PPE Selection & Documentation Guide

"Helping our Lowcountry community build safer workplaces — one regulation at a time."

A Practical Resource for Lowcountry Employers & Safety Professionals

Serving Charleston, Beaufort, Hilton Head Island, Bluffton, and Communities Throughout the Lowcountry

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At Lowcountry Safety & Compliance Group, we believe every worker deserves to go home safe. This guide was created to help you — our neighbors and partners across the Lowcountry — select the right personal protective equipment for your workplace, meet OSHA documentation requirements, and build a culture where safety comes first.

OSHA Reference:

This guide is based on OSHA Standards 29 CFR 1910.132–138 (General Industry) and 29 CFR 1926.95–106 (Construction). It is intended as a practical reference tool and does not constitute legal advice. Always consult current OSHA regulations and a qualified safety professional for compliance determinations.

SECTION 1

What Is PPE and Why Does It Matter?

Personal Protective Equipment — or PPE — refers to any clothing, device, or equipment worn by a worker to minimize exposure to hazards that can cause injury or illness on the job. Hard hats, safety glasses, gloves, respirators, high-visibility vests, and steel-toed boots are all examples of PPE you likely see every day on job sites and in facilities across the Lowcountry.

But here's what every employer and supervisor needs to understand from the start: **PPE is the last line of defense, not the first.** OSHA and safety best practices place PPE at the bottom of what's called the *Hierarchy of Hazard Controls* — a structured approach to reducing or eliminating workplace hazards. The goal is always to work your way down the hierarchy, only relying on PPE when other controls above it are not reasonably practicable.

Think of the hierarchy like this: if you can eliminate the hazard entirely, you'll never need PPE to guard against it. But in the real world — on construction sites in Bluffton, in manufacturing facilities in Charleston, on docks in Beaufort — complete elimination isn't always possible. That's where PPE becomes essential. And when it is the chosen or necessary control, it must be selected correctly, fit properly, and used consistently.

The Hierarchy of Hazard Controls

Control Level	Priority	Description & Examples
Elimination	1 — Highest	Physically remove the hazard from the workplace entirely. Example: Discontinue use of a hazardous chemical; remove a tripping hazard from a walkway.
Substitution	2	Replace the hazard with something less dangerous. Example: Swap a toxic solvent for a water-based alternative; use a lower-voltage electrical system.
Engineering Controls	3	Isolate workers from the hazard using physical means. Example: Machine guarding, local exhaust ventilation, noise barriers, interlocked safety switches.
Administrative Controls	4	Change the way people work to reduce exposure. Example: Job rotation to limit noise exposure, hazardous task scheduling, written safe work procedures, warning signs.
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	5 — Last Resort	Protect the worker's body from the hazard. Example: Hard hats, gloves, respirators, safety glasses, hearing protection, fall harnesses. PPE does not eliminate hazards — it only reduces exposure.

> ⚠ **Important Reminder for Employers**
>
> PPE is often the easiest control to implement — but it is also the one most likely to fail. It depends entirely on the employee wearing it correctly, every single time. Use PPE in conjunction with engineering and administrative controls whenever possible for the strongest protection.

SECTION 2

Step-by-Step Workplace Hazard Assessment

> OSHA Requirement:
>
> 29 CFR 1910.132(d) — Employers MUST conduct and certify a written hazard assessment before requiring employees to use PPE. This is not optional.

Before a single piece of PPE is purchased or handed out, OSHA requires you to take a systematic look at your workplace and identify the hazards that are actually present — or likely to be present. This assessment must be documented in writing and signed by a qualified person. Here's how to do it, step by step.

1 Walk the Workplace

Survey each work area, task, and process in your facility or on your job site. Don't just look at obvious danger zones — walk every area where employees work, travel, or store materials. Look for sources of **motion** (vehicles, machinery, moving parts), **heat** (ovens, welding, steam), **chemicals** (storage, handling, disposal), **light radiation** (welding arcs, UV sources), **sharp objects**, and **falling or rolling objects**. Take notes. Photographs are helpful. Bring a supervisor who knows the work well.

