

HARLOW COUNCIL

Addendum to Health and Safety Policy

Supply and Use of Personal Protective Equipment

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Interpretation

Personal protective equipment (PPE) is all equipment worn or held by employees to protect them against one or more foreseeable risks to their health or safety.

Introduction

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 places a specific duty on employers to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of employees while they are at work.

Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, employers must assess significant risks to employees' health and safety and then implement procedures that will minimise the identified risks to an acceptable level. PPE will sometimes be used as a means of controlling identified risks.

Failure to comply with the requirements of this policy is a disciplinary offence, which in serious cases could lead to dismissal.

Deliberate tampering of or interfering with any PPE, particularly to another persons could amount to a criminal offence under the HSWA 1974, and prosecution, and in cases where a person has subsequently been killed or suffers seriously life threatening injury, the offences of manslaughter or attempted manslaughter may even apply.

General Statement

Harlow Council will provide Personal Protective Equipment when the risk presented by a work activity cannot be eliminated or adequately controlled by any other means.

When it is provided, it is because health and safety hazards have been identified that require the use of PPE as a means of reducing the risks from those hazards.

Although the provision of PPE will primarily be for Harlow Council staff there is also a requirement to ensure that it is provided to Casual, Temporary and Agency staff, and those on Work Experience, where there is a foreseeable risk to a person's health and safety.

Where it is required to be used PPE will be issued on a personal basis. Unless there is an exceptional circumstance it will not be necessary for staff to share items of PPE.

The effectiveness of this Policy requires the cooperation of all members of management and staff. There will be full consultation with employee representatives through normal channels of communication.

Implementation of the Policy will be the responsibility of the relevant Directors/Assistant Directors and Managers in conjunction with the Health and Safety Team.

Arrangements for Securing the Health and Safety of Employees

Harlow Council will, in consultation with employees and their representatives:

- Ensure PPE requirements are identified when carrying out risk assessments
- Use the most effective means of controlling risks without the need for PPE whenever possible and only provide PPE where it is necessary
- Provide PPE that is to the required standard
- Ensure that if two or more items of PPE are used simultaneously, they are compatible and are as effective used together as they are separately
- Ensure PPE is available for all staff who need to use it
- Where necessary, provide adequate accommodation for correct storage
- Where necessary, provide adequate maintenance, cleaning and repair arrangements
- Inform staff of the risks their work involves and why PPE is required
- Inform and/or instruct staff in the safe use and maintenance of PPE
- PPE will be supplied free of charge, there must never be any cost associated with the user
- Individuals should not supply their own PPE out of choice, if they do request non-standard PPE (which they agree to supply), it must not be used unless it has been approved by their Line Manager and permission has been given by the Health and Safety Team.

Duties of Managers and Supervisors

Directors, Managers or supervisors must ensure:

- PPE requirements are considered when risk assessments are carried out
- Suitable PPE is provided and is always easily available to all employees that need to use it
- Where necessary, arrangements are in place so that PPE can be properly stored, maintained, cleaned and replaced
- Appropriate instruction and information is provided
- Employees properly use the PPE that is provided
- The use of PPE is regularly monitored and reviewed
- Special arrangements are made, where necessary, for individuals with health conditions that could affect the use of PPE. This does not mean giving permission that PPE does not have to be used.

- If an individual insists on supplying their own PPE, for whatever reason this request will usually be declined. If in special circumstances it is agreed that an individual can supply alternate PPE the Line Manager must be sure that it is fit for the purpose it is intended. If then the Line Manager agrees its use, remember that any non-issue or non-standard PPE cannot be used without prior permission of the Health and Safety Team who must be consulted and have the final decision.

Duties of Employees

Employees must ensure that they:

- Use all PPE provided properly whenever it is required and check the condition each time before it is used
- Properly store, clean and maintain their PPE
- Report any losses, defects or other problems with PPE to their Line Manager
- Inform their Line Manager, in confidence, of any personal conditions that may affect their ability to use PPE correctly

Summary

PPE is only effective in protecting the wearer or user if the following steps are taken:

- Only use PPE in accordance with instructions given and for the activities which they are designed to provide protection
- Only use PPE if fully instructed in its use
- Store, clean, repair and maintain PPE correctly, replacing any items that have been damaged and are no longer serviceable
- Only use issued PPE unless non-standard use of PPE has been approved

Safe System of Work

The use of PPE is an important means of controlling risks involved in various work activities. To ensure that it is effective, it is necessary to follow the manufacturers and Harlow Council's instructions on its correct use.

