



Communicable Disease

Respiratory Protection Program

Medical Evaluations FAQ

What is a medical evaluation?

It is an evaluation performed by a licensed health care professional to determine whether it is safe for an employee to wear a respirator. A medical questionnaire and/or a medical evaluation is completed to determine whether the employee has any medical or physical conditions that may cause harm with respirator use. Additionally, a medical evaluation helps to determine whether there are physiological or psychological effects from wearing a respirator.

Are medical evaluations required?

Yes, medical evaluations are a mandatory component of respiratory protection programs. They are mandatory for all employees required to wear a respirator or those who participate in voluntary respirator use.

What is the cost of medical evaluations for the employee?

Medical evaluations should be provided at no additional cost to all employees required to wear a respirator. They should be provided during work hours or at a time and place convenient to the employee.

When should medical evaluations be performed?

Medical evaluations should be performed before every fit testing for all employees required to wear a respirator.

Who performs medical evaluations?

Medical evaluations should be performed by a licensed health care professional within the employee health department or contracted by the employer. There are also private vendors that offer confidential medical evaluations online or in person; they can be found through an online search.

What information is required by the licensed health care professional in order to perform a medical evaluation and make an accurate respirator use recommendation?

The licensed health care professional should be provided with:

- The type and weight of the respirator to be used.
- The duration and frequency of respirator use.
- The expected physical effort of the workload during respirator use.
- Additional PPE to be worn with a respirator.
- Weather conditions that may be encountered during respirator use (temperature,

- humidity).
- A copy of the RPP and section 1910.134(e)(5)(i) of OSHA Standard 29 [29 CFR 1910.134](#).

What are the standards to follow if an employee answers yes to any of questions 1 - 8 in Part A Section 2 of the [29 CFR 1910.134 Appendix C](#) OSHA Medical Questionnaire or the initial medical evaluation is inconclusive?

The employee is required to complete a follow up medical evaluation that may include a physician consultation, a medical exam, or diagnostic testing. If an employee is not cleared after the follow-up medical evaluation, the employer should develop protocols to ensure the employee's work duties do not involve respiratory hazard exposure with no respirator protection.

Are medical evaluations confidential medical records?

Yes. Medical evaluations are confidential medical records and should be securely stored per regulations. Employee access to records should be guaranteed per OSHA guidelines [29 CFR 1910.1020](#) re: Access to employee exposure and medical records.

Can medical evaluations be handled by the employer or HR?

No. Medical evaluations are protected health records and as such should only be handled by the licensed health care professional and maintained according to HIPPA guidelines.

How long should medical records be stored for at the facility?

Medical records should be stored for the duration of the employment and an additional minimum of 30 years after employment has ended.

Can we develop our own questions for the medical evaluation?

Questions to be included in the medical evaluation are outlined in the OSHA standard [29 CFR 1910.134 Appendix C](#). All questions in part A are mandatory for all employees required to wear a respirator. Employers can include questions in Part B or any other additional questions at their own discretion. Mandatory questions in Part A can also be found in this [OSHA Medical Questionnaire Infosheet](#).