



Sun Safety Background Information



[Ultraviolet \(UV\) radiation is a workplace hazard](#). Staff can be exposed to harmful UV radiation from the sun, particularly while working outdoors. This exposure can increase the chance of developing serious health conditions, such as skin cancer.

Staff that work outdoors are exposed to the sun for extended periods of time and receive significantly more UV radiation than staff who work indoors. As a result, outdoor workers have a higher risk of developing skin cancer than indoor workers.

Whether staff work indoors or outdoors, employers have a responsibility and duty of care to protect their staff by taking all practical steps required to minimise the risk of sun exposure.

Why is it important?

The law states an employer must take all practicable steps to protect their employees' health and safety ([Health and Safety at Work Act 2015](#)). Whether employees work outside or inside, employers must protect them from injury by the sun and should

encourage employees to follow [SunSmart](#) messages to reduce their sun exposure.

Facts

[Melanoma](#) is the third most common cancer in New Zealand. Prolonged sun exposure causes damage to the skin, which can be permanent and irreversible and increases with each exposure. [Skin cancer statistics](#) indicate that around 500 New Zealanders die from skin cancer every year.

Key Messages

- Workplaces have a primary duty to ensure their staff are not put at risk associated with UV radiation exposure.
- Following the [Slip, Slop, Slap and Wrap](#) recommendations and avoiding the sun light when UV is at its strongest can help prevent sun damage.
- Promoting sun safety in the workplace through a healthy culture and providing shade (where applicable) and protective equipment can support your staffs to protect themselves.