2 Identify the Hazards

Categorize the hazards you observed by type. OSHA recognizes the following hazard categories for PPE assessment purposes:

- **Impact** — falling objects, projectiles, struck-by risks
- **Penetration** — sharp objects that can pierce the skin or foot
- **Compression** — rolling or pinching forces (roll-over, caught-between)
- **Chemical** — skin/eye contact with hazardous substances
- **Heat / Flame** — burns, fire exposure, hot surfaces

- **Harmful Dust** — respirable particulates, silica, wood dust, fibers
- **Light Radiation** — welding arcs, lasers, UV exposure
- **Biological** — bloodborne pathogens, mold, animal waste

3 Match Hazards to PPE

For each hazard identified, determine which category of PPE provides appropriate protection. Use Section 3 of this guide as your reference. Remember: some tasks will require multiple types of PPE worn simultaneously — for example, grinding metal may require eye protection, a face shield, hearing protection, and gloves all at once.

4 Select Properly Fitting PPE

PPE must fit each affected employee. One size does not fit all — and poorly fitted PPE offers dramatically reduced protection. Conduct fittings individually. For female employees and workers with smaller or larger frames, ensure appropriately sized options are available. A hard hat that falls over someone's eyes, or gloves that are too loose to grip, can create hazards of their own.

5 Certify the Assessment in Writing

OSHA requires a written certification that includes: (1) the workplace evaluated, (2) the name of the person who performed the assessment, (3) the date, and (4) a statement certifying the assessment was performed. Use Form 1 in Section 7 of this guide. This document must be retained and available for inspection.

6 Communicate and Train

Share your PPE selection decisions with all affected employees. OSHA requires that workers are trained before using PPE — not after. Training must cover when PPE is necessary, what type to use, how to put it on and take it off correctly, limitations of the PPE, and how to care for and maintain it. See Section 6 for full training requirements.

7 Review and Update

A hazard assessment is not a one-time event. You must reassess whenever: a new hazard is introduced, a new process or piece of equipment begins operation, a workplace incident occurs, or employee feedback suggests a gap in protection. Best practice is to conduct a formal review at least annually.

SECTION 3

PPE Categories & Selection Guide

The following reference guide covers the eight major categories of PPE used in general industry and construction. For each category, we've included common hazards addressed, types and options available, governing standards, and practical selection notes. Use this section alongside your completed hazard assessment to match the right protection to each task.

1 | HEAD PROTECTION — Hard Hats & Safety Helmets

Hazards Addressed: Falling objects, striking overhead structures (bumping), and electrical hazards.

Types & Options:

- **Class E (Electrical):** Protects against electrical hazards up to 20,000 volts. Required for most utility and electrical work.
- **Class G (General):** Protects against electrical hazards up to 2,200 volts. Standard for most construction and industrial use.
- **Class C (Conductive):** No electrical protection — typically used in environments where ventilation is prioritized and no electrical risk is present.
- **Type I:** Protects the top of the head only.

- **Type II:** Protects the top of the head AND lateral (side) impacts — preferred for most active construction environments.

Governing Standard: ANSI/ISEA Z89.1

Selection Notes: Inspect the shell and suspension before each use. Check the manufacturer's date stamped inside the shell — replace at manufacturer's recommended interval (typically 2–5 years for the shell, 1–2 years for the suspension). Do not paint, drill holes in, or apply adhesive stickers that could mask cracks. Replace immediately after any significant impact, even if no visible damage is apparent.

2 | EYE & FACE PROTECTION

Hazards Addressed: Flying particles and debris, molten metal splatter, liquid chemical splash, acids and caustic substances, vapors and gases, and radiant energy (welding, UV, lasers).

Types & Options:

- **Safety Glasses:** Basic impact protection. Must have side shields where there is a risk of flying objects from the side.
- **Goggles (Direct-Vent):** Protection against impact — not suitable for chemical splash or dust.
- **Goggles (Indirect-Vent):** Protects against chemical splash, dust, and mists in addition to impact. Required for chemical handling.
- **Face Shields:** Provides additional face and chin protection against splash, sprays, and impact — must always be worn over safety glasses or goggles.

- **Welding Helmets / Shields:** Auto-darkening or fixed-shade lenses protect against arc flash, UV, and infrared radiation.

Governing Standard: ANSI/ISEA Z87.1

> **⚠ Critical Rule:**
>
> Face shields ALONE do not protect eyes from impact. They must always be worn with safety glasses or goggles underneath. This is one of the most common PPE compliance errors found during inspections.

