

Prescription Safety Glasses Request/Authorization Guidelines

Objective:

Under OSHA standard [29 CFR 1910.133](#) (Subpart I – Personal Protective Equipment), workers needing vision correction in hazardous areas must wear eye protection that either incorporates the prescription into an approved design or consists of protective over-goggles ("fit-overs") that do not disturb the user's regular glasses. Regular street glasses do not qualify as safety eyewear.

NAU recognizes that PPE is most effective when it is comfortable enough to encourage consistent use. Prescription-equipped safety eyewear best meets that criteria for individuals who routinely wear prescription glasses. Non-prescription "over-goggles" are also legally acceptable as long as they are compatible with the individual's existing prescription glasses and are comfortable enough to encourage use. Over-goggles are generally available through the NAU Shipping and Receiving department and other retailers and don't require special authorization as their selection is part of the normal PPE fitment process. In cases where over-goggles are either non-comfortable or do not fulfill the required PPE needs (IE impact resistance vs. splash protection), Prescription safety glasses may be warranted.

At NAU, it is the responsibility of individual departments or divisions to equip workers with appropriate PPE. This includes complying with EHS recommendations or identifying specific PPE for individual activity types, purchasing or authorizing purchase, and replacing PPE when it has reached the end of its designed service life or if it becomes damaged.

Identification of Need:

Safety Glasses must be supplied by NAU under any of the following conditions -

- 1) Deemed necessary through a hazard assessment process
- 2) Recommended/required by a product or equipment manufacturer
- 3) Required by specific OSHA or other regulation
- 4) Recommended/required by NAU EHS personnel
- 5) Assigned by a Supervisor

***Eye protection types are use/hazard specific. Prescription eyewear must meet the requirements for the intended use to be considered reimbursable by NAU.**

Compare prescription orders for appropriate protection from particulates, impact, splash, light, vapor, or other hazards to confirm applicability before authorizing.

Requirements/restrictions:

- Specialty protective eyewear (IE Laser protective) which does not have any outside use by the employee must be paid for completely by NAU. Glasses in this category are reserved for campus use only and must be kept on campus in good working order.
- Safety glasses (IE simple impact resistant) may be partially subsidized by employees who have a non-business use for them. Employees who pay for premium products above the agreed upon reimbursement rate are permitted to use the safety glasses for personal reasons. However, the employee bears the responsibility of maintaining the glasses in good working order and for always having them available for use on campus.
- All non-wrapping type frames must be equipped with (fixed or detachable) side shields
- Employees may use any provider to obtain glasses so long as the glasses meet regulatory criteria for protection against the documented hazard/hazards. Except in rare cases, the appropriate ANSI Z87 or similar safety certification coding is required (see attachment).
- Employees are responsible for selecting and ordering suitable glasses within the predetermined price range, submitting receipts, and for paying any amount above and beyond the agreed-upon reimbursement value. Ensuring appropriate fit and comfort is the responsibility of the employee.
- Once purchased, employees shall use prescription eyewear whenever the documented hazard is present.
- Employees are responsible for protecting eyewear and maintaining it in good condition. Failure or damage resulting from loss, poor care, or misuse may result in employees bearing the financial burden for premature replacement.

Process:

Upon identifying the need for protective eyewear and the lack of suitable non-prescription options, workers/supervisors may discuss approval for purchase of prescription safety glasses.

- 1) Identify required protective factors (IE ANSI Z87 or similar). EHS can assist upon request.

- 2) Identify suitable level of reimbursement (NAU EHS *recommends* a minimum of \$150, and typical range of approximately \$200 - \$250 every 2-3 years depending on application) and obtain approval to make purchase from departmental leadership.
**Reimbursement may be adjusted at the discretion of departmental leadership based on local factors or the type of glasses required. Glasses which must satisfy a very specialized need or multiple protective requirements may be more expensive. Effort should be made to ensure that the purchased glasses satisfy all the employees' eyewear needs if feasible.*
- 3) Identify suitable eyewear options from local or online eyeglass suppliers (Usually performed by the intended wearer).
- 4) Make purchase. *NAU recommends that employees pay out of pocket and seek reimbursement for financial audit purposes.*
- 5) IF purchase was made using personal funds, submit receipts for leadership approval and reimbursement using the "Non-Travel Reimbursement" process in the [Employee Service Center > Contracts, Purchasing, and Risk Management](#) self-service catalog.

Attachment A – Certification Coding Guide

ANSI Ratings (satisfies most needs)

Impact Ratings:

- **Z87:** Basic impact protection (droplets, minor hits).
- **Z87+:** High-impact rating for high-velocity and high-mass tests.
- **Z87-2:** Basic impact prescription eyewear frame.
- **Z87-2+:** High-impact prescription eyewear frame.

Environmental & Splash Ratings:

- **D3:** Splash and droplet protection (liquids).
- **D4:** Dust protection (standard particle seal).
- **D5:** Fine dust protection (heavy/micro particle seal).

Radiation & Filter Ratings:

- **U (Scale 2–6):** Ultraviolet (UV) light protection.
- **R (Scale 1.3–10):** Infrared (IR) light protection.
- **L (Scale 1.3–3):** Visible light (glare) filter.
- **W (Scale 1.3–14):** Welding shade protection.

Special Design & Feature Ratings:

- **H:** Optimized fit for smaller head sizes.
- **S:** Special purpose lens tint.
- **V:** Variable tint or photochromic lens.
- **X:** Anti-fog lens coating resistance.
- **O2:** Relaxed optical requirements rating (Protective but may cause increased eye stress and fatigue due to reduced optical qualities).

Laser Safety Glasses:

- **Consult with NAU EHS to assess the specific laser application(s) to determine the appropriate optical density and wavelength rating for glasses.**