

WAC 296-305-02001 Personal protective equipment and protective clothing.

Note: For wildland firefighting personal protective equipment and clothing requirements see WAC 296-305-07012, Personal protective clothing and equipment for wildland firefighting.

(1) Employers must provide and maintain at no cost to the employee the appropriate protective ensemble/protective clothing to protect from the hazards to which the member is or is likely to be exposed. Information on hazard assessments can be found in WAC 296-800-16005. Employers must ensure the use of all protective equipment and clothing required by this standard. Full protective equipment designated for the task, must be worn for all department activities.

(2) Firefighters must be trained in the function, donning and doffing, care, use, inspection, maintenance and limitations of the protective equipment assigned to them or available for their use.

(3) Protective clothing and protective equipment must be used and maintained in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. A written maintenance, repair, retirement, servicing, and inspection program must be established for protective clothing and equipment. Specific responsibilities must be assigned for inspection and maintenance. This requirement applies to firefighter's personally owned equipment as well as equipment issued by the employer.

(4) The fire department must provide for the cleaning of protective clothing and contaminated station/work uniforms at no cost to the employee. Such cleaning must be performed by either a cleaning service, or at a fire department facility, that is equipped to handle contaminated clothing. If the fire department does its own cleaning, they must follow the manufacturer's recommended cleaning procedure or the 2008 edition of NFPA 1851, Standard on Selection, Care and Maintenance of Protective Ensembles for Structural Fire Fighting and Proximity Fire Fighting.

(5) Personal protective equipment and clothing must be of a type specified by NIOSH, MSHA, NFPA, ANSI, or as specifically referenced in the appropriate section of this chapter.

(6) Station/work uniforms. Station/work uniforms are not themselves intended as primary protective garments.

(a) Station/work uniforms if provided, must meet the requirements as specified in the 1990 or 1994 edition of NFPA 1975, Standard on Station/Work Uniforms for Fire and Emergency Services. However, departments are not required to provide station/work uniforms for their employees.

(b) Station/work uniforms include trousers, and/or coveralls, but exclude shirts, underwear, and socks.

(c) Members must not wear any clothing that is determined to be unsafe due to poor thermal stability or poor flame resistance when engaged in or exposed to the hazards of structural firefighting. The fire department must inform members of the hazards of fabrics that melt, drip, burn, stick to the skin and cause burns to the wearer due to poor thermal stability or poor flame resistance, and must prohibit their use by employees. Garments that are not provided by the employer, and that are made from all or mostly cotton, will meet the requirements of this section.

(d) Garments meeting the requirements of WAC 296-305-07012(1), meet the intent of this section.

(7) Proximity firefighting clothing:

(a) All turnout clothing used as proximity clothing must meet the requirements of the 2000 edition of NFPA, 1976 Standard on Protective Ensemble for Proximity Firefighting.

(b) There must be at least a two-inch overlap of all layers of the protective coat and the protective trousers so there is no gaping of the total thermal protection when the protective garments are worn. The minimum overlap must be determined by measuring the garments on the wearer, without SCBA, with the wearer in the most stretched position, hands together reaching overhead as high as possible.

(c) Single piece protective coveralls must not be required to have an overlap of all layers as long as there is continuous full thermal protection.

(d) Fire departments that provide protective coats with protective resilient wristlets secured through a thumb opening may provide gloves of the gauntlet type for use with these protective coats. Fire departments that do not provide such wristlets attached to all protective coats must provide gloves of the wristlet type for use with these protective coats.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, 49.17.040, 49.17.050, and 49.17.060. WSR 18-22-116, § 296-305-02001, filed 11/6/18, effective 12/7/18. Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, 49.17.040, 49.17.050, 49.17.060 and 29 C.F.R. 1910.156, Fire brigades. WSR 13-05-070, § 296-305-02001, filed 2/19/13, effective 1/1/14. Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.040. WSR 99-05-080, § 296-305-02001, filed 2/17/99, effective 6/1/99. Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, [49.17].050 and [49.17].060. WSR 96-11-067, § 296-305-02001, filed 5/10/96, effective 1/1/97.]