exposed health care workers to care for themselves and their families may help to slow virus transmission rates.

All Americans are facing uncertainty during this time, but health care providers should not have to question if there is a sufficient supply of equipment that they count on to protect themselves, their families and their patients from the spread of COVID-19. Radiologic technologists, and all health care workers, implore you to act immediately to ensure a sustainable supply of PPE is available and equitably distributed to all health care facilities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sal Martino". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sal Martino, Ed.D., R.T.(R), FASRT, FASAE, CAE
Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director

