



Personal Protective Equipment Procedure

1. Purpose

The WA Country Health Service (WACHS) is committed to providing and maintaining a safe work environment. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is the lowest level of protection in the Hierarchy of Controls. Risks must be assessed and reduced through the application of higher level controls where possible. Where these risks cannot be completely eliminated, workers are required to adhere to this Policy as directed.

This policy is to inform all staff, students, volunteers, contractors and visitors who work or visit WACHS sites of the PPE requirements they need to adhere to when entering WACHS work areas or performing their duties. This document supports the WACHS [Environmental Cleaning Policy](#), WACHS [Managing Risks of Hazardous Chemicals and Dangerous Goods Procedure](#), WACHS [Working at Heights Procedure](#) and MP 0172/22 [Respiratory Personal Protective Equipment Policy](#)

2. Procedure

This procedure defines the minimum requirements for all WACHS sites with regard to the selection, use, care, maintenance and storage of equipment and clothing designed to provide protection to the wearer. Each work area is to assess the need for PPE, which must be provided and used where an actual or potential risk exposure has been identified. It applies to all workers, contractors and visitors as indicated above.

PPE used across WACHS sites is to comply with the appropriate AS/NZ Standards.

2.1 General Requirements

PPE is any protective device or clothing worn by a worker designed to reduce or control the level of risk when exposed to:

- dangerous goods, hazardous chemicals, toxic substances, infectious substances
- dust, fumes or particles
- radiation - ultraviolet and/or other
- noise
- moving objects e.g. vehicles, trolleys and forklifts
- flying objects when using machinery with moving parts
- environmental factors e.g. temperature, animals, weather events
- working at heights

2.2 PPE Use in Clinical Settings

For specific information regarding PPE use in clinical settings refer to the following mandatory policy, associated guideline and embedded resources:

- MP 0172/22 [Respiratory Personal Protective Equipment Policy](#)
- DoH [Respiratory Protection Guidelines for Western Australian Healthcare Facilities](#)

Staff member training in the correct use of PPE, including identification of the correct PPE to be used, the correct donning and doffing sequence and a practical assessment is to be undertaken as soon as practicable following commencement of employment and can be accessed via [MyLearning](#) - Correct Use of Personal Protective Equipment Declaration (PPE EL1) 2025.

A local risk assessment is undertaken to identify staff members who will require the use of respiratory protection i.e. particulate filter respirator (PFR) when providing care to patients under droplet or airborne precautions including when an aerosol generating procedure is performed or when a patient exhibits an aerosol generating behaviour.

A quantitative fit test is to be performed on all staff members who are required to wear a PFR. The quantitative fit test is to be performed as soon as possible on commencement of employment or transition to a role where a PFR is required and at least once every two years, and include assessment of correct PFR application and fit check procedure.

2.3 PPE for Working at Heights

For specific information regarding PPE use when working at heights refer WACHS [Working at Heights Procedure](#).

2.4 Signage

Signs indicating mandatory PPE requirements are to be displayed in all areas throughout WACHS sites which require PPE to be worn. It is the responsibility of all persons to observe and comply with the appropriate PPE requirements in the area.

It is the responsibility of department managers to ensure appropriate PPE signage is displayed as required in their area and is maintained in a good, clean and legible condition.

2.5 Maintenance

All PPE is to be cared for and maintained in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions including:

- ensuring good cleaning practices
- following correct decontamination processes when hazardous/infectious substances may be present
- correct storage to ensure PPE remains hygienic, clean and protected until it is required for use
- ensuring ripped or frayed clothing is disposed of and replaced as soon as practicable.
- regular inspections as per Standards requirements to ensure that the protection intended is provided. This inspection program is to include a schedule, elements to be inspected and decisions and actions based on the inspection results. Ensuring any repair and/or alteration is done in accordance with the specifications by the manufacturer
- ensuring PPE that is no longer fit for purpose or is single-use only does not re-enter service and is disposed of taking into consideration environmental factors and the health and safety of anyone coming into contact with the (potentially contaminated) clothing/equipment.

2.6 Selection and Use

Selection

Risk assessments must be completed for all tasks. When selecting PPE the following is to be considered:

- assessment of risks including
 - task risk level
 - frequency of exposure to risk
 - workstation characteristics
- defining the level of protection required for the task
- trialling the compatibility and practicality of the PPE prior to commencing
- assessing PPE information such as recommendations from manufacturers regarding replacement requirements, quality assurance, inspection, and maintenance requirements
- procurement and supply availability.

