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**DIRECTORATE: HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

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**POLICY TITLE : PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE) POLICY**

**POLICY REF. No. : PPE1/OHS PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT**

### **1. PREAMBLE**

The purpose of the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Policy is to protect the employees of the Department of Public Works and Roads from exposure to work place hazards and the risks through the use of personal protective equipment (PPE). PPE is not a substitute for more effective control methods and its use will be considered only when other means of protection against hazards and risks are not adequate or feasible. It will be used in conjunction with other controls unless no other means of hazards control exist.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) will be provided, used, and maintained when it has been determined that its use is required to ensure the safety and health of our employees and that such use will lessen the likelihood of occupational injury and/or illness.

This section addresses general PPE requirements, including eye and face, head, foot and leg, hand and arm, body (torso) protection, and protection from drowning. Separate programs exist for respiratory protection and hearing protection as the need for participation in these programs is established through industrial hygiene monitoring.

The Department of Public Works and Roads Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Policy includes:

- Responsibilities of supervisors and employees
- Hazard assessment and PPE selection
- Employee training
- Cleaning and Maintenance of PPE

## 2. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

This policy is applicable to all the employees of the Department of Public Works and Roads as well as the contractors doing work for the department.

## 3. POLICY DEFINITIONS

**"Accident"** means an event arising out of and in the course of an employee's employment and resulting in personal injury and/or damage other than contemplated in Section 24 of the Occupational Health and Safety Act, 85 of 1993, as amended, and its regulations.

**"Assessment"** means an evaluation of the workplace and the tasks that have to be carried out in order to establish whether the use of PPE would reduce and control the risk attached.

**"Incident"** means an event that occurs at the workplace and which is reportable to an inspector in terms of Section 24(1) of the Occupational Health and Safety Act, 85 of 1993, as amended, and its regulations.

**"Danger"** means anything which may cause injury or damage to persons or property.

**"Employee"** means any person who is employed by or works for an employer and who receives or is entitled to receive any remuneration or who works under the direction or supervision of an employer or any other person.

**"Employer"** means any person who employs or provides work for any person and remunerates that person or expressly or tacitly undertakes to remunerate him, but excludes a labour broker as defined in section 1(1) of the Labour Relations Act, 1956 (Act No. 28 of 1956).

**"Hazard"** means a source of or exposure to danger.

**"Personal Protective Equipment"** means specialized equipment/clothing designed to protect employees against specific health and safety hazards in the workplace.

**"Risk"** means the probability that injury or damage will occur.

**"Safe"** means free from any hazard.

**“Work”** means work as an employee or as a self-employed person, and for such purpose an employee is deemed to be at work during the time that he is in the course of his employment, and a self-employed person is deemed to be at work during such time as he devotes to work as a self-employed person.

**“Workplace”** means any premises or place where a person performs work in the course of his employment.

#### **4. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK**

This document is established within the framework of the following legislation and policies:

- Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993 (Act 85 of 1993).
- Regulations promulgated in terms of the Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993 (Act 85 of 1993).
- Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act, 1993 (Act 130 of 1993).
- National Health Act, 2003 (Act 61 of 2003).
- Regulations promulgated in terms of the National Health Act, 2003 (Act 61 of 2003).
- Constitution of South Africa Act, 1996 (Act 108 of 1996).

#### **5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF SUPERVISORS**

Supervisors have the primary responsibility for implementing and enforcing PPE use and policies in their work area. This involves;

- 5.1 Purchasing PPE from approved suppliers and no supervisor shall be allowed to use their own suppliers.
- 5.2 Ensure that no deviation shall be made which will compromise the quality of PPE to be purchased.
- 5.3 Providing appropriate PPE and making it available to employees.
- 5.4 Ensuring that employees are trained on the proper use, care, and cleaning of PPE.

- 5.5 Ensuring that PPE training certification and evaluation forms are signed and given to the OHS Practitioner/Coordinator of the affected workplace.
- 5.6 Ensuring that employees properly use and maintain their PPE, and follow the department's PPE policy and rules.
- 5.7 Notifying the department's management and the OHS Practitioner when new hazards are introduced or when processes are added or changed.
- 5.8 Ensuring that defective or damaged PPE is immediately disposed of and replaced.

## **6. RESPONSIBILITIES OF EMPLOYEES**

The PPE user is responsible for following the requirements of the PPE policy. This involves;

- 6.1 Properly wearing PPE as required.
- 6.2 Attending required training sessions.
- 6.3 Properly caring for, cleaning, maintaining, and inspecting PPE as required.
- 6.4 Following the department's PPE policy and rules.
- 6.5 Informing the supervisor of the need to repair or replace PPE.

Employees who repeatedly disregard and do not follow PPE policy and rules will be reported to their Supervisors and Director: HRM who will take disciplinary action against them.

