



A SAMPLE SUN PROTECTION POLICY FOR WORKPLACES

This sample sun protection policy is intended as a guide only. Organisations should use aspects to tailor a policy that suits the needs and practicalities of their own organisation.

(Organisation Name) sun protection policy

Rationale

Australia has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world. Despite being an almost entirely preventable disease it continues to affect at least one in every two Australians during their lifetime. Of all new cancers diagnosed in Australia each year, 80% are skin cancers.

Employees who work outdoors for all or part of the day have a higher than average risk of skin cancer. This is because ultraviolet radiation in sunlight or 'solar UVR' is a known carcinogen.

All skin types can be damaged by exposure to solar UVR. Damage is permanent and irreversible and increases with each exposure.

(Organisation Name) has an obligation to provide a working environment that is safe and without risks to health. This obligation includes taking proper steps to reduce the known health risks associated with exposure to solar UVR for outdoor workers.

Aims

This policy aims to provide ongoing organisational support to reduce employee exposure to solar UVR by implementing appropriate sun protection control measures.

Our commitment

(Organisation Name) will conduct a risk assessment in consultation with health and safety representatives and employees to identify employees who have a high risk of exposure to solar UVR, and work situations where exposure to solar UVR occurs.

(Organisation Name) will reduce employees' exposure to solar UVR by requiring the use of sun protection control measures by outdoor workers when the UV Index is 3 and above, and at all times when working in alpine regions or near highly reflective surfaces.

(Organisation Name) recognises that the SunSmart UV Alert is issued whenever the UV Index is forecast to reach 3 and above, and will use the time period displayed to inform employees when it is necessary to use sun protection control measures while working outdoors.

(Organisation Name) recognises that supervision of outdoor workers and monitoring of the use of sun protection control measures is required to ensure compliance.

(Organisation Name) recognises that standard company grievance procedures will be initiated where an employee fails to comply with sun protective control measures.

(Organisation Name) will ensure injury reporting procedures are followed when an incident of sunburn or excessive exposure to solar UVR occurs in the workplace.

(Organisation Name) recognises that a combination of sun protection control measures, which includes engineering and administrative controls and personal protective equipment and clothing, provides the best protection to employees from exposure to solar UVR.

Management will:

- provide shaded areas or temporary shade where possible
- encourage workers to move jobs where possible to shaded areas
- consider applying window tinting to work vehicles
- modify reflective surfaces where possible
- identify and minimise contact with photosensitising substances
- provide indoor areas or shaded outdoor areas for rest/meal breaks
- schedule outdoor work tasks to occur when levels of solar UVR are less intense, such as earlier in the morning or later in the afternoon
- schedule indoor/shaded work tasks to occur when levels of solar UVR are strongest, such as the middle part of the day
- encourage employees to rotate between indoor/shaded and outdoor tasks to avoid exposing any one individual to solar UVR for long periods of time
- provide daily access to the SunSmart UV Alert
- provide and ensure use of appropriate sun protective PPE in line with SunSmart guidelines including:
 - sun protective work clothing
 - sun protective hats
 - sunglasses
 - sunscreen
- provide training to employees to enable them to work safely in the sun
- ensure training is provided as part of induction for new employees
- ensure employees are provided with information to effectively examine their own skin
- ensure managers and supervisors act as positive role models
- adopt sun protection practices during all company social events
- promote the use of sun protection measures 'off the job'.

Employees will:

- cooperate with all measures introduced by management to minimise the risks associated with exposure to solar UVR
- comply with instructions and advice in regards to the use of sun protection control measures
- participate in sun protection education programs
- act as positive role models
- be responsible for their own sun protective practices at work.

Review

This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis, or at least every two years.

Name (please print): _____

Position: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Date of next policy review: _____

FURTHER INFORMATION AND CONTACTS

The Cancer Council Australia is Australia's peak cancer control organisation. Its members are the eight state and territory Cancer Councils (see below), which work together to undertake and fund cancer research, prevent and control cancer and provide information and support for people affected by cancer.

People seeking information and advice about skin cancer and sun protection can:

- Call The Cancer Council Helpline on 13 11 20
- Visit www.cancercouncil.com.au/sunsmart

The Cancer Council Australia

92–94 Parramatta Rd
CAMPERDOWN NSW 2050
Tel: (02) 9036 3100
Fax: (02) 9036 3101
Email: info@cancer.org.au
Website: www.cancer.org.au

The Cancer Council ACT

Building 44
5 Richmond Avenue
FAIRBARN ACT 2609
Tel: (02) 6257 9999
Fax: (02) 6257 5055
Email: reception@actcancer.org
Website: www.actcancer.org

The Cancer Council New South Wales

153 Dowling Street
WOOLLOOMOOLOO NSW 2011
Tel: (02) 9334 1900
Fax: (02) 9358 1452
Email: feedback@nswcc.org.au
Website: www.cancercouncil.com.au

