

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) — Who Pays?



Employers must pay for all personal protective equipment (PPE) required by Oregon OSHA standards.

Covering the cost of workers' PPE

Employers must provide PPE items to their employees at no cost if a rule or law requires PPE on the job.

For example, heavy coats worn in cold storage are considered PPE, and employers must pay for them.

Likewise, if the employee needs prescription lenses in a full-face respirator that is required on the job, the employer must pay.

Methods for providing PPE

Employers may devise their own means of providing PPE. Options include issuing vouchers or purchase orders; keeping stock on hand and issuing the equipment; or providing a cash allowance or credit at a retailer. These methods are allowed as long as the employee does not have to pay for PPE that the employer is responsible for supplying. This applies to the initial issue of PPE as well as replacement PPE. Employers must ensure that any PPE the employee selects provides the required protection and is kept in good condition.

If other Oregon OSHA standards specify payment requirements for PPE, that standard will prevail.

PPE items that employers *do not* have to pay for include:

- Everyday clothing, such as long-sleeve shirts, pants, street shoes, and normal work boots worn off the job site
- Shoes or boots with built-in metatarsal protection, if the employer provides metatarsal guards
- Items used solely for protection from weather, such as winter coats, raincoats, ordinary sunglasses, and sunscreen
- PPE that is upgraded or personalized beyond what the employer provides
- Voluntary PPE, such as dust masks or respirators not required by an Oregon OSHA standard, according to the voluntary use rules in the respiratory protection standard
- Any PPE that the employee loses or intentionally damages; PPE is considered lost if the employee shows up for work without it. Employers may address these situations with work rules and disciplinary policies.

Temporary employees

If an employer hires workers from an employment agency, temporary staffing firm, or employee leasing company, and directs and controls worker activities, that employer is responsible for providing and paying

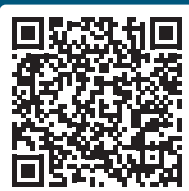


for workers' PPE. Oregon OSHA recognizes that the best way to ensure proper PPE and its intended use is to have the employer — defined as an entity with direction and control over workers and their work — provide the PPE. Agreements between the temporary or leasing agency and the employer are allowed as long as PPE is provided at no cost to the worker.

There is a special application for multi-employer construction worksites like those often found on construction sites. Normally, a host-employer or general contractor does not have to provide or pay for PPE for subcontractors' employees.

More job-specific PPE information

- [General industry](#)
- [Construction](#)
- [Agriculture](#)
- [Forest activities](#)



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Workers

Your employer cannot retaliate against you for reporting a workplace health or safety concern or violation. For more information on your rights, visit the Oregon OSHA website.

The Technical Section of Oregon OSHA produced this fact sheet to highlight health and safety programs and rules. The information is intended to supplement the rules and provide best practices to employers.