

Personal Protective Equipment Policy

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Scope.....	2
Policy Statement	2
Reason for the Policy	2
Definitions.....	2
Policy Sections.....	3
Background	3
PPE Hazard Assessment and Selection	3
Training Requirements.....	4
Medical Surveillance Requirements	5
Care and Use of PPE	5
Compliance	6
Roles and Responsibilities.....	6
Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) Responsibilities:	6
Principal Investigator (PI), Manager, Supervisor and Instructor Responsibilities:	6
Faculty, Staff, Student, Affiliate and Visitor Responsibilities:.....	7
Related Resources.....	7
Supplementary Guidance.....	7
References	8

Scope

This Policy applies to all faculty, staff, students, affiliates and visitors where PPE is required based on their job duties, other activities, potential exposures or work environment. This Policy does not preclude the addition of more stringent PPE requirements for specific activities or work environments.

Policy Statement

Yale University (University) is committed to providing a safe and healthy place of employment, education, and research. During University activities, individuals may encounter potentially hazardous materials, conditions, or processes. Whenever feasible, identified hazards should be eliminated or replaced with less hazardous materials or processes (substitution). Additionally, if engineering and administrative controls (such as work practices) are insufficient to fully protect an individual from a hazard, personal protective equipment (PPE) may be necessary. When engineering and administrative controls (e.g., work practices) are not sufficient to fully protect an individual from a hazard, personal protective equipment (PPE) may be required. The University will provide and make readily available all required PPE.¹ The safety requirements of some work environments also limit personal attire.

Reason for the Policy

The purpose of this Policy is to set forth requirements, consistent with federal and state regulations and University policies, for the use of PPE during University activities. In addition to the requirements of this Policy, there are situations where PPE is addressed by other University safety policies, procedures and programs (see Supplementary Guidance and References, below).

Definitions

Administrative Control: An administrative (work practice) control is a change in the way an activity is conducted, or a procedure is performed that reduces the likelihood of exposure to a hazardous material, condition or process. Examples include written safety policies, procedures, rules, schedules and training which reduce the duration, frequency and severity of exposure to a hazardous material, condition or process.

Engineering Control: An engineering control is the redesign, replacement or application of

¹ Exception: An undergraduate student enrolled in a laboratory course is required to purchase their laboratory coat. Unless it becomes contaminated, they are responsible for the care and maintenance of the laboratory coat by following the manufacturer's instructions.

equipment to an activity or work environment to reduce or eliminate exposure to a hazardous material, condition or process.

Medical Surveillance: Medical surveillance is the evaluation of an individual's health in the work environment in relation to his or her potential exposures to hazardous materials, conditions, or processes. Medical surveillance also includes an evaluation of the individual's ability to wear the required PPE.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): PPE is equipment worn to minimize exposure to a hazardous material, condition or process. Examples of PPE include lab coats, hardhats, safety shoes, gloves, safety glasses, goggles, hearing protectors, respirators, fall and electrical protection devices, and other such devices meant to protect an individual from exposure to a hazardous material, condition or process.

PPE Hazard Assessment: A PPE hazard assessment is the evaluation of the personal protective equipment requirements for a specific activity or work environment, so that the individual is protected from exposure to a hazardous material, condition, or process.

Policy Sections

Background

The federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration ([OSHA](#)) has established a specific set of PPE standards in Parts 1910 ([General Industry](#)) and 1926 ([Construction](#)) of Title 29 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR). These standards address PPE selection, inspection, donning, and maintenance. Additional standards that address PPE include the National Electrical Code (e.g., [NFPA 70E](#)), the CDC/NIH [Biosafety in Microbiological and Biomedical Laboratories](#), standards of the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health, and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's [Standards for Protection Against Radiation](#) (10 CFR 20). The University requires all faculty, staff, students, affiliates and visitors to adhere to these standards.

