PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

Introduction

The Council acknowledges that health and safety hazards will have identified if Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) needs to be used and will ensure, through the proper use of this equipment, that any risks are reduced to a minimum.

Whilst it is generally recognised that the use of PPE can be undertaken without undue risks to health, it is appreciated that some employees may have genuine reservations and concerns. The Council will seek to give information and training to enable a fuller understanding of these issues.

All service area managers will provide (PPE) when the risk presented by a work activity cannot be adequately controlled by other means. All reasonable steps will be taken by the service area managers to secure the health and safety of employees who work with PPE.

The implementation of this arrangement requires the total co-operation of all members of management and staff. There will be full consultation with employee representative through existing channels of communication.

Arrangements for securing the health and safety of employees

Managers will, in consultation with employees and their representatives:

- carry out an assessment of proposed PPE to determine whether it is suitable to control exposure
- take measures necessary to remedy any risks found as a result of the assessment
- ensure that where two (or more) items of PPE are used simultaneously, these are compatible and are as effective used together as they are separately
- arrange for adequate accommodation for correct storage of the PPE
- implement steps for the storage, maintenance, cleaning and repair of the PPE
- train staff in the safe use of PPE for all risks within the organisation
- replace PPE, which has been provided to meet a statutory obligation, as necessary and at no cost to the employee
- inform every employee of the risks which exist
- review assessments as necessary if substances used or work processes change.

Procedures for dealing with health and safety issues

Where an employee raises a matter related to health and safety and the use of PPE, the service area will:

- take all necessary steps to investigate the circumstances
- take corrective measures where appropriate
- advise the employee of action taken

Where a problem arises in the use of PPE the employee must:
- inform a responsible person immediately (their manager).
- in the case of an adverse health condition advise Occupational Health Service and their own general practitioner.

Information and training
Managers will give sufficient information, instruction and training to ensure the health and safety of workers using PPE, which includes temporary staff, persons gaining work experience with the service area and contractors, as well as those in direct employment. Managers and supervisors who are responsible for users of PPE will also receive appropriate training.

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 manufacturer's and employer's instructions on its correct use. The following information will be given to employees and procedures will be strictly adhered to:
- 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 and seek a replacement.
- When using two (or more) type of PPE together, ensure that items are compatible when used together and that combined use does not reduce their effectiveness.
- Report symptoms of discomfort or ill health immediately.
- Inform management of any training needs.

PPE is only effective in protecting the wearer or user where the following steps are taken:
- only use PPE in accordance with the employer's and manufacturer's instructions.
- only use for the activities for which they are designed to provide protection.
- only use PPE if fully trained in its use.
- store, clean, repair and maintain PPE correctly, replacing any items which have been damaged and are no longer serviceable.

Record keeping

Records should be kept of the following:
1. The results of the PPE assessment
2. Actions taken as a result of PPE assessment
3. Inventory of PPE and to whom each item has been issued.
4. The provision of training.
5. Information given to employees.

6. Complaints or alleged reports of discomfort, or non-suitability of the PPE discovered following field tests or surveys.
7. Action taken in respect of such complaints.
8. Manufacturers' advice with regard to compatibility of various items of PPE which are used together.
9. Replacement of PPE with dates.
10. Maintenance and testing of PPE.

Brexit and PPE

Main changes:

From 1 January 2021
the UKCA marking will come into force and will start to appear on products.

From 1 January 2021 CE marking will continue to be recognised in the UK until the end of 2021.

Therefore, in most cases you will be able to continue to purchase and use PPE bearing the CE marking in the UK until that date.

From 1 January 2022
Only product bearing the UKCA marking will be acceptable in Great Britain. CE marking will not be recognised in Great Britain. However, a product bearing the CE marking would still be valid for sale in the UK so long as it was also UKCA marked and complied with the relevant UK rules

Further Information and Reference

- HSE www.hse.gov.uk
- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992 (as amended)
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) at Work INDG174(rev2) - A brief guide
- Personal Protective Equipment at Work L25 http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/l25.pdf
- Personal Protective Equipment Directive 89/686/EEC-covers the process for CE marking Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Other useful references:

Office for Product Safety and Standards
Regulation 2016/425 and the Personal Protective Equipment (Enforcement) Regulations 2018 As they apply to equipment being supplied in or into Great Britain from 1 January 2021 Guidance November 2020

Office for Product Safety & Standards
Regulation EU 2016/425 and the Personal Protective Equipment (Enforcement) Regulations 2018 As they apply to equipment being sold in or into Northern Ireland, Guidance November 2020

Office for Product Safety and Standards and Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy Guidance
Designated Standards

Office for Product Safety and Standards and Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy Guidance
Designated standards: PPE Notices of publication and a consolidated list for designated standards for personal protective equipment (PPE).

Office for Product Safety and Standards Guidelines on the appointment of UK Conformity Assessment Bodies. Requirements for conformity assessment bodies certifying for the GB and NI market from 1 January 2021 Guidance: January 2021

Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
Guidance: Using the UKCA mark from 1 January 2021

European Commission
Notice to Stakeholders withdrawal of the United Kingdom and EU Rules in the Field of Industrial Products

Reviewed December 2021 by Occupational Health and Safety Team.