Use

Use requirements will vary depending on the task risk assessment. Instructions for PPE use will be supplied by the PPE manufacturer. Worker inductions are to include training on correct PPE use, storage, maintenance and replacement.

2.7 Types of PPE

Head Protection

Head protection includes safety helmets, sun hats, and wet weather hats. Safety helmets should be worn where a person may be struck on the head with a falling object or may strike their head on a fixed object. Helmet accessories such as neck flaps, earmuffs, or helmet linings may be considered and approved by Managers only if the accessory/attachment does not reduce the safety characteristics of the head protection or adversely affect the balance and comfort of the helmet.

Hair

All persons in high risk areas or working around rotating equipment are to ensure that hair longer than shoulder length is concealed or tied back above the top of the shoulder line to prevent entanglement and infection control risk.

Eye Protection

Eye protection is to be worn for tasks where there is potential for eye damage or injuries to occur. The following are to be considered regarding protective eyewear in the workplace:

- nature of the risk to eyes e.g. radiation, dust, abrasive particles, biological hazards, chemical hazards.
- visual requirements of the task.
- personal preference/comfort of the wearer e.g. weight, ventilation and unrestricted vision.

There are many types of eye wear that can be considered e.g. goggles, face shield, glasses, and welding helmets. Please refer to specific policies, standards (Eye protection -

AS/NZS 1337 and AS/NZS 1338.), job hazard analysis/safe work method statements and managers with any queries regarding the type of eye wear that should be chosen. It should be noted that prescription spectacles are not adequate forms of eye protection PPE.

Hearing Protection

Any person who is exposed to a noise level of 85dB over an eight-hour shift must wear hearing protection. Guidance is available in AS/NZS1269 Occupational Noise Management, and AS/NZS 1270 Acoustics - hearing protectors. Some of the commonly used devices include disposable ear plugs and earmuffs.

There are varying types of hearing protection devices that may accommodate acceptability of the wearer, compatibility with other PPE, weight and requirement for the device to attenuate noise to a level not greater than 85dB.

Respiratory Protection

WACHS is to ensure that no person in the workplace is exposed to atmospheric contaminant at concentrations in excess of the exposure standards or the unbreathable atmosphere as outlined in Regulation 58 of the Work Health and Safety Regulations 2023. Where it is not possible to remove contaminants, WACHS is to provide suitable respiratory PPE in accordance with Section 6 of AS/NZS 1715. Guidance is available in AS/NZS 1715 Selection, Use and Maintenance of Respiratory Protective Devices and AS/NZS 1716 Respiratory Protective Devices.

All workers must receive education, in accordance with the manufacturers' advice, in relation to donning a PFR and the procedure to perform a fit check for each specific mask worn.

All workers who are required to wear a PFR in the course of their job must have been fit tested and have access to that specific type of mask.

Refer to MP 0172/22 [Respiratory Personal Protective Equipment Policy](#) for further information.

Hand Protection

There is a vast range of hand protection available to protect from various hand injuries depending on the hazard e.g. chemical, burn, laceration etc. To ensure the correct type of protection is used, refer to Job Hazards Analysis sheets or Safe Work Method Statements, WACHS [Environmental Cleaning Policy](#) and the Australian Standards. Selection and use will depend on the type of hazard that exists e.g. chemical, biological, and thermal. Some people may develop an allergic reaction to latex gloves. If this occurs reduced protein and powder free gloves can be provided by WACHS. Workers are to ensure hands are washed thoroughly after PPE use.

Foot Protection

Protective footwear must provide both adequate protection from injury and comfortable support to the feet. Footwear PPE is varied and classified by the types of duties performed. All risks associated with the role are to be assessed according to the task, environment and nature of the work to determine the specific requirements. Footwear falls

under the guidelines provided by the AS/NZ Standard 2210.1 Occupational protective footwear.