3 | HEARING PROTECTION

Hazards Addressed: Noise-Induced Hearing Loss (NIHL) — permanent, irreversible, and entirely preventable.

Types & Options:

- **Foam Earplugs (disposable):** Highest NRR available (up to ~33 dB). Must be properly rolled and inserted to achieve rated protection.
- **Pre-Molded Earplugs (reusable):** Consistent fit; easier to use correctly. Lower NRR than foam.
- **Earmuffs:** Cover the entire ear; excellent for environments with intermittent high noise. Easy to don/doff.
- **Canal Caps:** Semi-insert style; useful when workers move in and out of noisy areas frequently.

Governing Standard: 29 CFR 1910.95 (Occupational Noise Exposure); NRR (Noise Reduction Rating) per EPA labeling requirements.

Selection Notes: Hearing protection is required when employee noise exposure equals or exceeds an 8-hour time-weighted average (TWA) of 85 dB. When calculating real-world protection, derate the labeled NRR by 50% to account for typical real-world fit conditions. For very high-noise environments, consider using earplugs and earmuffs simultaneously.

4 | RESPIRATORY PROTECTION

Hazards Addressed: Nuisance dust, respirable silica, welding fumes, chemical vapors and gases, mists, biological aerosols, and oxygen-deficient atmospheres.

Types & Options:

- **Disposable Filtering Facepieces (N95, N99, N100):** Air-purifying; filter particulates only. N95 = 95% filtration efficiency.
- **Half-Face Respirators:** Reusable; accept cartridges for particulates, vapors, gases, or combination hazards.
- **Full-Face Respirators:** Reusable; provide eye and face protection in addition to respiratory protection.
- **Powered Air-Purifying Respirators (PAPR):** Battery-powered blower forces air through filters; provides higher protection factors.
- **Supplied-Air / SCBA:** Required for IDLH (Immediately Dangerous to Life or Health) atmospheres and oxygen-deficient environments.

Governing Standard: 29 CFR 1910.134; NIOSH-approved devices required.

⚠ Program Required Before Use:

Respiratory protection requires a formal written program, individual medical evaluation (by a licensed healthcare professional), annual fit testing, and documented training — ALL before the employee wears a respirator. Voluntary use of certain respirators also carries specific requirements. Do not issue respirators without these elements in place.

5 | HAND PROTECTION — Gloves

Hazards Addressed: Cuts and lacerations, abrasions, punctures, thermal burns, chemical absorption, vibration, extreme cold and heat.

Types & Options:

- **Leather / General Mechanic Gloves:** Abrasion, puncture, and general material handling. Not chemical-resistant.
- **Cut-Resistant Gloves (ANSI A1–A9):** Protect against sharp edges; ratings indicate cut resistance level.
- **Nitrile Gloves:** Chemical-resistant against many oils, solvents, and fuels. Good puncture resistance.
- **Neoprene Gloves:** Broad-spectrum chemical resistance; protects against many acids, bases, and solvents.
- **Latex Gloves:** Excellent tactile sensitivity; biological fluids. Screen for latex allergies before issuing.
- **PVC Gloves:** Acids, alkalis, and aqueous solutions.
- **Insulated Electrical Gloves:** Class 00 through Class 4 — rated for specific voltage levels. Require leather protectors over rubber insulating gloves.
- **Heat/Cold-Resistant Gloves:** Oven mitts, cryogenic gloves — match to specific temperature range.

Governing Standard: ANSI/ISEA 105 (Cut, Puncture, Chemical Resistance); EN 388 (European standard, also widely referenced).

Selection Notes: No single glove material protects against all chemicals. Always consult the manufacturer's chemical resistance chart for the specific chemical you are handling. Gloves degrade over time and with use — inspect regularly and replace when discolored, stiff, cracked, or punctured.

6 | FOOT & LEG PROTECTION

Hazards Addressed: Falling and rolling objects, punctures through the sole, electrical hazards, slips and falls on wet surfaces, chemical contact, extreme temperatures.

