

PROCEDURES/GUIDELINES:-	Personal Protective Clothing
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RESPONSIBILITY:-	
Draft Policy Developed by:	Work Health and Safety Coordinator
Committee/s (if any) consulted in the development of this policy:	Nil
Responsibility for implementation:	General Manager
Responsibility for review of Policy:	General Manager

Protective Clothing and Equipment is classed as a Level 3 control measure (Safe Work Australia Code of practice, How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks). Level 3 control measures do not control the hazard at the source. They rely on human behavior and supervision, and used on their own, tend to be least effective in minimising risks.

PPE should only be used:

When there are no other practical control measures available (as a last resort) as an interim measure until a more effective way of controlling the risk can be used to supplement higher level control measures (as a back-up).

The WHS Regulations include specific requirements if PPE is to be used at the workplace, including that the equipment is:

Selected to minimise risk to health and safety suitable for the nature of the work and any hazard associated with the work a suitable size and fit and reasonably comfortable for the person wearing it maintained, repaired or replaced so it continues to minimise the risk. A worker must, so far as reasonably able, wear the PPE in accordance with any information, training or reasonable instruction.

Examples of PPE include ear muffs, respirators, face masks, hard hats, gloves, aprons and protective eyewear. PPE limits exposure to the harmful effects of a hazard but only if workers wear and use the PPE correctly.

1. Issues to Consider:

a) Legislation and Regulation

The Workplace Health Safety Act and its regulations contain provisions for protective clothing and equipment.

b) Awards

The Local Government (State) Award provides for wide-ranging use and supply of protective equipment and clothing.

“Council shall supply employees with protective clothing and equipment suitable to the nature of the work performed and the work environment and shall satisfy the relevant legislation”.

c) Work Clothes/Uniforms

Indoor staff work clothes/uniforms are not regarded as protective clothing other than as part of the “sun protection” measures.

Outdoor staff clothes/uniforms may be included as part of their personal protective equipment e.g. High visibility clothes and work boots.

d) Workplace Incidents

To reduce the risk of injury, illness or work related hazards by providing employees with appropriate protective clothing and equipment where there is no other practical control measures available.

2. Responsibilities and Obligations:

a) Applicability

This procedure applies to all employees, contractors or other personnel employed or engaged by Council, directly or indirectly, to work on a Council work site. This procedure applies to all protective clothing and personal protective equipment including clothing and accessories issued to employees for sun protection.

b) Council's obligation to comply with legislation

Council is committed to providing suitable protective clothing and equipment for all relevant employees, when there are no other practical control measures available or to supplement a higher level control measures. As part of this commitment, risk assessments and Safe Work Method Statements have been undertaken to identify minimum mandatory protective clothing and equipment requirements.

c) Employees obligations

All employees have an obligation to comply with legislation and regulations which require the use of personal protective clothing and equipment, and to abide by this procedure as well as other related policy, procedures and instructions e.g. Sun Protection procedure. Failure to do so may lead to disciplinary action.

d) Contractors obligations

Contractors, Subcontractors, Volunteers and/or on-site suppliers directly or indirectly engaged by Council are required to meet the minimum personal protective clothing and equipment requirements at their own costs.

Basic mandatory items would include:

- i. Safety boots
- ii. Safety vests
- iii. Shirts with collars, full length sleeves
- iv. Below Knee length shorts

Other safety equipment and clothing may be required at specific work sites and could include such items as:

- i. Hard hats in designated areas
- ii. Ear muffs or earplugs in designated areas
- v. Any other equipment (gloves, respirator masks)
- vi. Sun hat
- vii. Safety goggles or glasses
- viii. Sun block
- ix. Night work clothing

Contractors who do not comply with the mandatory requirements will be denied entry to worksites following appropriate warnings or advising as to Council's requirements for compliance.

Contractors who provided WHS and PPE Policy/Procedure will be given a higher rating when being considered for best value for money (or non-priced) criteria.

Details of Council's Workplace Health Safety Policy and other Workplace Policies will be advised to contractors, suppliers and the like.

e) Obligations of Other Personnel

Non employees of Council such as Community Service workers, labour market program workers, work experience personnel, work for the dole personnel, etc will be required to supply their own basic mandatory items:

- i. Safety boots
- ii. Sun hat
- iii. Shirts with collars, full length sleeves
- iv. Knee length shorts as a minimum

Note: Council on request may be able to loan non employees high visibility vests for short term occurrences.

