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Personal protective equipment – a guide for businesses

Personal protective equipment (PPE) provides protection for workers when all other control measures can't adequately eliminate or minimise risks to a worker's health and safety.

Who can provide PPE

PPE can be provided by:

- you - a person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU)
- another PCBU (costs could be shared)
- the worker (if they genuinely and voluntarily choose to provide their own PPE).

You cannot pass on the cost of providing PPE (in full or part) to your worker.

You cannot make your worker provide their own PPE as a condition of employment.

You must make sure your worker uses or wears their required PPE and make sure they receive information and training on how to correctly use, wear and maintain it.



Choosing appropriate PPE

When selecting PPE you must make sure it is:

- suitable for the nature of the work and any risks associated with the work
- a suitable size and fit and reasonably comfortable (eg does your worker wear prescription glasses, have facial hair or other features that could affect how well PPE fits?)
- compatible with any other PPE your worker is required to wear or use.

PPE should also meet any industry-specific requirements or standards.

Any new risks arising from wearing PPE must be identified and managed (eg wearing hearing protection may mean workers will not hear vehicles approaching).

Maintenance, repair and replacement of PPE

You must make sure PPE (regardless of who provides it) is maintained, repaired and replaced so it continues to protect your worker.

PPE and other persons in the workplace

Other persons (eg visitors or volunteers) must also be provided with appropriate PPE and training and instruction on how to use or wear it. They must use or wear the PPE as instructed.

Worker engagement

You must engage with your workers when making decisions about PPE and when proposing changes that may affect their health or safety.

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