Types & Options:

- **Steel-Toe Boots / Shoes:** Protects toes from compression and impact (falling objects).
- **Composite-Toe:** Non-metallic toe protection; preferred where metal detectors or cold-weather use is a factor.
- **Metatarsal Guards:** External or internal guards protect the top of the foot/metatarsal bones from crushing hazards.
- **Electrical Hazard (EH) Rated Footwear:** Provides secondary protection against open electrical circuits up to 600 volts under dry conditions.
- **Chemical-Resistant Boots:** Neoprene, PVC, or rubber construction for chemical/liquid exposure.
- **Slip-Resistant Soles:** Required in environments with wet, oily, or otherwise slippery surfaces.
- **Puncture-Resistant Midsole:** Protects against nails and sharp objects penetrating through the sole.

Governing Standard: ASTM F2413 (Standard Specification for Performance Requirements for Protective Footwear).

Selection Notes: EH-rated footwear is NOT a substitute for insulating rubber footwear in high-voltage environments. Employees working near live electrical parts above 600 volts must use appropriate rubber insulating boots. Look for the ASTM F2413 marking stamped inside the shoe to verify compliance.

7 | HIGH-VISIBILITY & BODY PROTECTION

Hazards Addressed: Struck-by from vehicles and moving equipment, cuts and lacerations, heat and flame exposure, chemical splash, electrical arc flash.

Types & Options:

- **Class 1 Hi-Vis:** Minimum visibility; for environments with traffic speeds below 25 mph and separation from traffic.
- **Class 2 Hi-Vis:** For work near roadways with traffic up to 50 mph; minimum required for most roadway construction work.
- **Class 3 Hi-Vis:** Maximum visibility; for workers on or near active roadways at highway speeds, or in poor visibility conditions. Includes sleeves and torso coverage.
- **Coveralls / Tyvek Suits:** Splash protection from chemicals or biological materials.
- **Aprons:** Front protection from chemical splash or heat.
- **Arc Flash PPE (Clothing & Face Shield):** Arc-rated garments rated by cal/cm² (calories per square centimeter) — must match or exceed the incident energy level of the arc flash hazard.

Governing Standards: ANSI/ISEA 107 (High-Visibility Safety Apparel); NFPA 70E (Arc Flash); ASTM F1506 (Arc-Rated Garments).

Selection Notes: Workers near roadway traffic or moving equipment should wear a minimum of Class 2 hi-vis. For arc flash, an arc flash hazard analysis must be performed to determine the required arc rating (cal/cm²) before PPE is selected. Never use standard cotton or synthetic clothing near electrical arc hazards — they can melt to the skin.

8 | FALL PROTECTION

Hazards Addressed: Falls from elevation. OSHA triggers: 4 feet (general industry), 6 feet (construction), or at any height over dangerous equipment or machinery.

Types & Options:

- **Full-Body Harnesses:** Required for personal fall arrest systems. Distribute fall forces across shoulders, chest, and thighs.
- **Shock-Absorbing Lanyards:** Connect harness to anchor point; expand during fall to reduce peak forces on the body.
- **Self-Retracting Lifelines (SRL):** Automatically take up slack and lock immediately upon fall detection. Allow greater mobility than traditional lanyards.
- **Anchor Points:** Must be capable of supporting at least 5,000 lbs. per attached worker (or designed with appropriate safety factor by a qualified person).
- **Safety Nets:** Collective fall protection below the work area; require specific installation per OSHA specs.
- **Positioning Lanyards:** For positioning only — not for fall arrest. Must be used with a fall arrest system.

Governing Standard: 29 CFR 1910.140 (General Industry); 29 CFR 1926.502 (Construction).

⚠ Critical Rule:

Full-body harnesses are REQUIRED for fall arrest. Body belts are prohibited as a fall arrest device (they can cause internal injury during a fall). After ANY fall event — even if no injury occurred — the harness and lanyard must be removed from service immediately and inspected or replaced before being returned to use.

SECTION 4

Documentation Requirements

OSHA doesn't just require you to use PPE — it requires you to document it. During an OSHA inspection, an inspector may ask to see your hazard assessment certification, your training records, and your PPE program documentation. If you can't produce them, you can face citations even if your employees are wearing every piece of PPE correctly. Here's what you need to maintain.

