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OSHA Issues New Enforcement Guidance on Personal Protective Equipment

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) on Tuesday issued the Enforcement Guidance for Personal Protective Equipment in General Industry, a directive that provides enforcement personnel with instructions for determining whether employers have complied with OSHA personal protective equipment (PPE) standards. The directive was effective Feb. 10.

OSHA issued a final rule on Employer Payment for Personal Protective Equipment in November 2007 that required employers to provide most types of required PPE at no cost to the worker. The agency also issued a final rule in September 2009 updating its PPE standards to be more consistent with current consensus standards.

The new Inspection Guidelines replace those issued in June 1995. Changes in this directive include clarifying what type of PPE employers must provide at no cost to workers and when employers are required and not required to pay for PPE. The directive also provides guidance that allows employers to use PPE that complies with current consensus standards and updates PPE enforcement policies based on court and review commission decisions.

These personal protective equipment standards require employers to provide - at no cost to workers - protective equipment, such as goggles and face shields that fit properly without restricting vision; earplugs and earmuffs when they will reduce noise to acceptable levels and are less costly than administrative and engineering controls; and respirators to protect workers from exposure to air contaminants. Additionally, the directive lists PPE and other items exempted from the employer payment requirements and includes questions and answers useful in clarifying PPE payment concerns.

Visit OSHA's [Safety and Health Topics page](#) on Personal Protective Equipment for more information.

Download the new [Enforcement Guidance](#)



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