



## *Worksite UV Protection Model Policy*

### Policy Statement

(Organization) is committed to the health and safety of its workers. This commitment includes protecting our employees from the adverse effects associated with prolonged exposure to ultraviolet radiation (UVR).

### Scope

This policy applies to every department/division, supervisor, and employee of (Organization), where outdoor work or work assignments are required and there is a risk of prolonged exposure to UVR as a result of these activities.

### Rationale

Skin cancer is the most common cancer in the United States. Adults spend more than one-third of their day at the workplace and workers who spend a majority of that workday outdoors are at increased risk for skin cancer, including melanomas of the skin. There are three types of skin cancer including basal and squamous cell carcinomas, and melanoma. Basal and squamous cell carcinomas are the most common and highly curable types. Melanoma is the most serious form of skin cancer. As many as 90% of melanomas are estimated to be caused by exposure to UVR – the primary cause of skin cancer. The risk for skin cancer can be greatly reduced when certain precautions are practiced.

This Worksite UV Protection Model Policy provides a framework to encourage and support UV protection and is designed to assist organizations in creating sun protection guidelines for their worksite setting.

The CDC recommends the following for protection from sunburn:

- Stay in the shade, especially during midday hours.
- Wear clothing that covers your arms and legs.
- Wear sunglasses that block both UVA and UVB rays.
- Use sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher and both UVA and UVB protection.
- Avoid indoor tanning.

## Model Policy for Implementation

Early detection and prevention is the best way to protect skin from the sun and prevent skin cancer. The first step to creating a worksite environment that supports UV protection for all employees is to utilize this model policy in its entirety or adapt this model policy to support employee health and meet the needs of the worksite. To help prevent the development of skin cancer, employees (especially outdoor workers) will receive instruction, encouragement, and environmental support to avoid overexposure to the sun when they are outdoors. Accordingly, management recommends that supervisors implement sun safety programs or procedures that address the following elements:

### Sun Safety Guidelines

#### **Personal Protective Equipment**

For all outdoor labor occurring on sunny days – especially between 10:00 a.m. to 4 p.m. – employees will be (encouraged, required) to:

- A. Work in shaded areas, when practical.
- B. Wear sun-protective clothing that includes:
  - (1) Four-inch or more full-brimmed hats that, when worn, create a shadow that completely covers the head, face, nose, ears, and neck.
  - (2) Long-sleeve shirts and full-length pants made of tightly woven fabric that is lightweight.
- C. Wear sunglasses that protect from 100 percent of UVA & UVB (full spectrum).
- D. Carry and use sunscreen and lip balm with a minimum of SPF 15.

(Organization) supervisors will assess personal protective equipment, including hats, to determine if and how they might be modified to better protect outdoor workers from over-exposure to UV rays.

(Organization) supervisors will provide employees personal sun protective equipment that includes sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15, SPF 15 lip balm, sunglasses, sun protective work clothing (long-sleeves and long pants), and sun protective hats.

#### **Education & Training**

(Organization) supervisors will provide annual sun safety training for all employees encouraging them to practice sun safety while on the job.

(Organization) administrative staff will provide annual sun safety training for supervisors to (encourage, require) role modeling and reinforce use of sun-protective equipment for employees.

(Organization) supervisors will post the EPA's Ultra Violet (UV) Index daily for employees.

## Communication

The Worksite UV Protection Policy guidelines will be communicated and reinforced to employees by supervisors and administrative staff through new employee orientation, verbal reminders, posters, signs, pamphlets, email notifications, payroll stuffers, newsletters, and meetings.

## Compliance

Enforcement of this policy is the shared responsibility of all (organization name) personnel. **All employees** are authorized and (encouraged, required) to communicate and partake in the necessary precautions of this policy during the working hours to prevent and reduce the risk of skin cancer.

(Organization) supervisors will understand, model and (encourage, require) employees to follow the Worksite UV Protection Policy guidelines.

(Organization) supervisors will be aware of changing conditions and adjust work assignments as needed to reduce employee's over-exposure to UV radiation.

Employees will be (encouraged, required) to report sun related injuries (sunburn, heatstroke, etc.) to an immediate supervisor.

## Environment Controls

(Organization) will provide shaded outdoor break areas for all employees.

As scheduling permits, (Organization) supervisors will schedule outdoor work before 10:00 a.m. or after 4:00 p.m. when feasible in April through September to avoid peak sun intensity. However, scheduling constraints should not reduce productivity.

