



PPE responsibilities—workers

What is PPE?

PPE is equipment or clothing designed to protect you from workplace hazards. It includes items such as hard hats, safety boots, coveralls, gloves, safety glasses and goggles, earplugs, high visibility vests, lifejackets, fall protection, and respirators.

Who provides and pays for PPE?

Unless otherwise agreed upon with your employer, you must provide, at your cost, your own:

- Clothing needed for protection against the natural elements
- Safety headgear
- Safety footwear
- General-purpose gloves. However, if a product or a work activity requires specific gloves to protect the worker, your employer must provide these gloves.

Your employer must provide and pay for all other PPE required for the job. If you have an allergic reaction or other adverse health effect from employer-provided PPE, such as latex gloves, your employer is responsible for providing an appropriate and equally protective substitute.

How do you know what PPE to select?

When you purchase your own PPE, such as your hard hat or safety boots, check that it meets standards acceptable to WorkSafeBC. Approved PPE will have a permanent marking or label indicating what standard it meets. For example, safety boots may have a green CSA triangle symbol.

Choose PPE that is comfortable and fits well. If it does not fit properly, it may not provide adequate protection. If it is not comfortable (for example, too tight or too loose), you are less likely to wear it.

If your employer is providing PPE, make sure you are involved in its selection, in consultation with your Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) committee, or worker representative as applicable.

What are your PPE responsibilities?

- Make sure you are educated and trained in how and when to fit and wear your PPE properly, and how to clean, maintain, store, and dispose of it, before you start work.
- Wear all PPE required for the job.
- Check that your PPE does not compromise your health and safety (for example, interfere with your breathing, vision, communication, or mobility).
- Take care of your PPE—clean, maintain, and store it properly.
- Inspect your PPE for wear and tear and other damage before use.
- Make sure your PPE is repaired or replaced as necessary. Report any damage to your supervisor or employer.

Who else has PPE responsibilities?

Everyone in the workplace has PPE responsibilities:

- You are required to wear your PPE.
- Your supervisor must monitor that you are wearing it.
- Your OHS committee or worker representative participates in addressing issues relating to PPE.
- Your employer has a responsibility to ensure a safe and healthy workplace to protect all workers, including providing and maintaining PPE.

Make it a habit to wear your PPE!

For more information go to WorkSafeBC.com, *Workers' Compensation Act* and OHS Regulation.