- Use the policy appendices to help assess the requirements for PPE. If there is no policy appendix seek guidance from your Line Manager
- Ensure that protective clothing fits properly and adjust PPE so that it is comfortable when working. Make sure that the PPE is functioning correctly: if not, report the defect
- When using two (or more) types of PPE together ensure that the items are compatible and that combined use does not reduce their effectiveness

- Report symptoms of discomfort or ill health immediately
- Inform line management of any training needs

For further advice and guidance on the selection, issue, training and storage of PPE contact the Health and Safety Team.

SUPPLY AND USE OF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Appendix 1

Head Protection

Head protection must be worn when there is a foreseeable risk of injury to the head from falling objects.

Examples of the types of activities that would require the use of head protection include:

- a) Building work, particularly work on, underneath or in the vicinity of scaffolding and elevated work places, erection and stripping of formwork, assembly and installation work, erection of scaffolding and demolition work
- b) Work in pits, trenches, shafts and tunnels
- c) Work with bolt driving tools
- d) Work near hoists, lifting plant, cranes and conveyors
- e) Tree felling and tree surgery
- f) Work near suspended access systems, bosuns chairs etc.
- g) Site visits – building/demolition
- h) Working on and around scaffolding

NB The above is not an exhaustive list

The main current standard for industrial head protection is: **BS EN 397**

Other and/or specialist equipment however may be to a different standard.

If uncertain about the appropriate standard seek advice from the Health & Safety Team.

Head protection must be issued on a personal basis and suitable instructions given in its use.

Head protection should have; an adjustable headband, an absorbent easily cleanable or replaceable sweat band, textile cradle straps and, where appropriate, a chinstrap.

Whenever possible the head protection should not hinder the work being done i.e. some jobs may require a hard hat that does not have a peak.

Head protection must be maintained in good condition and be suitably stored when not in use.

Head protection must be replaced if it is damaged, has been weakened by exposure to chemicals or sunlight, and at intervals specified by the manufacturer.

Employees must ensure that they have suitable head protection with them before commencing work that requires, or is likely to require, its use.

SUPPLY AND USE OF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Appendix 2

Eye Protection

Eye protection must be worn when there is a foreseeable risk of injury to the eyes, and includes both persons directly involved in the work and also others not directly involved but who may come into contact with the process and be at risk from the hazards.

Examples of the types of activities that would require the use of eye protection include:

- a) Handling or coming into contact with acids, alkalis and corrosive or irritant substances
- b) Working with power driven tools where chippings are likely to fly or abrasive materials be propelled
- c) Working with hand tools where chippings are likely to fly or abrasive materials is propelled
- d) Working in an environment where there is a foreseeable risk of penetrating eye injury e.g. thorny undergrowth
- e) Working in the vicinity of other work activities that pose a risk of eye injury
- f) Working in an environment involving harsh /bright lighting

NB The above is not an exhaustive list

The main current standard for eye protection is: **BS EN 166**

Other and/or specialist equipment however may be to a different standard.

If uncertain about the appropriate standard seek advice from the Health & Safety Team.

Eye protection must be issued on a personal basis and suitable instruction given in its use.

Eye protection must be kept clean and stored in a suitable location when not in use.

Lenses that are badly scratched or pitted must be replaced as they may impair vision and their resistance to impact may be reduced.

Employees must ensure that they have suitable eye protection with them before commencing work that requires, or is likely to require, its use.

Suitable eye protection will be provided that goes over an individual's prescription glasses. There may, however, be a very limited number of occasions when this might not be appropriate and it is necessary to supply prescription safety glasses.

SUPPLY AND USE OF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Appendix 3

High Visibility Clothing

High Visibility Clothing must be used by anyone who has a need to work on or near the highway or needs to be identifiable for health & safety reasons.

Working on or near to some classes of highway requires a higher standard of protection.

Examples of the types of activities requiring the use of high visibility clothing include:

- a) Undertaking road and paving repairs
- b) Roadside vehicle inspections
- c) Licensing enforcement
- d) Surveying and inspection

NB The above is not an exhaustive list

The main current standards for High Visibility Clothing are: **EN 471 Class 2 or Class 3**

Other and/or specialist equipment however may be to a different standard.

If uncertain about the appropriate standard seek advice from the Health & Safety Team.

