



Personal Protective Equipment

## Ensuring Workplace Safety for Women: The Role of Employer Support on Proper Fitting PPE

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Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is vital in ensuring worker safety across all trade industries. However, when PPE doesn't fit correctly, it can be just as dangerous as not wearing any protection at all. This is a problem that is particularly challenging for women, who historically have had limited access to PPE designed to fit their body type with the same level of performance as standard PPE offerings.

In this blog PIP will discuss the dangers of ill-fitting PPE and the challenges women face when it comes to finding optimal protection to meet their needs. They'll also explore how companies can address these challenges and the benefits of investing in PPE designed for women.

### The Dangers of Ill-Fitting PPE

Ill-fitting PPE can lead to reduced protection against workplace hazards. For example, when PPE is too big or too small, it may not cover the body correctly, leaving workers vulnerable to risks such as chemical splashes, sharp objects or falling debris. Not to mention an improper fit can hinder movement and cause discomfort, leading to distractions and reduced efficiency. What's more, oversized PPE runs the risk of becoming entangled in machinery, resulting in severe injuries that can be fatal.

Historically, PPE has been designed with male body shapes and sizes as the standard, resulting in limited options for women. Consequently, due to the limited offerings of women's PPE in what was once considered male-dominated industries, women may feel pressured to conform to more traditional gender norms, choosing between oversized men's PPE or undersized options that fail to provide adequate protection.

When it comes to PPE designed specifically for women, options may be limited to less-than-ideal approaches, such as simple size reduction and additions of more "feminine" colors. Unfortunately, this strategy often fails to consider the unique physical characteristics of women, let alone optimizing their safety, resulting in discomfort and increased risk of injury on the jobsite.

## How Companies Can Address the Issue

Companies can help address this issue by conducting a thorough hazard assessment to identify their employees' specific risks and hazards and selecting PPE accordingly. By considering the needs of all workers, including women, employers can ensure everyone has access to properly fitting PPE.

Employers need to drop the one-size-fits-all mentality and start stocking various sizes and cuts of PPE. By including options designed specifically for women, companies make it easier for female employees to find the protection they need to be safe and performing at their best.

Another critical step companies should take is involving workers in the PPE selection process. By seeking employee input and considering their preferences and comfort, employers can better understand the unique needs of all employee body types and address any concerns.

Training on the proper use and maintenance of PPE, including information on determining the correct fit, is also essential. This knowledge empowers workers to advocate for their safety needs and ensures that everyone uses PPE effectively.

***Read more: Why Unisex PPE Doesn't Work for Women and What to Do About It***

## Investing in Women: Enhancing Safety and Fostering Inclusivity

Prioritizing investments in PPE designed specifically for women is essential for several reasons. First and foremost, it bolsters safety and protection. Providing female employees with PPE tailored to their body shapes and sizes ensures they are well-protected against workplace hazards.

Beyond benefiting employees, investing in adequately fitting PPE also has positive financial implications for companies. For example, fewer workplace accidents and injuries can result in lower insurance premiums, reduced workers' compensation claims and less downtime due to injury-related absences.

A safer work environment can enhance a company's reputation, making it more appealing to clients, investors and potential employees. Going the extra mile to provide the proper PPE demonstrates a commitment to worker safety. In addition, it sends a strong message to current and prospective employees, clients and partners that the company values the well-being of its entire workforce.

As the workforce becomes increasingly diverse, companies must adapt their safety practices and policies to meet the needs of all employees, regardless of gender. By doing so, companies can create a more inclusive and equitable workplace that benefits both employees and their bottom line.

However, finding a supplier that provides high-quality protective workwear designed specifically for a woman is often more challenging than one might think. Unfortunately, as mentioned before, many PPE providers today claim to have PPE for women, but in reality are providing male PPE in a smaller size and more feminine color. Designing PPE for women goes beyond size and color to needing different cuts, detailing and materials. When it comes to sourcing the protective gear women need, PIP® has the solution.

## Bisley Workwear: Quality and Comfort for the Toughest Work Environments

PIP® now offers Bisley® Workwear, a leading provider of high-quality workwear that provides women with the PPE they need to stay safe in hazardous industrial environments.

When it comes to delivering high-quality workwear for the most demanding and hazardous work

environments, Bisley® stands out as the top choice with one of the most versatile, durable and high-quality offerings for both men AND women in the market.

As a leading manufacturer of women's industrial workwear in Australia, Bisley® Workwear is dedicated to creating durable and stylish protective gear for hardworking professionals. Their extensive range of products, including women's classic polo tees, cargo pants, shorts, hi-visibility protective wear, hoodies and jackets, is designed to combine form, fit, comfort and productivity.

Bisley® takes pride in being a market leader in specially branded workwear apparel and is long recognized as one of Australia's most trusted brands. Their team of experts goes above and beyond to test each garment, ensuring that every working day is as comfortable and safe as possible.

Bisley® collaborates with leading independent laboratories to design and develop exceptional women's workwear. These partnerships enable them to utilize state-of-the-art fabrication technology to manufacture workwear essentials that meet various industry requirements and safety standards. So, whether you're searching for tops, bottoms or coveralls to protect your uniform from spills and debris or hi-visibility garments and extreme cold protection for on-site safety, their range offers premium quality and durability.

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