## **7. RESPONSIBILITIES OF OHS PRACTITIONER/COORDINATOR**

The OHS Practitioner/Coordinator is responsible for the development, implementation, and administration of the department's PPE policy. This involves;

- 7.1 Conducting workplace hazard assessments to determine the presence of hazards which necessitate the use of PPE.
- 7.2 Selecting and purchasing PPE.
- 7.3 Reviewing, updating, and conducting PPE hazard assessments whenever
  - a job changes

- new equipment is used
- there has been an accident
- a supervisor or employee requests it
- or at least every year

7.4 Maintaining records on hazard assessments.

7.5 Maintaining records on PPE assignments and training.

7.6 Providing training, guidance, and assistance to supervisors and employees on the proper use, care, and cleaning of approved PPE.

7.7 Periodically re-evaluating the suitability of previously selected PPE.

7.8 Reviewing, updating, and evaluating the overall effectiveness of PPE use, training, and policy.

## **8. PROCEDURES**

### **A. Hazard Assessment for PPE**

The OHS Practitioner/Coordinator, in conjunction with Supervisors, will conduct a risk assessment of each work area to identify sources of work hazards. Each assessment will be documented and will identify the work area assessed, the person conducting the assessment, findings of potential hazards, and date of the assessment.

- Employees and supervisors are to take personal responsibility for their health and safety and for the health and safety of persons affected by their activities.
- Good governance and accountability shall underpin the procurement, issuing and control of personal protective equipment in accordance with corporate directives.
- The department shall conduct hazard assessments to determine what PPE may be necessary and training shall be conducted to ensure the proper use and care of PPE.
- The department views PPE as an employer's last line of defense against injury and illness while at work and as such, working without PPE in a working environment where PPE is required shall not be permitted.

- The department undertakes to comply with relevant legislation as the minimum acceptable standard for occupational health and safety.
- The department shall ensure as far as is practicable, an environment that is safe and without risk to the health of all employees by progressively reducing the occurrence of disabling health and safety incidents or accidents through the provision of appropriate PPE, training in the use thereof and enforcing the use thereof.

The OHS Practitioner/Coordinator will conduct, review, and update the hazard assessment for PPE whenever;

- a job changes
- new equipment or process is installed
- there has been an accident
- whenever a supervisor or employee requests it
- or at least every year

## **B. Selection of PPE**

Once the hazards of a workplace have been identified, the OHS Practitioner/Coordinator will determine if the hazards can first be eliminated or reduced by methods other than PPE, i.e., methods that do not rely on employee behavior, such as engineering controls, administrative controls or substitution of the hazard with the less hazardous one.

If such methods are not adequate or feasible, then the OHS Practitioner/Coordinator will determine the suitability of the PPE presently available; and as necessary, will select new or additional equipment which ensures a level of protection greater than the minimum required to protect our employees from the hazards. Care should be taken to recognize the possibility of multiple and simultaneous exposure to a variety of hazards. Adequate protection against the highest level of each of the hazards will be recommended for purchase.

All personal protective clothing and equipment will be of safe design and construction for the work to be performed and will be maintained in a sanitary and reliable condition. Only those items of protective clothing and equipment that meet SABS (SANS) or NIOSH or ANSI (American National Standards Institute) standards will be procured or accepted for use. Also due to the COVID-19 pandemic cloth masks (that have triple ply layers) can also be procured. Newly purchased PPE must conform to the updated SABS (SANS) or NIOSH or ANSI standards which have been incorporated into the PPE regulations, as follows:

- Eye and Face Protection ANSI Z87.1-1989.

- Nose and Mouth Protection: Ordinary disposable masks or cloth mask with triple ply layers. The N95 and FFP2 masks should be procured for healthcare workers who are at risk of exposure, e.g. to Coronavirus.
- Head Protection ANSI Z89.1-1986
- Foot Protection ANSI Z41.1-1991
- Hand Protection (There are no ANSI standards for gloves, however, selection must be based on the performance characteristics of the glove in relation to the tasks to be performed.)

Affected employees whose jobs require the use of PPE will be informed of the PPE selection and will be provided PPE by the Department of Public Works and Roads at no charge. Careful consideration will be given to the comfort and proper fit of PPE in order to ensure that the right size is selected and that it will be used.

### **C. Training**

Any worker required to wear PPE will receive training in the proper use and care of PPE before being allowed to perform work requiring the use of PPE. Periodic retraining will be offered to PPE users as needed. The training will include, but not necessarily be limited to the following subjects:

- When PPE is necessary to be worn
- What PPE is necessary
- How to properly don, doff, adjust, and wear PPE
- The limitations of PPE
- The proper care, maintenance, useful life, and disposal of PPE

After training, the employees will demonstrate that they understand how to use PPE properly, or they will be retrained.

Training of each employee will be documented using the Personal Protective Equipment Training Attendance Register and kept in a file. The document certifies that the employee has received and understood the required training on the specific PPE he/she will be using.