Protection will be afforded by the use of either a high visibility coat or waistcoat.

High visibility clothing must be kept clean and stored in a suitable location when not in use.

Damaged high visibility clothing must be replaced.

Employees must ensure that they have suitable high visibility clothing with them before commencing work that requires, or is likely to require, its use.

SUPPLY AND USE OF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Appendix 4

Foot Protection

Protective footwear must be worn where there is a foreseeable risk of injury from objects falling onto the foot, or penetration from objects to the sole of the foot.

Examples of the types of activities requiring the use of foot protection include:

- a) All manual work will require footwear with toecap protection
- b) Some construction work will require footwear that not only provides toecap protection but mid sole protection as well
- c) Supplementary work activities that pose a foreseeable risk of injury to the feet
- d) Staff that have occasion to work in areas, or undertake work, where there is a foreseeable risk of injury to the feet

NB The above is not an exhaustive list

The main current standards for protective footwear are:

EN 345 - Safety Footwear (toecap tested to 200 joules)

EN 346 - Safety Footwear (toecap tested to 100 joules)

Other and/or specialist equipment however may be to a different standard.

If uncertain about the appropriate standard seek advice from the Health & Safety Team.

Protective footwear must be issued on a personal basis. Damaged protective footwear must be replaced.

Wellingtons, when used, must also conform to appropriate protective standards.

Some activities may require the issuing of specific types of protective footwear e.g. electrical work, use of chainsaws.

Safety footwear must be maintained in good condition, checked regularly and discarded if badly worn or damaged. Laces should be checked and replaced if necessary. Materials lodged in the tread should be removed. The stitching should be checked for loose, worn or cut seams.

Employees must ensure that they have suitable foot protection with them before commencing work that requires, or is likely to require, its use. As part of the risk assessment process, Line Managers/Supervisors will determine when employees, that are required to use safety footwear, should start wearing them e.g. at the start of the working day or when on site etc.

SUPPLY AND USE OF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Appendix 5

Hand Protection

Hand protection must be used where there is a foreseeable risk of injury to the hands from hazards such as; cuts and abrasions, extremes of temperature, skin irritation and dermatitis, and contact with toxic or corrosive substances.

Examples of the types of activities requiring the use of hand protection include:

- a) Manual Handling: Hands may be pierced by abrasive, sharp or pointed objects or damaged by impact when handling goods. However, gloves should not be worn when working near moving equipment and machinery parts, as the glove may get caught in the equipment and draw the hand and arm of the employee into the moving machinery.
- b) Vibration: Gloves are essential to keep hands warm in cold weather when operating machines that cause vibration such as pneumatic drills and chain saws. Vibration white finger occurs more frequently, and more severely, when the hands and fingers are cold, as the blood supply is reduced by the body in an attempt to conserve heat.
- c) Construction and Outdoor Work: Gloves protect against unseen hazards, sharp objects and the daily handling of rough and abrasive materials. Keeping hands warm and supple in cold weather is important when working on a site handling scaffolding, bricks and timber. Manual dexterity is lost when the hands are cold which can then lead to accidents.
- d) Hot and Cold Materials: Gloves will also protect against hazards from handling hot or cold materials and work involving contact with naked flames or welding.
- e) Use of Dry Materials: Gloves will protect against the risk of dermatitis when handling or working with dry materials. Examples include mixing cement and plaster.
- f) Chemical: There are many tasks where the hands may come into contact with harmful, toxic or corrosive substances. Examples include maintenance of machinery, use of cleaning materials, use of repair or maintenance substances, cleaning up chemical spillages and mixing and dispensing pesticide formulations.

NB The above is not an exhaustive list

The main current standards for hand protection are:

Mechanical Hazards

BSEN 388

Chemical Hazards

BSEN 374

Thermal Hazards (Hot)

BSEN 511

Thermal Hazards (Cold) BSEN 407

Other and/or specialist equipment however may be to a different standard.

If uncertain about the appropriate standard seek advice from the Health & Safety Team.

Correctly selected and used, gloves provide a barrier between the wearers' skin and the harmful substance or work activity helping to prevent local damage. The type and degree of protection depends on the glove material and the way in which it is constructed.

Emollients (barrier creams) can also be used as an aid to skin protection/hygiene, both in addition to the use of gloves and in situations where gloves cannot be used. Experience shows however that barrier creams are less reliable than suitable gloves as a means of protection.

Hand protection must be maintained in good condition and be suitably stored when not in use.