4.1 Certification of Hazard Assessment

> Required by:
>
> 29 CFR 1910.132(d)(2)

This is the written certification that your hazard assessment was performed. It is a mandatory OSHA requirement — not optional. The certification must include all four of the following elements:

Required Element	Description
Workplace Evaluated	The specific work area, department, job site, or operation that was assessed. Be specific — a separate certification may be needed for each distinct work area.
Date of Assessment	The actual date the hazard walk-through and assessment was completed.
Name of Person Certifying	The individual who conducted the assessment and is certifying its completion. This should be someone qualified to identify workplace hazards.
Certification Statement	A written statement that the assessment has been performed in accordance with 29 CFR 1910.132(d)(2). Use Form 1 in Section 7 of this guide.

4.2 PPE Training Certification

> Required by:

> 29 CFR 1910.132(f)(4)

OSHA requires written certification that each employee has been trained in the PPE applicable to their work. The training record must document the following:

- Employee name
- Date of training
- Subject of training — including: types of PPE used, when use is necessary, how to properly don, doff, adjust, and wear PPE, limitations of the PPE, and care and maintenance requirements
- Name and signature of the trainer

Use Form 3 in Section 7 of this guide to document PPE training. Retain these records for the duration of each employee's employment plus three years as a best practice (OSHA does not specify a retention period for all PPE records, but longer retention is always safer).

4.3 PPE Issuance Log

> Best Practice — Strongly Recommended

While OSHA does not specifically mandate a PPE issuance log, maintaining one is an essential best practice and provides valuable protection for your organization. An issuance log tracks:

- What PPE was issued to each employee (including item description and size)
- Date of issuance
- Employee acknowledgment signature confirming receipt and understanding of proper use
- Supervisor signature confirming issuance

If an employee later claims they were never given proper PPE, your signed issuance log is your documented evidence. Use Form 2 in Section 7.

4.4 Inspection & Replacement Records

> Best Practice — Required for certain PPE types (e.g., respirators, fall protection)

Certain categories of PPE — particularly respiratory protection equipment and fall arrest systems — have specific OSHA-mandated inspection requirements. For all PPE types, documenting routine inspections, equipment removed from service, and replacement dates demonstrates your due diligence and helps prevent equipment failures before they become injuries.

Track the following for each inspection event: PPE type and identifier, date of inspection, name of inspector, condition noted, action taken (returned to service / removed from service / replaced), and date of replacement if applicable.

A Note on Format and Recordkeeping

OSHA does not require a specific format for PPE records — but having them organized, complete, and immediately accessible is critical during an inspection. Lowcountry Safety & Compliance Group can help you build a documentation system that works for your specific operation — whether that's a binder system, digital files, or integrated safety management software. Contact us to learn more.

SECTION 5

PPE Inspection & Maintenance Quick Reference

Even the highest-quality PPE fails if it's not properly inspected and maintained. Post this table in your break room, safety office, or equipment storage area as a quick field reference for supervisors and employees.

PPE Type	Before Each Use	Periodic Inspection	Discard / Replace When	Cleaning Notes
Hard Hat	Check shell for cracks, dents, chalking. Check suspension for fraying or tears.	Monthly — inspect shell markings, check for UV degradation (chalky or dull finish).	After any significant impact; if shell is cracked, dented, or chalky; at manufacturer's service life limit.	Mild soap and warm water only. No solvents, paint, or adhesives on shell.
Safety Glasses / Goggles	Check lenses for scratches, pitting, or cracks. Check frame and strap integrity.	Quarterly — verify lens marking (Z87.1) is present.	When lenses are scratched (vision impaired), cracked, or pitted. When frame is bent or broken.	Rinse with water; wipe with lens cloth. Avoid abrasive wipes. Store in case when not in use.
Face Shield	Check shield for scratches, cracks, or chemical haze. Check headgear adjustment.	Quarterly — inspect mounting hardware and ratchet adjustment for wear.	When vision is impaired by scratches or haziness. When headgear is cracked or broken.	Rinse with water; wipe with soft cloth. Avoid abrasives. Do not store in direct sunlight.
Earplugs (Foam)	Check for dirt, deformation, or hardening.	N/A — disposable; single-use or per manufacturer guidance.	After each use if disposable. When stiff, dirty, cracked, or misshapen if reusable.	Disposable — do not wash and reuse. Reusable pre-molded plugs: mild soap, rinse, air dry.
Earmuffs	Check cushions for cracks, hardening, or gaps. Check headband tension. Check cups for cracks.	Monthly — check cushion seal integrity and headband spring tension.	When cushions are hardened, cracked, or no longer sealing. When headband loses adequate tension.	Wipe cushions with damp cloth. Replace cushions per manufacturer schedule or when degraded.
Respirator (Disposable)	Check for tears, deformation, damaged straps. Perform user	N/A — single-use disposable.	When breathing resistance increases, when soiled or wet, after each use (if	Do not wash disposable respirators. Discard per applicable regulations for contaminated PPE.

