

## Personal protective equipment

Personal protective equipment (PPE) refers to clothing and equipment worn by workers. It includes: hard hats, safety glasses, sunscreen cream, footwear and garments designed to protect the worker from injury as a result of hazards including but not limited to heat, ultra-violet radiation, and wet conditions, biological and chemical hazards.

This fact sheet provides department workers with general information regarding the identification, purchase and maintenance of general PPE items. Where a business unit requires specialised PPE, these items should be identified in the business unit operational plan and procured as specified below.

In the hierarchy of controls, PPE is the lowest form of hazard control. Prior to selection of PPE, workers and their supervisor should undertake a risk assessment to determine if higher risk controls are available.

When selecting PPE the following must occur:

- where required, professional advice should be obtained to identify the most suitable types of PPE for the tasks to be carried out
- training in the use of PPE must be provided to those issued with the PPE to ensure the proper selection, fit, use, cleaning and maintenance of the PPE
- there must be adequate supervision and enforcement of the use of PPE
- once in use, the effectiveness of the PPE must be assessed
- suitable PPE must also be provided to visitors and others who may be exposed to hazards in the workplace
- all PPE must comply with current relevant Australian Standards and should be stamped or labelled with an AS compliance marking
- existing PPE in use across the department must be re-assessed regularly to ensure compliance with relevant Australian standards.

### Purchasing PPE

All PPE purchased must be in accordance with the department procurement procedures and financial delegations. PPE purchase is funded by the workers workgroup/division. Prior to purchasing PPE, safe work methods and procedures and available risk assessments should be reviewed to determine the most appropriate PPE for purchase.

Shawl Group is the department's supplier for Uniforms and Personal Protective Equipment. Shawl Group provide a flexible online ordering solution to suit the varied needs of the department. Payment is by department purchase card, so staff are never out of pocket, and reimbursement is no longer required. Some Totally Workwear (TWW) stores across the state offer fitting and general item supply as well.

### Replacement maintenance and storage

All PPE must be regularly inspected, kept clean, maintained and easily accessible and stored in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications. Where PPE is shared, such as visitor hard hats, laboratory coats etc., the relevant supervisor must ensure that the PPE is maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.

Supervisors will determine in consultation with workers a suitable replacement schedule based on reasonable/fair wear and tear determination. Disputes regarding PPE supply and replacement are to be resolved in accordance with the department's conflict resolution policies and procedures.

PPE items are the responsibility of the user. Intentional damage or negligent acts that damage PPE including cutting sleeves or trousers or for any other damage other than through reasonable wear and tear may result in the user incurring the cost for repair or replacement.

It is a requirement of the WHS legislation that where PPE is provided, workers must follow reasonable direction and use the PPE for its intended purpose.

Managers/supervisors will be required to keep copies of any risk assessments and worker consultation, PPE items issued, issue dates / expiry dates / maintenance and safe work procedures (e.g. SWMS or JSA), maintenance and training completed by workers.