



OSHA RULES REQUIRE EMPLOYER TO PAY FOR PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

As of February 15, 2008, OSHA requires the employer to pay for Personal Protective Equipment. The following are a few examples of the PPE required in the lodging industry:

- Face shields, visors, goggles, hard hats, reusable gloves
- Protective aprons, gowns and head cover for handling blood borne pathogens
- Air-support face masks where chemicals such as ammonia or chlorine might require an engineer's intervention

There are exceptions to the rule, and those include:

- Safety-toe protective footwear
- Prescription safety eyewear

These were deemed exempt from the employer payment requirement, in large part, because these items were considered to be very personal in nature and were often worn off the work-site. It is important in evaluating whether there is an obligation to pay whether the item could be deemed personal in nature for example, non-prescription goggles which would not be worn offsite would be paid for by the employer, whereas prescription goggles would be paid for by the employee. The safest practice is to error on the side of paying for the item.

Another alternative is to ensure the personal items are affordable. Many hotel and restaurant organizations develop a footwear program where the cost is shared and a specific vendor provides service for the program. Frequently the shoe program will provide non-slip capabilities in addition to safety-toe or metatarsal protection. Many of the shoes are indistinguishable from a regular dress shoe and are quite acceptable for non-work wear.

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