PPE Type	Before Each Use	Periodic Inspection	Discard / Replace When	Cleaning Notes
	seal check each time donned.		disposable), or per manufacturer guidance.	
Respirator (Reusable)	Check facepiece for cracks or distortion. Check straps and buckles. Check valves. Perform user seal check.	Per OSHA 1910.134 and manufacturer — document each inspection. Inspect cartridges for serviceability.	When facepiece is cracked or distorted. When straps are broken or inelastic. When valves are damaged. Replace cartridges per change-out schedule.	Wash with mild soap and warm water after each use. Rinse thoroughly. Air dry — do not store in direct sunlight. Store in sealed bag away from chemicals.
Gloves (Chemical)	Inflate and check for pin holes. Check for discoloration, stiffness, swelling, or chemical degradation.	Inspect after each use and before storage.	Any holes, tears, discoloration, stiffness, or chemical attack. When permeation breakthrough is suspected.	Rinse inside and out with clean water after chemical use. Air dry. Store away from heat, UV, and ozone sources.
Safety Footwear	Check for sole separation, torn uppers, missing laces, compromised toe cap.	Monthly — check sole wear, electrical hazard rating markings, and waterproofing (if applicable).	When sole is worn through, upper is torn, toe cap is compromised, or after significant crushing impact.	Clean per manufacturer instructions. Condition leather regularly. Keep dry. Replace laces as needed.
Hi-Vis Garments	Check for fading of fluorescent background, soiling of retroreflective tape, tears or missing tape.	Monthly — hold up to light to check tape reflectivity. Check ANSI class label.	When fluorescent background fades significantly or retroreflective tape loses reflectivity, tears, or peels.	Machine wash per label — use detergents without optical brighteners (can degrade fluorescent material). Air dry when possible.
Fall Arrest Harness / Lanyard	Inspect all webbing, stitching, D-rings, buckles, snaps, carabiners, and SRL housing. Check for cuts, burns, chemical damage, deformation.	Annual formal inspection by a competent person; document in writing. Log each use and any unusual events.	IMMEDIATELY after any fall event. When webbing is cut, burned, chemically damaged, or deformed. When hardware is distorted, corroded, or cracked.	Wipe with damp cloth and mild soap. Rinse and air dry. Do not use bleach, solvents, or abrasives. Store hanging or lying flat in a cool, dry location away from UV, heat, and chemicals.

SECTION 6

Employee PPE Training Requirements

> OSHA Requirement:
>
> 29 CFR 1910.132(f) — Employers must train each employee who is required to use PPE.
>
> Training must be completed before the employee uses the PPE.

Handing an employee a hard hat and a pair of safety glasses isn't enough. OSHA requires that each employee who must use PPE receives proper training — before they ever put it on. Training isn't just a compliance checkbox: it's what determines whether your PPE investment actually protects your people. A harness worn incorrectly won't save a life. A respirator that isn't properly fitted won't keep fumes out of someone's lungs.

What Training Must Cover

PPE training must address all of the following elements for each type of PPE the employee is required to use:

Training Topic	What Employees Need to Understand
When PPE is Necessary	Employees must know which tasks, locations, or conditions require them to wear PPE — not just that PPE exists. Define it clearly for each job role.
What Type of PPE is Necessary	For each hazard, employees must understand which specific type, class, or rating of PPE is required — and why alternatives may not be acceptable.
How to Properly Don (Put On) PPE	Demonstrate and practice correct donning sequence. A respirator that isn't seated correctly provides dramatically reduced protection. A harness with a twisted leg strap can cause serious injury in a fall.
How to Properly Doff (Remove) PPE	Especially important for chemical protective equipment, where improper removal can result in self-contamination. Teach the correct sequence and disposal procedures.
How to Adjust and Wear PPE Correctly	Adjust for individual fit. Safety glasses that slide down the nose don't protect eyes. Earplugs not fully inserted don't block noise.
Limitations of the PPE	Employees must understand what their PPE does NOT protect against. An N95 respirator does not protect against vapors or oxygen-deficiency. A Class E hard hat does not protect against arc flash.