Skin Protection

Workers who are required to work outdoors and/or work with toxic and/or volatile chemicals are to consider the environment they are exposed to during their work shift and hazards that could potentially cause harm. Information pertaining to selection of skin protection PPE can be found below:

- AS/NZS 2604 and AS/NZS 1067 - Sunscreen
- AS/NZS ISO 2801 and AS/NZS 4501.1 - Clothing for protection against heat and flame
- AS/NZS 3765 - Clothing to protect skin against toxic or volatile chemicals

Other

This may include PPE for specific tasks such as working with chemicals, radiation, cytotoxic materials, welding, painting e.g. lead aprons for X-Ray protection, sleeve protectors, aprons, coveralls when using chemicals, or leather jackets or cold protective clothing for work near furnaces or cool rooms. Task risk assessments will determine the type of PPE that is required. For further advice please seek guidance from specific policies, line managers or regional Work Health and Safety (WHS) departments.

2.8 Storage

PPE is to be stored in readily accessible locations where it can't be damaged, deteriorate or be used by another person if it is unhygienic to do so. Storage methods and locations are also to conform to manufacturers' storage guidelines.

2.9 Disposal

Single use PPE items such as gloves, aprons and masks are to be disposed of after each procedure or activity to prevent cross transmission or micro-organisms. The prompt removal of PPE between tasks is to be done before leaving the area. PPE is not to replace other infection control practices such as hand hygiene.

2.10 Purchasing

It is the responsibility of WACHS to provide PPE to their workers. The brand and type of PPE to be used is to be determined by WACHS in accordance to procurement arrangements, however in consultation with line managers there may be times where workers purchase PPE that is different or more expensive than what has been offered by WACHS (e.g. the PPE offered by WACHS legitimately does not fit or suit the worker). All PPE purchased by workers needs to meet the minimum requirements specified in WACHS policy and Australian standards.

2.11 Training and Supervision

Before commencing work, staff who are likely to be exposed to a hazardous health or safety risk are to receive information, instruction and training on:

- risks in the workplace
- use and location of PPE including:
 - PPE to be used

- storage, care, maintenance and disposal of PPE procedures to be followed
- reporting procedures on hazards/risks that have been identified and raised.

2.12 Records

Training records that demonstrate PPE instruction are to be maintained by the Manager.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Supervisors and Managers are responsible for:

- ensuring that PPE is used, stored and maintained, in accordance with applicable requirements
- ensuring that all reasonably practicable engineering solutions are implemented within their areas in relation to plant and systems of work to minimise the necessity for PPE
- ensuring PPE is made available for use by all staff, contractors and visitors
- ordering required PPE identified by safety data sheets (SDS) or risk assessments
- ensuring their staff and contractors comply with PPE requirements
- identifying all high-risk work areas that require staff, contractors and visitors to wear PPE and provide appropriate signage
- notifying staff and providing appropriate time allocation to complete PPE training
- keeping records of the information and training provided.

The **Regional WHS Coordinator** is responsible for providing advice:

- to managers and supervisors on PPE requirements in the workplace
 - on risk assessments and the requirement of PPE use for hazardous tasks
- and consulting with managers and staff on how to remediate hazards and risks that have been identified and raised via WACHS SRRF reporting.

Workers are responsible for:

- taking reasonable care for their own health and safety and not adversely affecting the health and safety of other persons
- ensuring relevant PPE is accessible or obtained before commencing individual tasks
- inspecting PPE prior to use and informing their supervisor if PPE is damaged, defective, or expired and replace accordingly
- complying with any reasonable instruction and cooperating with any policy or procedure relating to the use, handling and storage of PPE in the workplace
- wearing the required PPE at all times when required and as instructed
- ensuring they attend and complete relevant PPE training when instructed
- reporting all hazards, incidents, injuries, dangerous occurrences and system failures in a timely manner which occur or have the potential to occur using the WACHS [Safety Risk Report Form](#) (SRRF)
- using all safety equipment provided by WACHS that is relevant to the task.

Contractors are responsible for:

- taking reasonable care for their own health and safety and not adversely affecting the health and safety of other persons
- inspecting PPE prior to use and informing their site contact if PPE is damaged, defective, or expired
- complying with any reasonable instruction and cooperating with any policy or procedure relating to the use, handling and storage of PPE in the workplace
- wearing the required PPE at all times when required and as instructed

- reporting all hazards, incidents, injuries, dangerous occurrences and system failures in a timely manner which occur or have the potential to occur to their site contact
- using all safety equipment provided by WACHS that is relevant to the task.

All staff are required to comply with the directions in WACHS policies and procedures as per their roles and responsibilities. Guidelines are the recommended course of action for WACHS and staff are expected to use this information to guide practice. If staff are unsure which policies procedures and guidelines apply to their role or scope of practice, and/or are unsure of the application of directions they should consult their manager in the first instance.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation

In accordance with the [Work Health and Safety Policy](#), WACHS is committed to continual improvement through monitoring and evaluation strategies.