PPE Hazard Assessment and Selection

OSHA requires the University to identify and evaluate potentially hazardous materials, conditions and processes that may require control measures, including the use of PPE. If an exposure to a hazardous material, condition, or process exists that cannot be avoided or eliminated through administrative or engineering controls, the PI, manager, supervisor, or instructor must select, provide and make available proper PPE to the exposed individuals. PPE purchased for use on campus must comply with the applicable American National Standards Institute ([ANSI](#)) standards for the specific type of personal protective equipment or the procedure associated with its use.

The documents and tables listed as Supplementary Guidance and References describe the hazards addressed by each type of PPE, as well as the PPE requirements for common activities. This table gives examples of different types of PPE and the hazards for which they offer protection:

Body Part	Example of PPE	Examples of Hazard
Feet	Safety shoes	Crushing injury Puncture injury Slip injury Electric shock
Eyes	Safety glasses Goggles Welding helmet or face shield	Human blood Biological pathogens Particles Lacrimating vapors Chemical splash UV light from welding Light exposure from lasers
Face	Face shield	Impact from flying particulates (e.g., wood chips) Splash of blood, biological pathogen, or chemical to the eyes or mucous membranes
Ears	Ear plugs or muffs	Loud noise from equipment or other noise sources
Head	Hard hat	Contact from falling object
Body (torso)	Lab coat Chemical resistant apron Leather apron	Chemical splash Blood or biological pathogen splash on broken skin Burn from molten metal work
Hands	Gloves (chemical-resistant/ cut resistant/insulated)	Contact with chemicals Cuts from sharps Contact with hot or cold objects Animal bites or scratches Electric shock
Respiratory system	Respirator	Particles (e.g., aerosolized or suspended pathogenic viruses, bacteria, fungi, nanomaterials, silica), vapors, gases, fumes or allergens

Training Requirements

Individuals required to wear PPE must participate in training before performing any activities requiring PPE use. The training must include information on the following:

- **When/Why PPE is necessary:** Understanding the specific hazards and situations where PPE is required.
- **How to properly use PPE:** This includes donning, doffing, adjusting, and wearing PPE correctly.
- **Limitations of PPE:** Recognizing the boundaries of PPE and when it cannot provide adequate protection.

- **Proper care, maintenance, and disposal:** Ensuring PPE is maintained properly, its lifespan is understood, and it's disposed of correctly when no longer usable.

An individual's specific training requirements are based on their activities, work environment, potential exposures to hazardous materials, conditions, or processes. This training is provided via several methods, including instructor-led sessions, computer-based training courses, written programs, or by local supervisors.

In many cases, an individual's PPE training requirements are assigned via Workday Learning. Depending on the job and location of an individual, PPE training may be provided as a separate standalone session or it may be included in another required EHS training, such as Hazard Communication, Laboratory Safety, Biosafety, Bloodborne Pathogens, Noise & Hearing Conservation, and/or Respiratory Protection.

Medical Surveillance Requirements

Prior to wearing certain types of PPE (e.g.; respiratory protection), medical surveillance may be required. This may involve a health assessment to ensure that the individual can safely use the PPE without adverse effects. The medical surveillance program is managed by the Occupational Health Department. Further information can be found on the [Yale Health website](#).

Care and Use of PPE

Individuals who use PPE must properly fit, inspect, use, clean, maintain, and store their PPE. EHS can aid with all of these steps.

Fitting: PPE is available in different sizes (or is adjustable) to accommodate different individuals and uses. Users must choose or adjust their PPE so that it is appropriately sized to provide maximum protection, and to facilitate their ability to safely perform the activity.

Inspection: Users must inspect PPE before and after each use, following the manufacturer's instructions. Any PPE that is damaged, worn out, defective or otherwise no longer provides effective protection must be removed from service for repair or replacement.

Use: Users must use appropriate PPE whenever required. Any PPE found to be worn out, defective, cut or otherwise damaged must be immediately replaced. Immediately discontinue using contaminated PPE. Contaminated uniforms and lab coats must be decontaminated prior to laundering. If contaminated, other re-usable PPE must be decontaminated prior to reuse. Disposable PPE must never be reused.