Training Topic	What Employees Need to Understand
Care, Maintenance & Useful Life	Inspection before use, storage requirements, cleaning procedures, and when to discard and request replacement. Reference Section 5 of this guide.
Disposal Procedures	How to properly dispose of contaminated or expired PPE, particularly for chemical or biological hazard applications.

When Retraining Is Required

Initial training is not a one-time event. OSHA requires employers to retrain employees in the following circumstances:

- There is reason to believe an employee does not have the required understanding or skills to use PPE properly
- The workplace changes in a way that makes previous training obsolete
- New types of PPE are introduced that the employee has not previously used
- An incident or near-miss occurs that suggests a gap in PPE use or understanding
- Employee demonstrates incorrect PPE use during observation or audit

Training Delivery Tips for Lowcountry Employers

Effective PPE training doesn't require a fancy classroom. Here are practical approaches that work in real Lowcountry work environments:

- **Hands-on demonstration:** Have employees actually practice donning and doffing each piece of PPE during training — not just watch a video.
- **Language accessibility:** If you have employees who are more comfortable in Spanish or another language, ensure training is provided in a language they understand.
- **Refresher training at toolbox talks:** Brief 5-10 minute toolbox talk reminders reinforce training throughout the year without requiring a full training session.
- **New hire orientation:** Always include PPE training as part of your new employee onboarding before the employee begins any task requiring PPE.

Local Tip from the Lowcountry

Summer heat in the Lowcountry creates real PPE challenges — heat stress is a genuine hazard when employees are wearing hard hats, hi-vis vests, gloves, and respirators in July and August humidity. During training, address heat

management strategies alongside PPE requirements: scheduled hydration breaks, shade access, buddy systems for monitoring, and acclimatization plans for new workers. OSHA's heat illness prevention guidance should be incorporated into your overall safety program.

SECTION 7

Ready-to-Use Forms

The following forms are designed to help you meet OSHA documentation requirements out of the box. Reproduce these forms as needed, complete them in full, and retain them in your safety records file. All three forms are required or strongly recommended by OSHA regulations and enforcement practice.

FORM 1 | Certification of Hazard Assessment

Required by 29 CFR 1910.132(d)(2) | Retain on file and available for OSHA inspection.

Company Name:

Work Location / Department / Area Assessed:

Specific Tasks or Processes Evaluated:

Date of Assessment:

Name of Person Conducting Assessment:

Title / Position:

Hazards Identified During Assessment (check all that apply):

[ ] Impact [ ] Penetration [ ] Compression [ ] Chemical

[ ] Heat / Flame [ ] Harmful Dust [ ] Light Radiation [ ] Biological

[ ] Electrical [ ] Noise [ ] Fall from Elevation [ ] Other: _____

PPE Selected Based on Assessment Results:

Additional Notes / Observations:

Certification Statement:

I certify that the above workplace hazard assessment has been performed in accordance with the requirements of 29 CFR 1910.132(d)(2), and that the PPE selected provides appropriate protection for the hazards identified at this workplace.

Signature of Person Certifying Assessment

Date Signed

FORM 2 | PPE Issuance & Acknowledgment Log

Best Practice / Strongly Recommended | Retain on file for duration of employment.

Employee Acknowledgment: By signing, the employee confirms receipt of the listed PPE, acknowledges training has been completed on its proper use, and agrees to use it as required.

Employee Name

Job Title

PPE Item Issued

Size

Date Issued

Employee Signature

Supervisor Signature

🎓 FORM 3 | PPE Training Certification Record

Required by 29 CFR 1910.132(f)(4) | Retain on file for duration of employment plus 3 years (best practice).

