# BI Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Policy

1. The appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) is required within BI laboratories. The appropriate PPE is mandated according to the BI lab environment, as assessed by BI staff, and specific hazards associated with the BI user’s work. Refer to RMM# 320: PPE Program.
2. If BI equipment or processes require special PPE (e.g. heat-resistance or cold-resistant gloves), BI staff will ensure the appropriate protection is located nearby. If BI users cannot find the special PPE, they must consult with BI staff prior to proceeding. The use of special PPE will be explained to BI user’s during equipment training.
3. Open wounds, cuts, scratches or grazes must be covered with waterproof dressings, whereby the dressing adhesive surrounds the affected area. Such dressings may be found in most BI laboratories or can be requested from BI Staff.
4. Street clothes and back packs are kept separate from laboratory areas and coats. BI users may use the BI locker area, located near the BI main entrance; the BI is not responsible for lost or stolen items.
5. Visitor PPE, including laboratory coats and eye protection are available upon request from BI staff.

## PPE – Laboratory Coats

1. Laboratory coats, knee-length, that are closed, are required to by worn by BI users in BI laboratories. Reusable and disposable laboratory coats are permitted.
2. BI user laboratory coats are provided by the user’s supervisor. Lab coats may be shared within a lab group; but sharing is at the discretion of the users and supervisor. BI users may only use their own lab coat unless authorized to share a lab coat with other users. Users may require more than one lab coat, depending on the containment zone rating of where work is being performed.
3. Prior to bringing a laboratory coat into the BI facility, BI users are encouraged to register new laboratory coats with the McMaster Laundering Service (see below).
4. Lab coats will be kept on designated lab coat hooks, and not draped on chairs or equipment. Only one laboratory coat will be hung per hook and coats will not be hung on top of one another. Laboratory coat hooks may be signed out in the BI laboratory hallway area; seek assistance from BI staff as needed.
5. Given the biosafety rating of BI laboratories, CL-1 or CL-2, laboratory coats brought into specific containment zones must remain there until decontaminated by BI staff. Decontamination procedures will depend on exposure risks to biohazardous agents. Refer to the BI Biohazardous Work Policies.
6. Abandoned laboratory coats will either become BI property or be discarded.
7. Lab coat disposal will be according to the type of exposure (e.g. hazardous or biohazardous). Refer to the BI Waste Disposal Policy.

### McMaster Laboratory Coat Laundering

1. Laboratory coats are not to be taken home to be laundered.
2. To use the McMaster in-house laundering system, laboratory coats must be labeled *prior* to usage and laundering. Labeling can be performed by the HSC Linen facility (yellow section, near receiving). Dropped off laundry takes one week to return to the linen area. For information on McMaster’s laundry service: http://www.workingatmcmaster.ca/med/document/Lab-Coats-Procedure-1-36.pdf

## PPE – Hand Protection and Gloves

1. BI users must wear the appropriate type of hand protection (e.g. gloves) when handling hazardous or biohazardous substances, especially when there is a risk of direct contact. Refer to RMM# 321: Hand Protection Program.
2. In CL-1 areas, gloves are provided by the user’s supervisor. In CL-2 labs, disposable, nitrile gloves are provided by the BI, but if users require other types of protection, it is the responsibility of the user’s supervisor to provide them.
3. Gloves should be replaced frequently and worn over the wrists of the laboratory coat, rather than worn inside.
4. BI users will dispose of gloves according to the contaminant (e.g. hazardous or biohazardous). Refer to the BI Waste Disposal Policies.
5. Do not wear gloves on common surfaces. Common surfaces include computers, equipment touch screens, and handles. If necessary, handle hazardous or biohazardous materials with one gloved hand and have the other hand ungloved to touch common surfaces.
6. Do not carry more items than can be safety handled.
7. Users should wash hands frequently with soap. Users must wash hands with soap, following glove removal, when handling materials known or suspected to be contaminated, and before exiting BI laboratories.
8. BI equipment that requires specific hand protection (e.g. heat-resistance or cold-resistant gloves) will have the appropriate protection nearby. Use of such PPE will be explained to BI user’s during equipment training.

## PPE – Eye Wear and Face Protection

1. Masks and safety glasses are required when handling hazardous and/or biohazardous substances, and for some procedures, especially those with risk of splashing and/or flying objects. RMM# 310: Eye Protection Program.
2. Protective eyewear is required when contact lenses are in use.
3. Protective eyewear is provided by the user’s supervisor.
4. BI equipment that requires specific eye protection (e.g. face shield) will have the appropriate protection nearby. Use of such PPE will be explained to BI user’s during equipment training and captured in equipment SOPs.

## PPE – Hearing protection

1. If noise levels are perceived by BI users or staff to be potentially harmful, BI staff will arrange for a sound level survey by EOHSS. Should noise reduction initiatives be introduced, BI users must comply with wearing the appropriate hearing protection. Refer to RMM 403: Noise Control and Hearing Protection Program.

## PPE – Miscellaneous

1. BI laboratories require sensible clothing and footwear.
2. BI laboratories require legs to be covered; long pants are recommended. Any open skin (including ankles) should be covered to protect from hazardous and biohazardous materials. Shorts or skirts with bare legs is not permitted.
3. BI laboratories require sensible footwear with closed-toe and closed-heel.
4. Jewelry, scarves or other accessories should be removed if they interfere with PPE or safety protocols, or if there is a risk of injury or exposure.
5. Long hair is to be tied back or restrained to avoid contact with hands, materials, containers and equipment.

## PPE – Maintenance

1. If PPE worn by Facility Services or BI Staff during routine maintenance or similar work interferes with the work or compromises safety, then it may be removed.

## PPE – Emergency Procedures

1. If during an emergency procedure, there is not time to don PPE, the BI staff and emergency responders are exempt.