The Cancer Council Northern Territory

Unit 2, Casi House
Vanderlin Drive
CASUARINA NT 0810
Tel: (08) 8927 4888
Fax: (08) 8927 4990
Email: admin@cancernt.org.au
Website: www.cancercouncilnt.com.au

The Cancer Council Tasmania

180–184 Collins Street
HOBART TAS 7000
Tel: (03) 6233 2030
Fax: (03) 6233 2123
Email: infotas@cancer.org.au
Website: www.cancertas.org.au

The Cancer Council Victoria

1 Rathdowne Street
CARLTON VIC 3053
Tel: (03) 9635 5000
Fax: (03) 9635 5270
Email: enquiries@cancervic.org.au
Website: www.cancervic.org.au

The Cancer Council Western Australia

46 Ventnor Avenue
WEST PERTH WA 6005
Tel: (08) 9212 4333
Fax: (08) 9212 4334
Email: inquiries@cancerwa.asn.au
Website: www.cancerwa.asn.au

The Cancer Council Queensland

553 Gregory Terrace
FORTITUDE VALLEY QLD 4006
Tel: (07) 3258 2200
Fax: (07) 3257 1306
Email: qldcf@qldcancer.com.au
Website: www.cancerqld.org.au

The Cancer Council South Australia

202 Greenhill Road
EASTWOOD SA 5063
Tel: (08) 8291 4111
Fax: (08) 8291 4122
Email: cancersa@cancersa.org.au
Website: www.cancersa.org.au

Sun protection products can be purchased from your nearest Cancer Council retail outlet. For more information call Toll Free 1300 363 433.

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EXPLANATION OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ARPANSA: Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency.

Carcinogen: Any substance that can cause cancer.

Employee: Covers all staff with a verbal or written contract of employment or training. This includes direct employees, managers or supervisors, group training placements or apprentices. An employee also includes an independent contractor engaged by the employer, a sub contractor or an employee of that contractor, or a person whose services are provided to an employer by a labour hire or recruitment agency.

Erythema: Reddening of the skin due to UVR exposure, as in sunburn.

Eye protection factor (EPF): A measure of the amount of protection against solar UVR provided by sunglasses that have been tested in accordance with Australian Standard, AS 1067: 2003.

NOHSC: National Occupational Health and Safety Commission.

Outdoor worker: An employee who in the course of their duties is required to work outdoors for part or all of the day.

PPE: Personal protective equipment and clothing.

Skin cancer: Cancer that starts in the cells of the skin. Types include basal cell carcinoma, which starts in the basal cells of the skin; squamous cell carcinoma, which starts in the squamous cells of the skin; and melanoma, which starts in the melanocytes of the skin.

Solar radiation: Electromagnetic radiation emitted by the sun. At the earth's surface it consists of visible light, infrared radiation and ultraviolet radiation or UVR.

Solar ultraviolet radiation (solar UVR): Refers to the components of ultraviolet radiation emitted by the sun that reach the earth's surface. It contains radiation in the range 290 to 400 nanometres. Wavelengths in the range 100 to 280 nanometres (all UVC and 90% of UVB) are completely absorbed in the atmosphere.

Sunburn: Reddening of the skin due to UVR exposure, also known as erythema.

Sun protection: Various health and safety issues can arise during outdoor work due to exposure to the sun. For the purpose of this booklet, the term sun protection refers to the modification of the work environment or use of equipment or clothing specifically to reduce exposure and protect against solar UVR.

Sun protection factor (SPF): A measure of the amount of protection provided by a sunscreen against solar UVR. SPF ratings are determined by testing sunscreens on the skin of human volunteers in accordance with Australian Standard AS2604: 1998.

SunSmart UV Alert: A tool which informs people about when UV Index levels will be high enough to damage the skin and when it is necessary to use sun protection measures. The SunSmart UV Alert is issued by the Bureau of Meteorology when the UV Index is forecast to reach 3 or above.

Ultraviolet protection factor (UPF): A measure of the UVR protection provided by fabric. UPF ratings are determined by testing fabrics in a laboratory in accordance with Australian Standard AS/NZS 4399: 1996.

Ultraviolet radiation (UV radiation or UVR): Part of the electromagnetic spectrum emitted by the sun. Ultraviolet radiation refers to all ultraviolet radiation in the range 100 to 400 nanometres which can be further classified by wavelength into three regions: UVA, UVB and UVC.

UVA: Ultraviolet radiation in the range 315–400 nanometres.

UVB: Ultraviolet radiation in the range 280–315 nanometres.

UVC: Ultraviolet radiation in the range 100–280 nanometres.

UV Index: A unitless number that describes the amount of solar UVR that reaches the earth's surface. The higher the UV Index, the more solar UVR present and the greater the potential for skin and eye damage.