Site specific protective equipment will be provided by council for the duration of the project. Eg hard hats, Safety vests, face shields, ear muffs.

f) Quality and Suitability of Personal Protective Clothing and Equipment

All protective clothing and equipment purchased by the Council will comply with the requirements of the appropriate authorities and, the requirements of the Standards Association of Australia. It will be the Purchasing officers responsibility to ensure that equipment meets appropriate standards requirements.

Available for issue are protective items such as sun protective safety clothing, sunscreens, lip gloss, barrier cream, sun hats, safety sunglasses, gloves, goggles, hard hats with/without shade brims, dust masks, and the like as well as “wet weather gear” being hats, coats, trousers, gumboots for use in wet weather.

g) Employee Consultation

When purchasing new or replacement protective clothing, Council will consult with employee representatives and/or with the Workplace Health Safety Committee. Such consultation may involve “trials” of proposed clothing.

h) Non-compliance by Employees

If any employee cannot for medical or physical reasons, wear protective clothing or use protective equipment as supplied, then the employee must give Council an explanatory written statement signed by a Medical Practitioner. Council reserves the right to have the employee examined by a Medical Practitioner of Council’s choice. Council also reserves the right to redeploy the employee or take other action if necessary.

Failure to provide a written statement from a medical practitioner will be treated as a breach of employee obligations as stated in section c and may lead to disciplinary action.

i) Grievance Procedures

Employees are to be aware that to interfere with, or alter or misuse any of the protective clothing or equipment as supplied shall be considered a serious breach of Council’s requirements.

Disciplinary action as stated in the relevant award will follow and may include formal reporting of the incident, counselling of that person, etc. Re-occurrence or severity of incident(s) could include dismissal proceedings.

j) Training

All new employees, are to attend a induction session and are to be made aware of their responsibilities regarding compliance of WHS legislation and Council’s policies relating to safe work practices.

An on-going programme of maintaining up-to-date awareness of Workplace Health Safety matters will continue for all current employees.

3. Conditions of Issue for Protective Clothing and Equipment:

All employees are required to utilise the necessary protective clothing and equipment whilst on duty and engaged in work for the Council **at all times**.

a) Outdoor (Works) Staff

i. **Initial issue:**

The following clothing, footwear and protective equipment will be provided to all permanent staff upon commencement of employment.

1. Three (3) pairs of overalls (High Visibility), one high visibility jumper.

OR

2. Two (2) pairs of long cotton drill trousers (blue in colour, heavy/light weight) and Two (2) pairs of below knee length shorts and five (5) shirts (high visibility in colour, long sleeve, light/heavy weight), one high visibility jumper.

OR

One (1) overalls and one (1) long trousers and Two (2) below knee length shorts and five (5) long sleeve shirts, one high visibility jumper.

3. One (1) pair safety leather work boots – choice of style; lace-up, elastic side etc., steel cap (as required). One (1) pair of rubber boots – wet weather, concrete works (when required).
4. One (1) pair safety sunglasses
5. One (1) broad rimmed sun hat (as required)
6. Sunscreen and lip gloss.
7. Raincoat, trousers and hat – may defer until required.

Note: (flame resistant PPE will be supplied for personal working with welders, oxyacetylene, grinders etc)

The above will be subject of an issue to all employees (and return of “old” items if required).

ii **Supplementary Issues**

Also available on an as required basis are such items as:

1. Hard hats with or without sun brim (some work sites may make the wearing of the attachment brim impractical).
2. Safety vests.
3. Ear plugs, ear muffs.
4. Gloves – leather and/or rubber.
5. Respiratory/dust masks.
6. Hand soaps, barrier creams and the like.

7. Night work clothing (High visibility reflective garments)

The use of some equipment (concrete saws, grinders, welders, chainsaws etc.) may require specific protective equipment and Safe Operating procedures. Employees are to ensure use of necessary items when operating such plant.

b) Outdoor (Administrative) Staff

Includes persons such as the Works Superintendent, Overseer's, and Storemen.