Gloves should be changed on a periodic basis and must be replaced if damaged.

Employees must ensure that they have suitable hand protection with them before commencing work that requires, or is likely to require, its use.

SUPPLY AND USE OF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Appendix 6

Hearing Protection

Hearing protection must be worn where there is a foreseeable risk of injury from exposure to loud noise either from work being directly undertaken, or by being in the vicinity of noisy work activities.

Examples of the types of activities requiring the use of hearing protection include:

- a) Joinery workshop
- b) Use of machinery in respect of Highways working, e.g. pneumatic drills, vibration levelling equipment
- c) Use of machinery in respect of Construction working, e.g. large drills, hilti guns etc
- d) Use of machinery in respect of Grounds Maintenance working, e.g. chainsaws, chippers, grass cutters, strimmers etc
- e) Use of machinery in respect of Cleansing work, e.g. hand held mechanical sweepers and ride on mechanical sweepers etc
- f) Driving tractors and machinery plant workshops
- g) Activities where the daily noise exposure level has been assessed as being at or above the relevant action levels, as defined in the Noise at Work Regulations 2005
- h) Other staff working in the vicinity of someone using or carrying out any of the above

NB The above list is not exhaustive

There are two types of hearing protection that can be used:

- a) Ear Defenders, which offer protection by fitting over the ear
- b) Ear Plugs, which offer protection by fitting into the ear canal

Ear defenders and earplugs will only be effective if they are properly fitted. If in doubt ask your Line Manager or Supervisor.

Whatever version is used must offer protection against the levels of noise that the wearer may encounter.

The main current standards for hearing protectors are:

EN 352 - 1 Ear Defenders

EN 352 - 2 Ear Plugs

Other and/or specialist equipment however may be to a different standard.

Hearing protection must be issued on a personal basis and suitable instruction given in its use.

Hearing protection must be kept clean and stored in a suitable location when not in use.

Damaged hearing protection must be replaced.

Unless specifically designed to be reusable, earplugs must be discarded after use.

Employees must ensure that they have suitable hearing protection with them before commencing work that requires, or is likely to require, its use.

SUPPLY AND USE OF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Appendix 7

Covert / Overt Body Armour (Stab Vest)

A number of Services have identified that staff who have a requirement to work out of normal hours, or who carry out various enforcement tasks, may be at an increased risk of being involved in an aggressive incident.

It is the responsibility of the Service concerned to put in place measures to reduce that risk, and one way of achieving this may be in the use of a stab vest.

Stab vests must be considered as a last resort and should only be issued to a member of staff following a risk assessment.

Addendum to Harlow Council Health and Safety Policy – Supply and Use of Personal Protective Equipment

The following is general guidance in respect of the use of a stab vest:

- Stab vests must be purchased from a supplier licensed to manufacture and supply such items
- They must be fitted for the use of individual members of staff
- As with all items of personal protective equipment stab vests are issued on a personal basis. They should not be shared between members of staff
- The normal range of work situations requiring the use of a stab vest must be agreed between the individual member of staff and their Line Manager
- The stab vest must be used on all occasions that fall within the agreed range of work situations
- It is the responsibility of individual members of staff to ensure the stab vest is kept in a safe place ready for use
- Any damage must be reported to your Line Manager ASAP
- Any incidents that result in the stab vest being used to protect a member of staff must be reported to your Manager and the Environmental Health/Health & Safety Team ASAP

Reference;

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/634517/Home_Office_Body_Armour_Standard.pdf

The impact of the Covid 19 pandemic has resulted in many staff working from home. However, if staff have been attending work environments, or inspecting premises, there are Covid 19 Risk Assessments accessible on the Kaonet to guide work activities.

The risk assessments detail preventative measures and actions to take in relation to personal safety. Use of face masks/shields, gloves and sanitiser are all available within work spaces.

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Revision History

Revision date	Previous revision date	Summary of Changes	Changes marked
July 2006	None	Original Draft document	
23/04/2008	July 2006	Updates from Draft. Inserted Revision History. Logo changed	No
3/9/2008	23/4/2008	General tidying up	
1/2014	9/2008	Reviewed and update HOSDB KR1, KR2, KR3 body armour updates	No
April 2020		Revised and updated	No
November 2021		Inclusion of Covid PPE	No
June 2023	November 2021	Inclusion of Overt body armour – removal of information reference reports, replaced by updated link	No