



Neath Port Talbot  
Castell-nedd Port Talbot  
County Borough Council Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol

# **Latex Allergy Policy**

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**PL/08/01**

## **Latex Allergy Policy**

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 This policy sets out the ways in which Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council (NPTCBC) will comply with its duties and responsibilities set out in the Health & Safety at Work Act etc 1974 with hazards associated with latex. This policy has been produced in response to the growing problem of latex sensitivity that is believed to be due to increased general exposure to latex in the workplace and home. The purpose of this document therefore is to:

- identify latex products;
- remove or reduce their use;
- implement controls.

This policy will be used to assist the Authority in the management of employees with a latex allergy.

## **2.0 AIMS OF THE POLICY**

2.1 The aims of the policy are to ensure that: -

- the Authority complies with its legal obligations under relevant legislation
- the risk to the individual from using latex products is reduced to the lowest level that is reasonably practical.

## **3.0 DEFINITIONS**

*Latex allergy* is an allergic reaction to exposure to natural rubber latex (NRL). Gloves are the single most widely used device containing NRL

There are three types of latex reaction:

- **Irritation** – dry itchy rash on the back of the hands. This is not always due to an allergy; symptoms usually disappear when gloves are removed
- **Delayed hypersensitivity (Type IV)** – also known as contact dermatitis, this reaction is predominantly caused by an allergy to the chemicals used in the latex manufacturing process. The severity can vary greatly, symptoms include; swelling of the skin, redness, blisters, itching and thickening of the skin. The reaction is usually localised to the hand and arm. Symptoms

occur several hours after contact reaching a maximum between 6 – 24 hours, and then they usually subside.

- **Immediate hypersensitivity (Type 1)** – this reaction is a response to the natural protein found in the latex and is potentially much more harmful. Reaction occurs within 5 – 30 minutes of exposure and diminishes once contact with the material ceases. The reaction can vary from a mild skin rash, a very severe skin rash or a variety of further physiological responses, including anaphylactic shock, which can be fatal

#### **4.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

##### **4.1 Chief Executive/ Corporate Directors**

Overall responsibility for the implementation of the policy rests with the Chief Executive and Corporate Directors.

##### **4.2 Heads of Service**

Heads of Service will be responsible for ensuring that the health and safety arrangements are developed and implemented to satisfy the requirements of the policy.

##### **4.3 Governing Bodies of Schools Maintained by Education Authority**

There is a shared responsibility for health, safety and welfare between the LEA, governing body and Headteacher.

##### **4.4 Managers/ Team Leaders/ Headteacher**

Each Manager/ Team Leader/ Headteacher will ensure that departmental instructions are implemented within their section.

##### **4.5 Corporate Health & Safety Section**

The Corporate Health & Safety Section will provide advice and guidance in order to ensure compliance with legislation and associated guidance.

##### **4.6 Employees**

Employees have a personal responsibility to protect themselves from risks associated with latex by raising their concerns with their Managers/Supervisors and by following instructions given to minimise the risks.

## **5.0 LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

The key legislation that needs to be considered as regards to this policy are as follows:

- The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (HSWA)
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Control Of Substances Hazardous to Health 2002

## **6.0 REVIEWS AND MONITORING**

The operation of the policy will be the subject of periodic review.

## **7.0 CORPORATE PROCEDURE**

NPTCBC shall implement this policy through the guidance outlined in the Corporate Procedure [CP/08/01](#).