

Health and Safety Policy Annex C: Guidance on the issue, use and storage of personal protective equipment (PPE)

Introduction

Personal protective equipment (PPE) is issued when all other avenues relating to safety have been reviewed and from this it identifies that there is a requirement for PPE to be used and/or worn to aid your protection. You have a duty to wear it in all appropriate circumstances and when instructed to do so. Failure to wear or use protective equipment in the required circumstances could not only result in injury to yourself and others but could also render you liable to the disciplinary process ultimately dismissal.

PPE is obtained from your manager or supervisor. If you are entering an area that requires you to wear PPE, this equipment should be available from staff in your service.

Cost

All PPE required for operations likely to be undertaken by employees will be provided by the council free of charge. The only exception to this rule is when an equipment upgrade is requested by an employee above the normal standard of equipment generally issued to the employee. In this case, only the extra cost above the standard purchase can be redeemed from the employee.

Responsibilities

Managers and supervisors:

- must record the type, quantity, date of expiry and date of inspection of PPE that is issued to individual members of your team
- must provide suitable PPE storage for PPE situated in static locations, which should prevent the equipment from becoming damaged or dirty
- must ensure all employees and non-employees who are issued PPE to wear receive information, instruction and training on how to make effective use of the equipment. Information must include how to correctly fit and wear it and what its limitations are. The extent of instruction and training will vary with the complexity and performance of the equipment, furthermore this training must be recorded.
- must carry out regular spot checks of the PPE issued to staff, looking for damage, wear or defects. Damaged equipment is to be exchanged immediately. Ear protector seals should be regularly inspected, cleaned and replaced as necessary.

Employees:

- are required to acknowledge receipt of equipment when on long-term issue. If you transfer to another service, your PPE should be taken with you, unless it is no longer required due to a job change. In this case, it is to be returned to the service manager or supervisor
- have a legal duty to use or wear the PPE provided and maintain the equipment in a good condition, ensuring the equipment is stored in a safe place when not in use
- wash regularly equipment, such as items that come into contact with the skin (for example, coveralls, ear protectors and the sweatband of safety helmets) to prevent skin disease or infection
- must regularly inspect safety equipment for signs of damage or defect. Damaged equipment should be reported and immediately replaced.