Appendix:

Further information on Brexit and PPE

PPE and the withdrawal of the UK from the European Union:

The withdrawal of the UK from the European Union has meant the introduction of new legislation. Currently, this mirrors EU legislation and there is one set of amended PPE Regulations. However, some of the provisions will apply differently in Great Britain (GB) and in Northern Ireland (NI).

EU Regulation 2016/425 on personal protective equipment has been applicable in the UK since its entry into force on 21st April 2018.

The Personal Protective Equipment (Enforcement) Regulations 2018 implemented the 2016 Regulation into UK law and provides a system for the enforcement of this Regulation.

The EU Withdrawal Act 2018 preserves these Regulations and enables them to be amended so that they continue to function effectively now that the UK has left the EU.

The Product Safety and Metrology etc. (Amendment etc.) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 have been introduced to fix any deficiencies that arose from the UK leaving the EU (such as references to EU institutions) and make specific provision for the GB market.

Therefore, there is one set of Amended PPE Regulations

However, some of the provisions apply differently in Great Britain (GB) and in Northern Ireland (NI) (for as long as the Northern Ireland Protocol is in force).

Designated standards

From 1st January 2021 EN standards that manufacturers of PPE currently work to, will become “UK Designated Standards”. The technical requirements and the conformity assessment processes and standards that are followed to demonstrate conformity will be largely the same as they are now, however they may diverge in the future.

European (EN) Standards

EN standards are developed by a recognised European Standards Organisation. Manufacturers, other economic operators, or conformity assessment bodies use standards to demonstrate that products, services, or processes conform with the applicable EU regulations.

From 1st January 2021 EN standards that manufacturers currently work to, will become “UK Designated Standards”.

UK Designated Standards

A designated standard is a standard, developed by consensus, which may be recognised by government in part or in full by publishing the reference on GOV.UK. Depending on the product, it can be a standard published by specific recognised standardisation bodies including:

- British Standards Institution (BSI)
- European Committee for Standardisation (CEN)
- European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardisation

- (Cenelec)
- European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI)

Designated standards will be prefixed “BS”, “BS EN”, “BS ISO” “BS EN ISO” “EN ISO” or “EN IEC”.

Northern Ireland
European standards will remain the relevant standards for placing goods on the Northern Ireland market where EU rules will continue to apply.

UK conformity assessment bodies:
From 1 January 2021 most UK-based notified bodies will become UK conformity assessment bodies

A conformity assessment body Is registered to assess products for the GB market against essential health and safety requirements. They carry out the procedures for conformity assessment and certification as set out in the 2016 Regulation. The UK has established a new framework for UK based bodies to assess PPE against GB rules.

Existing UK notified bodies have been granted new UK conformity assessment body’ status and listed on a new UK database. They do not need to seek re-accreditation and retain their 4-digit identification body number.

New UK conformity assessment bodies will be assigned a number by the Office for Product Safety and Standards on behalf of the Secretary of State.

Transitional arrangements:
Transitional arrangements have been put in place to allow products that are fully manufactured and placed on the market before 1st January 2021 and existing CE marked stock to circulate on the GB market.

Products placed on the market before 1 January 2021
If an individual, fully manufactured product has been placed on the UK market (either in Northern Ireland or Great Britain) before 1 January 2021, it can continue to circulate until it reaches its end user and does not need to comply with the changes that take effect from 1 January 2021.
‘Placed on the market’ means that there is an ‘offer of an agreement’ to transfer ownership or possession or other rights in the product and does not require physical transfer of the goods.

Existing CE marked PPE stock
CE marked PPE can be placed on the GB market until 31st December 2021 if it has been either self-declared as compliant (where permissible), or compliance has been demonstrated through assessment by an EU-recognised conformity assessment body (notified body). PPE lawfully placed on the market with a CE marking by 31st December 2021 can continue to circulate on the GB market after this date.

The introduction of UK Conformity Assessed (UKCA) marking:
The UK Conformity Assessed (UKCA) marking is a new marking that will be placed on products as a means of showing conformance with the relevant UK legislation.
The UKCA mark will become Great Britain’s equivalent of the CE mark.

The UKCA marking covers most goods which previously required the CE marking, this includes Personal Protection Equipment (PPE). This means that category II and III PPE for sale in Great Britain will need a UKCA certificate from a UK Conformity Assessment Body. (Or a CE mark during the transitional period).

NB: Separate rules apply to medical devices – Occupational Health will be able to advise.

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From 1 January 2022
Only product bearing the UKCA marking will be acceptable in Great Britain. CE marking will not be recognised in Great Britain. However, a product bearing the CE marking would still be valid for sale in the UK so long as it was also UKCA marked and complied with the relevant UK rules.

Exceptions:

1. Changes in EU Rules
The CE marking will only be valid in Great Britain for areas where GB and EU standards remain the same. If the EU changes its standards and a product is CE marked on the basis of those new standards you should not purchase it in Great Britain, even if you are purchasing it before the deadline of 31 December 2021.

2. A product has been manufactured post January 2021 and conformity assessment has NOT been transferred to an EU notified body.
It is important to note that CE markings based on EU type examination certificates issued by a Notified Body based in the UK become invalid as of the 1 January 2021. After this date a product will need to bear UKCA marking if conformity assessment has been carried out by a UK conformity assessment body and the manufacturer hasn't transferred their conformity assessment files from the UK body to an EU notified body before 1 January 2021. During the transition period, the manufacturer can affix the UKCA mark to the packaging instead of the product.