### **D. Retraining**

The need for retraining will be indicated when

- an employee's work habits or knowledge indicates a lack of the necessary understanding, motivation, and skills required to use the PPE (i.e., uses PPE improperly)
- new equipment is installed

- changes in the work place make previous training out-of-date
- changes in the types of PPE to be used make previous training out-of-date

## **E. Cleaning and Maintenance of PPE**

It is important that all PPE be kept clean and properly maintained. Cleaning is particularly important for eye and face protection where dirty or fogged lenses could impair vision. Employees must inspect, clean, and maintain their PPE according to the manufacturers' instructions before and after each use. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that users properly maintain their PPE in good condition.

Personal protective equipment must not be shared between employees until it has been properly cleaned and sanitized. PPE will be distributed for individual use whenever possible.

Defective or damaged PPE will not be used and will be immediately discarded and replaced.

***NOTE:*** *Defective equipment can be worse than no PPE at all. Employees would avoid a hazardous situation if they knew they were not protected; but they would get closer to the hazard if they erroneously believed they were protected, and therefore would be at greater risk.*

It is also important to ensure that contaminated PPE which cannot be decontaminated is disposed of in a manner that protects employees from exposure to hazards.

## **F. Disciplinary Procedure**

The Head of Department (HoD)/Administrator believes that the workplace Health and Safety Program is unenforceable without some type of disciplinary policy. The department believes that in order to maintain a safe and healthy workplace, the employees must be cognisant and aware of all the department's safety and health regulations as they apply to the specific job duties required. The disciplinary procedure that is in place will be applied to all safety and health violations.



## G. PPE Requirements and its Use

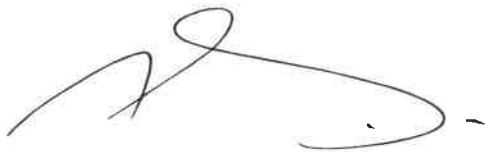
PPE	Requirements	Used in these situations
<b>High-Visibility Clothing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The apparel must be a colour that contrasts with the environment.</li> <li>Must have at least 775 sq cm of fluorescent / retro-reflective trim on both the front and back.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When worker is outside of a vehicle or machine.</li> </ul>
<b>Limb and Body Protection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Must be stored in a dry area.</li> <li>Must be free of holes and, in the case of hand protection, made of a material that provides a good grip.</li> <li>Must be impermeable when used in refuelling.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When the worker is exposed to a substance or condition that is likely to puncture, abrade or affect the skin – or be absorbed through the skin.</li> </ul>
<b>Head Protection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High-visibility, side impact hardhat.</li> <li>Cleaned regularly and stored away from grease and tools.</li> <li>Must be free of cracks, dents or any other damage.</li> <li>Chin straps must be used when workers are climbing, working from a height exceeding 3m, or working in high winds.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Must be worn in any work area where there is a danger of head injury from falling, flying or thrown objects, or other harmful contacts.</li> </ul>
<b>Eye and Face Protection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safety eyewear must fit properly and include side shields when necessary for worker safety.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safety eyewear must be worn when working in conditions that are likely to injure or irritate the eyes.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Face protectors must also be used if there is a risk of face injury.</li> </ul>
<b>Nose and Mouth Protection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The recommended control measure from inhaling odours and particles is the ordinary disposable mask. The Face-shields and Surgical masks are preferably used by employees who are exposed to high risks of infection, e.g. healthcare workers doing screening and testing for COVID-19 infection, or frontline workers likely to be exposed to COVID-19 infection.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Masks are used to prevent odours, bacteria and particles from passing through the nose and mouth. Respirators could also be used where finer particles or fibres such as asbestos could affect the lungs.</li> </ul>
<b>Safety Footwear</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must be of a design, construction and material appropriate to the protection required for the work environment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safety footwear must consider the following factors: slipping, uneven terrain, abrasion, ankle protection and foot support, crushing potential, temperature extremes, corrosive substances, puncture hazards, electrical shock, and any other recognizable hazard.</li> <li>• Toe and metatarsal protection, puncture resistance, and/or dielectric protection must be used where appropriate.</li> <li>• Caulked or other equally effective footwear must be worn by workers who are required to walk on logs, piles, pilings or other round timbers.</li> </ul>
<b>Hearing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noise Induced Hearing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If those levels cannot be</li> </ul>

<b>Protection</b>	<p>Loss regulations regarding noise exposure are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 85dBA daily noise exposure level</li> </ul>	<p>practicably met, the employer must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Reduce levels as low as possible</li> <li>○ Post warning signs regarding noise hazard areas</li> <li>○ Provide to workers hearing protection that meets SANS standards, and ensure it is worn effectively in noise hazard areas.</li> </ul>
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**REVIEW DATE:** Annually, and/or as and when the need arises.

**APPROVED/ APPROVED**



**M. S. THOBAKGALE (Mr.)**

**ADMINISTRATOR**

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND ROADS**

**29 MAY 2020**

**DATE**