Company Name:

Training Date: **Training Duration:**

Trainer Name:

Trainer Qualifications / Title:

Work Area / Department / Job Site Covered:

Training Topics Covered (check all that apply):

[ ] When PPE is necessary

[ ] What type of PPE is required for each task/hazard

[ ] How to properly don (put on) and adjust PPE

[ ] How to properly doff (remove) PPE safely

[ ] Limitations of each type of PPE covered

[ ] How to inspect PPE before each use

[ ] Proper care, cleaning, and storage

[ ] Useful life and when to discard / request replacement

[ ] Proper disposal procedures for contaminated PPE

[ ] Company PPE policy and enforcement

[ ] Other: _____

PPE Types Covered During Training:

Employee Attendance & Acknowledgment

By signing, each employee certifies that they received and understood the PPE training listed above.

Employee Name (Print)

Signature

Date

Trainer Signature

Date

SECTION 8

OSHA Standards Quick Reference

Use this reference table to quickly locate the OSHA standard governing a specific PPE category or topic. All standards listed are from Title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations (29 CFR). General industry standards are found in Part 1910; construction standards in Part 1926.

General Industry — 29 CFR Part 1910

OSHA Standard	Topic Covered
29 CFR 1910.132	General Requirements — PPE selection, hazard assessment, training, and certification requirements applicable to all PPE categories in general industry.
29 CFR 1910.133	Eye and Face Protection — Requirements for safety glasses, goggles, face shields, and welding helmets. References ANSI Z87.1.
29 CFR 1910.134	Respiratory Protection — Comprehensive standard covering written program requirements, medical evaluation, fit testing, respirator selection, training, and maintenance for all respirator types.
29 CFR 1910.135	Head Protection — Requirements for hard hats and safety helmets. References ANSI Z89.1.
29 CFR 1910.136	Foot Protection — Requirements for protective footwear. References ASTM F2413.
29 CFR 1910.137	Electrical Protective Equipment — Requirements for rubber insulating gloves, sleeves, blankets, and other electrical PPE used to protect workers from electrical shock hazards.
29 CFR 1910.138	Hand Protection — Requirements for glove selection based on tasks performed and chemicals handled.
29 CFR 1910.95	Occupational Noise Exposure — Permissible noise exposure limits, hearing conservation program requirements, audiometric testing, hearing protector selection, and training.
29 CFR 1910.140	Personal Fall Protection Systems — Requirements for fall arrest systems, positioning systems, and rescue equipment in general industry applications.

Construction — 29 CFR Part 1926

OSHA Standard	Topic Covered
29 CFR 1926.95	Criteria for Personal Protective Equipment (Construction) — General PPE requirements applicable to all construction operations, including hazard assessment and proper selection.
29 CFR 1926.96	Occupational Foot Protection (Construction) — Requirements for protective footwear in construction environments.
29 CFR 1926.100	Head Protection (Construction) — Hard hat and safety helmet requirements for construction operations. References ANSI Z89.1.
29 CFR 1926.101	Hearing Protection (Construction) — Requirements for hearing protection and conservation in construction operations.
29 CFR 1926.102	Eye and Face Protection (Construction) — Requirements for eye and face PPE in construction tasks.
29 CFR 1926.103	Respiratory Protection (Construction) — Respirator requirements for construction operations. Incorporates 29 CFR 1910.134 by reference.
29 CFR 1926.502	Fall Protection Systems Criteria and Practices (Construction) — Detailed specifications for guardrail systems, safety net systems, personal fall arrest systems, positioning device systems, and warning line systems in construction.

How to Access OSHA Standards

All OSHA standards are freely available at **osha.gov**. Standards are updated periodically — always verify you are referencing the current version. If you have questions about how a specific standard applies to your operation, Lowcountry Safety & Compliance Group is available to provide guidance. We stay current so you don't have to.

Ready to Take the Next Step?

Need Help Building Your PPE Program?

Lowcountry Safety & Compliance Group offers workplace hazard assessments, comprehensive PPE program development, written program creation, and hands-on employee training across the entire Lowcountry region — from **Charleston to Hilton Head**, **Beaufort to Bluffton**, and everywhere in between, including the sea islands communities we're proud to call home.

Whether you're starting a PPE program from scratch, updating your existing documentation, or preparing for an OSHA inspection, we're here to help — as your trusted local safety partner, not just a vendor.

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Disclaimer: This guide is provided as a practical reference for educational purposes. It is based on OSHA standards current as of publication date (June 2026) and does not constitute legal advice. OSHA standards are subject to change. Always consult the current OSHA standards at osha.gov and a qualified safety professional for compliance determinations specific to your workplace.