Implementation of this procedure will be monitored through key WHS measures including:

- internal audits or examinations to determine:
 - that PPE is readily accessible and visible to staff, contractors and visitors
 - areas where mandatory use of PPE is required are signposted accordingly
 - individual characteristics or conditions of workers are taken into account when requiring use of PPE (e.g. non latex gloves supplied to staff who have allergies to latex)
 - safe work procedures include required PPE for task and any relevant information relating to PPE inspection, use, cleaning, maintenance, storage and disposal
 - documentation relating to inspection, use, cleaning, maintenance and disposal of PPE is retained for requisite time periods
- reviews of induction and training programs to ensure inclusion of PPE information regarding inspection, use, cleaning, maintenance, storage and disposal requirements
- monitoring the use and effectiveness of PPE
- monitoring incident reports (WACHS SRRF) and workers' compensation claim data.

5. References

DoH: [Respiratory Protection Guidelines for Western Australian Healthcare Facilities](#)

[Work Health and Safety \(General\) Regulations 2022](#)

6. Definitions

Term	Definition
Personal Protective Equipment	Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) means all equipment which is intended to be worn or held by a person to protect them from risk to health and safety while at work.
Hazard	A hazard is a situation or item that has the potential to harm people, property or the environment. For hazardous chemicals and dangerous goods, this covers physicochemical, health and environmental hazards.
Risk	The likelihood and consequence of an injury or harm occurring.
Incident	An event that during the course of undertaking work related duties resulted in or could have resulted in injury or disease. This includes near miss incidents.
Care	To keep in good working order, includes processes for cleaning, decontamination and storage.
Maintenance	To preserve from loss or deterioration, include processes for inspection, repair and removal from service.

7. Document Summary

Coverage	WACHS wide
Audience	All staff
Records Management	Non Clinical: Records Management Policy Clinical: Health Record Management Policy
Related Legislation	Work Health and Safety Act 2020 (WA) Work Health and Safety (General) Regulations 2022 (WA)
Related Mandatory Policies/Frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MP 0124/19 Code of Conduct • MP 0172/22 Respiratory Personal Protective Equipment Policy • Employment Framework • Public Health Framework • Work Health and Safety Framework
Related WACHS Policy Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation Clinical Practice Standard • Environmental Cleaning Policy • Managing Risks of Hazardous Chemicals and Dangerous Goods Procedure • Work Health and Safety Policy
Other Related Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DoH Respiratory Protection Guidelines for Western Australian Healthcare Facilities • WorkSafe Managing Hazardous Chemicals Procedure
Related Forms	WACHS Safety Risk Report Form
Related Training Packages	Available from MyLearning : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct Use of Personal Protective Equipment Declaration (PPE EL1) 2025
Aboriginal Health Impact Statement Declaration (ISD)	ISD Record ID: TBA
National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards	1.06, 1.10, 3.15
Aged Care Quality Standards	Nil
Chief Psychiatrist's Standards for Clinical Care	Nil
Other Standards	Below standards available via the WACHS Library : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AS/NZS 2161 Occupational protective gloves • AS/NZS 2210.1 Occupational protective footwear • AS/NZS 1715 Selection, use and maintenance of respiratory protective devices • AS/NZS 1716 Respiratory protective devices • AS/NZS 2604 and AS 1067 - Sunscreen • AS/NZS ISO 2801 and AS/NZS 4501.1 - Clothing for protection against heat and flame

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• AS/NZS 3765 - Clothing to protect skin against toxic or volatile chemicals• AS/NZS 1337 and AS/NZS 1338 - Eye protection• AS/NZS 1801 - Safety Helmet• AS/MNZS 1269 – Personal Hearing Protectors
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8. Document Control

Version	Published date	Current from	Summary of changes
2.00	13 June 2025	13 June 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> change to title – removed (PPE) inclusion of Working from Heights link update of WHS references to align with current legislation inclusion of Department of Health Respiratory Personal Protective Equipment aligning with current overarching practices

9. Approval

Policy Owner	Executive Director People and Culture
Co-approver	Nil
Contact	Manager Work Health Safety and Wellbeing
Business Unit	Work Health and Safety
EDRMS #	ED-CO-17-18844
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