

North Dakota State University

Personal Protective Equipment

Introduction

Personal protective equipment (PPE) shall be provided, used, and maintained in a sanitary and reliable condition wherever hazards exist that cannot be eliminated or adequately controlled through engineering or administrative controls. PPE is the last line of defense and should not replace other hazard controls.

NDSU, as the employer, shall provide required PPE to employees at no cost when PPE is necessary to protect against workplace hazards, except where allowed by applicable regulations. Required PPE shall be appropriate for the identified hazard and properly fitted to the employee.

This equipment will be mandated wherever it is necessary by reason of hazards of processes or environment, chemical hazards, radiological hazards, or mechanical irritants encountered in a manner capable of causing injury or impairment in the function of any part of the body through absorption, inhalation, or physical contact.

Note: Employer-supplied PPE does not include: ordinary (non-specialty) safety-toe footwear, ordinary (non-specialty) prescription eyewear, everyday clothing, weather gear, PPE not required by risk assessment or best management practices, or replacement PPE caused by employee loss or negligence. Approved PPE must be made available for common use and not be removed from the job site or premises for personal use.

I. Purpose and Scope

To ensure that NDSU employees have training and available personal protective equipment (PPE) if the job/tasks performed for the positions require additional safety precautions or protection. This policy applies to NDSU employees, student employees, students, and visitors who conduct work or enter areas where PPE is required based on hazard assessment, safety procedures, or posted signage.

II. Goals

To reduce the risk of potential work-related injuries or death by maximizing the application and use of personal protective equipment (PPE).

III. Responsibilities

Department heads, supervisors, and principal investigators are responsible for evaluating workplace hazards and determining the appropriate PPE necessary to protect employees and students engaged in departmental activities. This responsibility includes:

- Conducting hazard assessments,
- Selecting PPE based on those hazards,
- Ensuring proper fit,
- Providing required PPE, and
- Ensuring employees are trained in its use.

Hazard assessments and PPE determinations shall be made by those most familiar with the work being performed and the associated hazards.

The Safety Office serves as a consultative and support resource by:

- Assisting departments with hazard assessment methodologies
- Providing guidance on PPE selection and regulatory requirements
- Offering training resources and compliance assistance

The Safety Office does not replace the responsibility of supervisors or principal investigators to assess hazards and determine PPE requirements for their operations.

The user must wear appropriate PPE when indicated by hazard assessment and report any deficiencies or changes in conditions that necessitate a new hazard assessment. PPE only works when it is selected correctly, worn consistently, and maintained properly — users are responsible for ensuring their PPE is used as intended. The user is required to:

- Wear PPE as required.
- Use PPE correctly for its intended purpose and in accordance with training.
- Inspect PPE prior to use.
- Maintain and store PPE properly, and do not modify any PPE.
- Report PPE issues or new hazards to supervisors.
- Participate in training and medical requirements (if applicable).

IV. Procedure

Department heads, supervisors, or principal investigators shall assess their work environments to identify potential hazards that may require the use of PPE. Identified processes and hazards should have specific written safe operating procedures/standards which are kept on file in the lab, space, or department.

Hazard assessments shall be documented in writing to:

- Identify the workplace, task, or activity being evaluated
- Identify the hazards present
- Specify the PPE required to mitigate those hazards
- Be of safe design and construction for the work to be performed
- Be reviewed and updated when processes, equipment, or hazards change

Hazard assessment documentation shall be maintained by the department and made available upon request. Any PPE determinations must be communicated to the affected employee and

arrangements made to properly fit and train them for use.

V. Types of PPE

A. Eye and Face Protection

1. Eye and face protection must be worn when machines or operations present potential eye and face injury.
2. Safety glasses are for impact protection only, and do not provide adequate chemical splash protection.
3. Chemical goggles are for protection against chemical splash. Some chemical goggles are also approved for impact protection.
4. Face shields protect the face from chemical splash and should not be used as the sole means of eye protection. Chemical splash goggles or safety glasses should be worn in combination with face shields, as necessary.
5. Employees involved in welding must wear filter lenses or plates of the proper shade number.
6. Employees exposed to laser beams must use suitable laser safety goggles which will protect for the specific wavelength of the laser and be optical-density adequate for the energy involved.
7. Goggles will be worn over any employee-owned prescription glasses that do not meet industrial safety standards. Contact lenses may be worn in laboratories and work areas **only when appropriate eye protection is worn**. Contact lenses are not a substitute for safety glasses or goggles.

B. Foot Protection

Appropriate foot protection is required for workers whose feet may be injured by hot or corrosive substances, falling objects, crushing or penetrating actions, or who are required to work in abnormally wet locations.

C. Head Protection

Workers in areas where there is possible danger of head injury from impact, or from falling or flying objects, or from electrical shock and burns, shall be protected by protective hard hats that meet appropriate ANSI Guidelines

D. Hearing Protection

Whenever it is not feasible to reduce the noise levels or duration of exposures to sound levels that may exceed 85 decibels, ear protection devices shall be provided and used. The Safety office can assist in measuring noise levels.

1. Devices inserted in the ear shall be determined and fitted individually
2. Plain cotton is not an acceptable protective device.

E. Respiratory Protection

In emergencies, or when engineering or administrative controls are not effective in controlling toxic substances, approved respiratory protective equipment will be provided and used.

1. Respirator use will adhere to NDSU's Respiratory Protection Program
2. Respiratory protective devices will be approved for the hazardous material involved based on extent and nature of work requirements and conditions.

F. Hand Protection

Hand protection shall be worn where applicable and shall fit well enough to allow dexterity for the job performed.

1. Gloves that have been contaminated by chemicals, oils or greases will be either decontaminated or disposed of.
2. Gloves shall be kept free from damage or tears.
3. Gloves shall be worn when handling material that may be abrasive, or may have burrs.
4. Insulated gloves should be worn when working around heat or steam.

G. Fall Protection

Lifelines, safety belts, harnesses and lanyards will be used only for employee protection. Employees working over or near water, where danger of drowning exists, will wear U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jackets or buoyant work vests.

1. Comply with the University Fall Protection Safe Operating Procedures.

VI. Training

The employer shall provide training to each affected employee who is required to use PPE before work begins. Training shall include:

- When PPE is required
- What PPE is required
- How to properly don, doff, adjust, and wear PPE
- The limitations of the PPE
- Proper care, maintenance, useful life, and disposal

Each affected employee shall demonstrate an understanding of the training and the ability to use PPE properly, before being allowed to perform work requiring the use of PPE, and when the following occur:

- The employer has reason to believe that any affected employee does not have the understanding and skill required of the job that requires the use of PPE
- Changes in the workplace make previous training obsolete
- Changes in the types of PPE to be used make the previous training obsolete

Documentation and verification of training received by each affected employee shall be maintained by the Department and available for review upon request.