(Organization) will provide permanent or temporary shade structures for off-site jobs whenever feasible.

## Policy Monitoring and Review

(Organization) supervisors will annually evaluate and revise sun safety programs, policies and procedures. Supervisors will implement sun safety programs all year, especially during, but not restricted to, the months of April through September. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the policy should be ongoing.

## Risk and Associated Factors

Certain factors are more likely to contribute to a higher risk of skin cancer. These risk factors include:

- Lighter natural skin color
- Family history of skin cancer
- Personal history of skin cancer
- Exposure to UVA and UVB radiation from the sun and indoor tanning beds
- History of sunburns early in life
- Skin that burns, freckles, reddens easily
- Blue or green eyes, blond or red hair
- Certain types and a large number of moles; consult a doctor if you notice changes in your skin such as size, shape, or color of a mole or other skin lesion or the appearance of a new skin growth
- Extended time spent outdoors

## What to Look For: The ABCDEs of Melanoma

### **A = Asymmetry**

- One half is unlike the other half.

### **B = Border**

- An irregular, scalloped or poorly defined border.

### **C = Color**

- Is varied from one area to another; has shades of tan, brown or black, or is sometimes white, red, or blue.

### **D = Diameter**

- Melanomas are usually greater than 6mm (the size of a pencil eraser) when diagnosed, but they can be smaller.

### **E = Evolving**

- A mole or skin lesion that looks different from the rest or is changing in size, shape, or color.

## Definition of Terms

- **Basal Cell Carcinoma:** Skin cancer that forms in the lower part of the epidermis (the outer layer of the skin).
- **Melanoma:** Skin cancer that forms in melanocytes (skin cells that make pigment).
- **Skin Cancer:** Cancer that forms in the tissues of the skin.
- **Squamous Cell Carcinoma:** Skin cancer that forms in squamous cells (flat cells that form the surface of the skin).
- **Ultraviolet:** Ultraviolet (UV) rays are an invisible kind of radiation that comes from the sun, tanning beds, and sunlamps.

- **UVA:** The most common kind of sunlight at the earth's surface, and reaches beyond the top layer of human skin. Scientists believe that UVA rays can damage connective tissue and increase a person's risk of skin cancer.
- **UVB:** UVB rays are absorbed by the ozone layer, so they are less common at the earth's surface than UVA rays. UVB rays, which help produce vitamin D in the skin, don't reach as far into the skin as UVA rays, but they still can be damaging.

### Resources/References:

#### 1) American Academy of Dermatology

Understanding Skin Cancer: [www.aad.org/spot-skin-cancer/understanding-skin-cancer/educational-resources](http://www.aad.org/spot-skin-cancer/understanding-skin-cancer/educational-resources)

How Do I Check My Skin: [www.aad.org/spot-skin-cancer/understanding-skin-cancer/how-do-i-check-my-skin/what-to-look-for](http://www.aad.org/spot-skin-cancer/understanding-skin-cancer/how-do-i-check-my-skin/what-to-look-for)

#### 2) American Cancer Society

Cancer Facts & Figures 2014:

[www.cancer.org/research/cancerfactsstatistics/cancerfactsfigures2014/index](http://www.cancer.org/research/cancerfactsstatistics/cancerfactsfigures2014/index)

#### 3) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Skin Cancer: [www.cdc.gov/cancer/skin/](http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/skin/)

Workplace Safety & Health Tips, UV Radiation:

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/uvradiation/>

#### 4) National Cancer Institute

Skin Cancer: [www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/types/skin](http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/types/skin)

#### 5) Sun Safe Colorado Outdoor-Based Business Sun Protection Policy Guidelines

[http://work.sunsafecolorado.org/docs/skin\\_policy.pdf](http://work.sunsafecolorado.org/docs/skin_policy.pdf)

#### 6) US Department of Health and Human Services

[www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/calls/prevent-skin-cancer/exec-summary.html](http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/calls/prevent-skin-cancer/exec-summary.html)

For more information, contact the South Dakota Department of Health at (605) 773-3737 or [www.goodandhealthysd.org](http://www.goodandhealthysd.org).

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**Contact Regarding Policy:** Contact (Organization Representative) with questions or concerns about the policy.

**Effective Date:** The policy is effective (date).

**Review Date:** The policy will be reviewed (date).

