
TITLE: PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

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APPLICABILITY: All sites and facilities

RELATED POLICIES: 5-1-1-010: Occupational Health and Safety Program
5-1-2-2-020: Footwear
5-1-2-2-030: Respiratory Protection
5-1-2-1-060: Fall Protection
5-1-2-2-040: Gowns – The Appropriate Use of Gowns for Infection Prevention
1-11-1-3-070: Routine Practices
1-11-1-3-010: Droplet Precautions
1-11-1-3-020: Contact / Contact Plus Precautions
1-11-1-3-030: Airborne Precautions

DEFINITIONS: See [Definitions](#) at end of document

DOCUMENT QUICK LINKS

- Doffing Procedure for Personal Protective Equipment (10-414-6148)
- Non-Sterile Exam Glove Selection Guide
- Personal Protective Equipment: Housekeeping Services
- Personal Protective Equipment: Food Services
- Personal Protective Equipment: Laundry Services

KEY POINTS

- Personal protective equipment (PPE) is equipment or clothing worn to minimize exposure to physical, biological, and chemical hazards in the workplace.
- PPE is used to prevent the transmission of infectious agents (biological hazards) both from client/patient to worker and between workers.
- PPE does not remove or reduce workplace hazards and should be used in conjunction with other control measures in the hierarchy of controls to reduce the risk of illness or injury.

POLICY

Northern Health (NH) will provide a safe workplace by eliminating or reducing the risk of exposure to workplace hazards through the use of the hierarchy of controls.

NH will provide appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to reduce the risk of illness or injury from workplace hazards and ensure workers are adequately trained in the safe use of the equipment. Workers must only use PPE provided by NH.

All PPE will be selected and used in accordance with recognized standards, manufacturer instructions, and hazard specific NH occupational safety programs (e.g., hazardous drugs, chemical exposure control).

PPE must be sourced through established supply chains to ensure compliance with standards.

PPE must not create a hazard to the wearer and must be compatible with other clothing or equipment so that one item of PPE does not make another item ineffective.

All PPE will be maintained in good working order and in sanitary condition. Defective or damaged PPE will not be used.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Managers will:

- Determine requirements for PPE through a workplace hazard identification and risk assessment, done in consultation with the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee or worker health and safety representative.
- Ensure workers are instructed in the correct use, limitations, and maintenance of PPE to be used.
- Conduct an annual review of the personal protective equipment program including:
 - a) Assessment of control measures to ensure continued effectiveness and the need for further control.
 - b) Ensure the adequacy of education and training.

Supervisors will:

- Ensure that PPE is available to all workers.
- Ensure workers are using PPE in accordance with safe work procedures.
- Ensure PPE is properly cleaned, inspected, maintained and stored.

Workers will:

- Use PPE according to safe work procedures.
- Clean, maintain and store PPE in accordance with training and instruction.
- Inspect equipment before use.
- Report any damaged or defective PPE to their supervisor.

REFERENCES

WorkSafeBC. Part 8 Personal Protective Clothing & Equipment, 8.1 - 8.10.
Retrieved on June 24, 2019 from
<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/law-policy/occupational-health-safety/searchable-ohs-regulation/ohs-regulation/part-08-personal-protective-clothing-and-equipment#SectionNumber:8.1>.

KEYWORDS

PPE, hazard control, control measures

DEFINITIONS

Control Measures: Methods to eliminate or reduce risk from identified hazards to the lowest level practicable through the hierarchy of controls.

Hazard: A thing or condition that may expose a person to occupational injury or illness.

Hierarchy of controls: A process of considering hazard control with consideration given first to the most effective and dependable control methods. The most effective control is to eliminate the hazard. Where elimination is not possible, substituting a less hazardous method or material is considered. Isolation of the hazard is then considered. Next engineering controls are considered, followed by administrative controls to change the way work is organized. Personal protective equipment is the least dependable method of control.

Worker: Refers to all NH employees (contract and non-contract), physicians, volunteers, students, and/or contractors.

Workplace: Any place where a worker is or is likely to be engaged in any work and includes any vessel, vehicle or mobile equipment used by a worker in work.

REVISION HISTORY			
Initial Effective Date:	October 31, 2007		
Approved By:	VP, Human Resources		
Author Title:	Workplace Health and Safety		
Revision History:	Effective Date:	Description of Changes:	Reviewed or Revised by:
	January 12, 2021	Removed outdated hazard flowcharts; revised to be inclusive of all types of hazards (physical, biological, and chemical); clarified need to use NH supplied PPE.	VP, HR; Workplace Health and Safety
	October 31, 2007	Issued	Director, Workplace Health and Safety
Contact policiesstandards@northernhealth.ca if further information is required.			
Acknowledgements (optional):			