

# Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Usage and Maintenance Guidelines

This SOP provides comprehensive **personal protective equipment (PPE) usage and maintenance guidelines**, detailing the proper selection, correct usage, regular inspection, cleaning, and storage of PPE to ensure maximum protection for employees. It emphasizes the importance of consistent PPE use in preventing workplace injuries and exposure to hazards, outlines responsibilities for PPE upkeep, and includes procedures for reporting damaged or ineffective equipment. Adhering to these guidelines promotes a safe working environment and compliance with health and safety regulations.

**Scope:** This procedure applies to all employees, contractors, and visitors who enter areas where PPE is required.

## 1. Purpose

To establish standardized procedures for the selection, use, maintenance, and reporting of personal protective equipment (PPE) to ensure employee safety and regulatory compliance.

## 2. Responsibilities

- Supervisors/Managers:** Ensure appropriate PPE availability, enforce proper usage, and arrange training as needed.
- Employees:** Wear assigned PPE, inspect before every use, maintain and store PPE properly, and report issues promptly.
- Safety Officer:** Conduct regular PPE audits, provide guidance, and manage records of PPE issuance and maintenance.

## 3. PPE Selection and Provision

- Identify hazards for each work activity or location through a risk assessment.
- Select PPE appropriate for the identified hazards (see table below for common types).
- Provide employees with properly fitting PPE at no cost.
- Replace PPE as necessary due to wear, damage, or expiration.

| PPE Type               | Typical Hazards Protected Against              |
|------------------------|--|
| Safety Helmets         | Impact from falling objects, bumping head      |
| Eye/Face Protection    | Chemical splashes, flying debris, UV radiation |
| Hearing Protection     | Loud noise environments                        |
| Respiratory Protection | Aerosols, dust, fumes, vapors                  |
| Gloves                 | Chemical or biohazard contact, cuts, abrasions |
| Protective Clothing    | Chemical splashes, fire, extreme temperatures  |
| Safety Footwear        | Impact, compression, punctures, slips          |

## 4. Usage Procedures

- Review PPE requirements for your task/location before starting work.
- Inspect PPE for defects, damage, or contamination before each use.
- Don PPE according to training and manufacturer instructions.
- Never modify PPE or use it for purposes not intended.
- Remove PPE safely to prevent contamination (for applicable PPE).
- Immediately report any discomfort, difficulty using PPE, or potential exposure incident to your supervisor.

## 5. Inspection, Maintenance, and Storage

- Regularly inspect all PPE for signs of damage or wear (cracks, tears, degraded materials, missing parts).
- Clean PPE according to manufacturer instructions after each use or as appropriate.
- Ensure PPE is dry and free of contaminants before storage.
- Store PPE in designated, clean, and dry locations protected from direct sunlight, extreme temperatures, or hazardous substances.
- Remove from service and report any PPE that is damaged, defective, or expired.

## 6. Reporting Damaged or Ineffective PPE

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1. If damaged or defective PPE is detected, remove it from service immediately.
2. Notify your supervisor or the safety officer for replacement.
3. Document the issue in the PPE log or incident report, as required.

## 7. Training

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- All personnel must receive training in correct PPE use, care, limitations, and disposal procedures before assignment to tasks requiring PPE.
- Refresher training must be provided following changes in equipment, procedures, or when misuse is observed.

## 8. Records and Documentation

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- Maintain records of PPE training, issuance, inspections, and incident reports for regulatory compliance and review.

## 9. References

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- Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) 29 CFR 1910 Subpart I – Personal Protective Equipment
- Manufacturer guidelines for cleaning and maintenance
- Company Health and Safety Policy

## 10. Review and Update

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This SOP is to be reviewed annually or when new hazards are identified or equipment is introduced. Updates should be documented and communicated to all relevant personnel.

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*Adhering to these guidelines promotes a safe working environment and ensures compliance with regulatory health and safety standards.*