

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Policy

For Australian Small & Medium Enterprises

Template Version 1.0 | December 2024

Important Notice

This template is provided as a general guide only and should be customised to your specific workplace. PPE requirements should be determined through risk assessment and comply with relevant Australian Standards. We recommend consulting a WHS professional.

1. Purpose

This policy establishes [Company Name]'s requirements for the selection, provision, use, and maintenance of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). PPE is used as a last line of defence to protect workers from hazards that cannot be eliminated or adequately controlled by other means.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees who work in areas where PPE is required
- All contractors and visitors to areas requiring PPE
- All types of PPE provided by [Company Name]

3. What is PPE?

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is equipment worn or held to minimise risks to health and safety. PPE includes:

- Head protection (hard hats, bump caps)
- Eye protection (safety glasses, goggles, face shields)
- Hearing protection (earplugs, earmuffs)
- Respiratory protection (masks, respirators)
- Hand protection (gloves)
- Foot protection (safety boots, shoes)
- Body protection (high-visibility clothing, aprons)
- Fall protection (harnesses, lanyards)
- Other specialised equipment

4. Hierarchy of Controls

PPE is the last level in the hierarchy of controls. Before relying on PPE, [Company Name] will consider:

- Elimination – remove the hazard
- Substitution – use something less hazardous
- Isolation – separate people from the hazard
- Engineering controls – modify equipment or environment
- Administrative controls – change work practices
- PPE – only when other controls are not reasonably practicable

PPE does not eliminate hazards – it provides a barrier between the hazard and the worker.

5. Selection of PPE

[Company Name] selects PPE that:

- Is appropriate for the hazard and task
- Provides adequate protection
- Complies with relevant Australian Standards
- Fits the worker correctly
- Is comfortable and allows the worker to perform the task
- Is compatible with other PPE required
- Is appropriate for the work environment

Workers are consulted on PPE selection to ensure suitability and acceptance.

6. PPE Requirements

[Company Name] has assessed workplace hazards and determined the following PPE requirements:

6.1 Mandatory PPE Areas

[Insert areas and required PPE, e.g.:]

- Warehouse: Safety footwear, high-visibility vest
- Workshop: Safety glasses, safety footwear, hearing protection
- Chemical storage: Safety glasses, chemical-resistant gloves, apron

6.2 Task-Specific PPE

[Insert tasks and required PPE, e.g.:]

- Grinding/cutting: Face shield, safety glasses, leather gloves
- Working at heights: Safety harness, hard hat
- Handling chemicals: Appropriate gloves, goggles, respiratory protection

6.3 Signage

PPE requirements are displayed on safety signs at entry points to relevant areas.

7. Provision of PPE

[Company Name] will:

- Provide appropriate PPE at no cost to employees
- Ensure PPE is available in appropriate sizes
- Replace PPE when worn, damaged, or expired
- Provide training in the correct use and care of PPE
- Maintain records of PPE issued

8. Use of PPE

8.1 Employee Obligations

Employees must:

- Wear PPE as required by this policy and signage
- Wear PPE correctly as trained
- Inspect PPE before each use
- Report damaged or defective PPE
- Care for and store PPE properly
- Not modify or tamper with PPE
- Not use damaged or defective PPE

8.2 Correct Use

For PPE to be effective, it must be:

- The correct type for the hazard
- The correct size for the wearer
- Worn correctly and adjusted properly
- In good condition
- Compatible with other PPE being worn

9. Maintenance and Storage

9.1 Maintenance

- PPE must be maintained in good working condition
- Follow manufacturer instructions for cleaning and maintenance
- Clean PPE regularly (especially shared equipment)
- Replace filters, cartridges, and components as required

- Damaged or defective PPE must be repaired or replaced

9.2 Storage

- Store PPE in clean, dry conditions
- Protect from sunlight, heat, and chemicals
- Store in a way that maintains shape and condition
- Keep separate from contaminated clothing

9.3 Inspection

- Inspect PPE before each use
- Check for damage, wear, or defects
- Check expiry dates where applicable
- Remove defective PPE from service

10. Types of PPE – Specific Requirements

10.1 Eye and Face Protection

- Must comply with AS/NZS 1337.1
- Select appropriate protection for the hazard (impact, splash, radiation)
- Keep clean for clear vision
- Replace scratched or damaged lenses

10.2 Hearing Protection

- Must comply with AS/NZS 1270
- Required when noise exceeds 85 dB(A)
- Must be fitted correctly for effectiveness
- Replace earplugs after single use or as directed

10.3 Respiratory Protection

- Must comply with AS/NZS 1716
- Select correct type for the contaminant
- Fit testing required for tight-fitting respirators
- Replace filters/cartridges as directed
- Clean and store properly

10.4 Hand Protection

- Select gloves appropriate for the hazard
- Check for holes or damage before use
- Dispose of single-use gloves after use
- Wash reusable gloves regularly

10.5 Foot Protection

- Must comply with AS/NZS 2210.3
- Safety toe caps required in designated areas
- Non-slip soles where slip hazards exist
- Keep in good repair

10.6 Head Protection

- Hard hats must comply with AS/NZS 1801
- Replace if cracked, damaged, or after impact
- Replace as per manufacturer guidelines
- Do not modify or drill holes

10.7 High-Visibility Clothing

- Must comply with AS/NZS 4602.1
- Select class appropriate for the risk
- Keep clean for visibility
- Replace when faded or damaged

11. Training

Employees will receive training on:

- Why PPE is required
- Selection of appropriate PPE
- Correct fitting and adjustment
- Correct use and limitations
- Care, cleaning, and storage
- Inspection procedures
- When to replace PPE

12. Responsibilities

12.1 Management

- Assess hazards and determine PPE requirements
- Select and provide appropriate PPE
- Ensure PPE complies with standards
- Provide training
- Monitor compliance
- Replace PPE as needed

12.2 Supervisors

- Ensure PPE is available and accessible
- Monitor that workers use PPE correctly
- Address non-compliance
- Report damaged or insufficient PPE
- Lead by example

12.3 Employees

- Wear PPE as required
- Use PPE correctly
- Maintain and store PPE properly
- Report defects and request replacement
- Attend training

13. Non-Compliance

Failure to wear required PPE is a serious safety breach. Non-compliance may result in:

- Verbal warning
- Written warning
- Disciplinary action

Repeated non-compliance may result in further disciplinary action up to termination of employment.

14. Visitors and Contractors

Visitors and contractors must:

- Comply with PPE requirements
- Provide their own PPE or use PPE provided by [Company Name]
- Be briefed on PPE requirements during induction

15. Review

This policy will be reviewed:

- At least annually
- When new hazards are identified
- When PPE standards change
- Following incidents involving PPE

Employee Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that I have read and understood [Company Name]'s PPE Policy. I understand my responsibility to wear, maintain, and care for PPE as required.

Employee Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____