Maintenance and Storage: Users must keep their PPE clean and properly maintained. Cleaning is particularly important for eye and face protection because dirty or fogged lenses can impair vision. After each use, reusable PPE must be cleaned and maintained according to the

manufacturers' instructions. Generally, reusable PPE can be cleaned with mild soap/detergent and water after use, and air dried. PPE should be stored in a cabinet, locker, or other location away from sources of potential contamination or sharp/heavy objects that could deform or otherwise cause damage.

Compliance

When indicated by the work environment, a PPE hazard assessment or other procedure, consistent use of appropriate PPE is required. In many cases, wearing a uniform or specified personal attire is also required. No activity may be conducted if the required personal attire is not worn, or the required PPE is not available and used. Failure to comply with these requirements can be grounds for disciplinary action, as can failure to enforce PPE and personal attire requirements. PIs, managers, and supervisors can contact their HR Generalist, Chair, Business Partner or Office of Post-Doctoral Affairs, as appropriate, for help in addressing noncompliance. EHS has the authority to take necessary actions to enforce compliance with this Policy and to address unsafe conditions, including stopping an activity or shutting down a laboratory or other facility if necessary.

Roles and Responsibilities

Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) Responsibilities:

- Develop and update PPE policies, procedures and guidance;
- Provide general safety training;
- Require adherence to this Policy;
- Identify activities, work environments and potential exposures where a PPE hazard assessment is required;
- Review and approve requirements and completed PPE hazard assessments as needed or upon request;
- Address PPE exception requests; and
- Provide guidance on the selection and use of PPE and training as necessary.

Principal Investigator (PI), Manager, Supervisor, and Instructor Responsibilities:

PIs, managers, supervisors, and instructors are primarily responsible for the safety of the faculty, staff, students, affiliates, and visitors who perform activities under their direction. These responsibilities include:

- Perform, document and certify PPE hazard assessments for their staff, students, affiliates and visitors when they first enter a work environment, begin an activity or are potentially exposed to a hazardous material, condition or process;
- Review and update these assessments when a new hazardous material, condition or

process is introduced into the work environment or if there is a change to a process or the location where a process is conducted;²

- Ensure that staff, students, affiliates and visitors are aware of hazardous materials, conditions or processes in their work environment and
- Ensure that staff, students, affiliates and visitors receive applicable PPE information and training prior to exposure to those hazards;
- Ensure that staff, students, affiliates, and visitors' complete applicable medical requirements prior to entering the lab or using PPE.
- Provide additional safety training specific to their activities and work environment;
- Supply required PPE at no cost to affected staff and students;¹
- Communicate, monitor and enforce minimum PPE standards, as well as the use of PPE specified by the PPE hazard assessment, work environment or activity performed; and
- Notify EHS of materials, conditions or processes that may require individuals to wear additional or different types of PPE.

Faculty, Staff, Student, Affiliate and Visitor Responsibilities:

- Follow the administrative controls (e.g., safety procedures) outlined in this and other documents;
- Participate in safety and PPE training sessions;
- Work with your PI, manager, supervisor or instructor to determine if changes to PPE are required;
- Wear specified personal attire, as required;
- Care for and use PPE as required; and
- Notify your PI, manager, supervisor, or instructor of any contaminated, worn out, defective, cut or otherwise damaged PPE.
- Complete any applicable medical requirements prior to entering the lab or using PPE.

Related Resources

Supplementary Guidance

Personal Protective Equipment Assessment Tables/Tools for:

[Hospitality](#)

[Facilities](#)

² For laboratories, this assessment is done by completing the laboratory PPE hazard assessment tool, accessible via <http://ehs.yale.edu/ppe>. EHS can provide PPE hazard assessment forms and tools for other work environments.



[Laboratories](#)

[Clinical Areas](#)

[Tool and Machine Shops](#)

[Yale Animal Resource Center](#)

References

[Gradations of Risk Table for Biosafety Levels](#)

[Noise and Hearing Conservation Program](#)

[Respiratory Protection Program](#)

[Fall Protection Program](#)

[Electrical Protection Program](#)

[Chemical Hygiene Plan](#)

[Biosafety Manual](#)

[*Biosafety in Microbiological and Biomedical Laboratories*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) and the National Institute of Health \(NIH\)](#)