These persons are to have access to such outdoor issues as is necessary (footwear, wet weather clothing, sunscreen and high visibility clothing).

c) Temporary Staff – Outdoor (Works)

For a period of employment of less than six (6) months the employee is to provide their own basic work clothes that will comply in terms of personnel protection requirements, (long trousers, knee length shorts and long sleeve shirts).

Council will supply as for other Outdoor Staff items such as sunscreen, lip glass, wet weather clothing, safety vests, hard hat, and safety boots.

Items that are site or plant specific (goggles, face shields) will be supplied by Council.

d) Indoor (Administrative) Staff

Minimal protective clothing and/or safety equipment required.

Persons employed in Technical services section (Engineering, Building) to have access to such items of "Outdoor (Works) Staff" issue as necessary (footwear, wet weather gear, hard hats, safety vests) to carry out their duties in a dual work environment (office and job site).

e) Temporary (Indoor) Staff

No specific provision made for temporary staff, with any issue being restricted to site specific requirements such as hard hats, safety vests etc.

f) Replacement Issues

i. For basic clothing items it is expected that generally, re-issues shall occur on an annual basis. In the event of excessive wear and tear, spillages etc., the Storekeeper shall assess the need for early replacements.

- ii. All other items of clothing and/or equipment shall be on assessment of the (Overseers, Management and Storekeeper) or by legislative requirements (e.g. hard hats).
- iii. The issue of replacement clothing and/or equipment requires the return of old clothing/equipment.
- iv. The issue and return of clothing/equipment will be recorded in Council's Stores Issue Register.

g) Additional or Alternate Issues

Requests for additional clothing or alternate non-standard clothing is to be submitted in writing to the Director of Works and Operations.

A Medical Certificate as per Clause 2.h. of the Protective Clothing and Equipment Procedure must accompany requests for non-standard clothing.

h) Risk Assessment for Work Sites

Council operates within in a variety of work sites. However for the purpose of this Procedure it is practical to make an evaluation of "risk" on the basis of three (3) categories of work sites and three (3) classifications of protection.

The following summary is made as a result of a risk analysis assessment of Council worksites completed for the wearing of personal protective clothing and equipment.

a) Work Sites – Categories

1. Outdoor Sites

These primarily involve physical works of a maintenance or construction nature and are almost completely carried out in an outdoor environment.

2. Composite Sites

These primarily involve a supervising or semi-administrative type function with a mix of indoor/outdoor activities.

3. Indoor Sites

These primarily involve administrative functions and are almost exclusively conducted in an indoor environment.

b) Classifications of Protection

1. Basic Protection

This includes use of those routine basic items of protection, generally as described in Clause 3(a) "initial Issue". This applies to all employees working on "Outdoor Sites" and represents the minimal level of safety clothing to be worn.

2. Specific Protection

This will vary from job to job and be subject to locations, plant in use and actual works being undertaken. It includes the use of:

- Plant specific protective equipment – ear muffs, safety goggles, dust masks, hard hats, etc,
- Site or job specific clothing – safety vests, gloves, leather apron, cut resistant chaps, etc.
- Special equipment – gas detectors, etc.
- Specific hand or barrier creams and the like.
- Night work clothing

This will generally apply to all outdoor staff, including supervisory staff from time to time; technical services staff engaged in outdoor site works of supervision, survey, set-out, inspection, etc., and visitors to outdoor sites.

3. Sun Protection

Refer to council Sun Protection Procedure

Outdoor Sites

All outdoor (works) staff, including temporary staff, to utilise the full range of protective measures including long trousers, or knee length shorts, long sleeve or long sleeve shirts with collars, sun hats (broadbrim), sunglasses, sunscreens, etc. (where practical utilise natural shade).

Composite Sites

All outdoor (administrative) staff, appropriate technical services staff and temporary staff to utilise measures similar to those for outdoor sites.

Indoor Sites

Use of sunscreens and hats are desirable on infrequent outdoor visits.

Note: *All employees in any situation are to consider **their** sensitivity to solar UV radiation and take precautions*

Review of Procedure

This Procedure shall be reviewed and monitored on a regular basis.

Variation

Council reserves the right to vary or revoke this Procedure.