



Department of  
Health



## **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 UV radiation' is a known carcinogen.

All skin types can be damaged by exposure to solar UV radiation. 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 UV radiation for outdoor workers.

#### **Aims**

This policy aims to provide ongoing organisational support to reduce employee exposure to solar UV radiation 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 UV radiation, and work situations where exposure to solar UV radiation occurs.

*(Organisation name)* will reduce employees' exposure to solar UV radiation 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 UV radiation 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 UV radiation.

*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 UV radiation 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 UV radiation 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 UV radiation 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 UV radiation
- 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: \_\_\_\_\_

**Reference:**

Skin Cancer and Outdoor Work: A guide for Employers, January 2007, Cancer Council Victoria