

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT PPE REIMBURSEMENT

Revised May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024

## **Reimbursement:**

### **1. Does this policy apply to interns or summer help employees?**

Yes. See the PPE policy for guidance on these employees.

### **2. How do I get reimbursed? Who do I give my receipts to?**

Each office may function a little differently, but in general, the first thing you must do is sign the receipt and take the items purchased to your supervisor for him/her to review. After reviewing and approving the items for their compliance with the eligibility rules, your supervisor must also sign the receipt. The receipts should then be turned in to your office manager (the Area Office Manager if you are in an Area or Sub Area). In turn, the office manager would submit the receipts for reimbursement and payment will be made directly to the employee. Updated 10-6-2005

### **3. Is there a danger that I will purchase items but will be denied reimbursement?**

If you have any doubt that the items you want to purchase are eligible, you should check with your Supervisor and/or your Senior Manager. You must be sure that you are eligible for reimbursement, that you have an adequate balance of your PPE, and that the item you want to purchase is approved. Updated 4-7-2011

### **4. I need the cash and not the PPE. Can I purchase PPE, get reimbursed, and then return the items for the cash?**

NO. If an employee returns an item(s) that have been reimbursed, it must be returned for an item that is eligible for replacement and is of equal or greater value than what was returned. Again, this type of abuse would warrant disciplinary action for the employee and could jeopardize the entire program. Updated 10/6/2005

### **5. If I don't spend my PPE balance in one year, can I carry the balance over to the next year?**

No. You have a specific dollar amount to spend for each fiscal year (July 1 – June 30) but the balance does not carry forward. Updated 4-7-2011

### **6. I didn't spend my entire allotted PPE; can I have the rest in cash?**

No. This is strictly a reimbursement program. Updated 4-7-2011

**7. Will this increase my final average salary for retirement?**

No.

**8. I plan to leave KDOT employment. I want to be reimbursed for as much stuff as possible before leaving. You have to pay me, don't you?**

No. If you have given us notice that you will be leaving KDOT employment in the next 60 days, we are under no obligation to process any more reimbursement vouchers before you leave. Updated 10/6/2005

**9. He/she spent their allotted PPE funds and then quit! Aren't you going to make him/her pay it back?**

It depends. If the purchase was made within 60 days of leaving KDOT employment (quitting, retiring, etc.), they are required to pay KDOT back for those purchases. Updated 4-7-2011

**10. The policy says "Employees who have purchased and been reimbursed and leave within 60 days must reimburse the agency"; what happens if there is a delay in the employee claiming reimbursement; do we use the purchase date on the receipt or the reimbursement date?**

Handle this similar to how we handle the fiscal year-end reimbursements. Use the purchase date on the receipt. Updated 9-8-2016

**11. I was hired back with KDOT after only being gone a few months. I had spent part of my PPE money during this same fiscal year and wasn't required to pay it back at that time; does my PPE reset since I was re-hired?**

This employee will be able to spend the remaining unspent amount left in their PPE until the next fiscal year when the dollars will re-set back to the full amount.

**12. Do I have to pay back money that I was overpaid even if it wasn't my fault?**

Yes. If an employee is paid for more than the maximum PPE limit, the employee must reimburse KDOT for the overage amount as soon as possible after the overpayment has been identified. Area staff should clarify specific procedures with their District administrative office. Reimbursements should be forwarded to the Chief Accountant of General Accounting in Fiscal Services and must include the employee's name and the voucher number that originally overpaid the employee.

For additional information or clarification on reimbursement procedures, contact staff in your district or Fiscal Services. Updated 7-21-2009

**13. Is this taxable? Do I have to report it?**

No, reimbursement for safety equipment required on the job is not considered taxable income. Likewise, items that are reimbursed (up to your maximum PPE allowance) may not be included as taxable deductions on personal income tax statements. Jeans purchased by PPE-eligible employees are considered a taxable item for income tax purposes. Updated 5-20-2020

**14. Is my purchase subject to sales tax?**

Yes. You are making the purchase and you own the item, not the State. You will be reimbursed for the sales tax applied to your purchase. Updated 11-2-2000

**15. The policy says that an “original paid receipt with an item description” is required for reimbursement. What if my receipt just says “merchandise”?**

You will need to ask the store to provide a receipt with an item description signed by the salesperson. They should be willing to write up a special receipt for you to submit. Updated 9-13-2001

**16. If I purchase a package deal from a vendor that is on contract with KDOT and the receipt is made out to KDOT, but I paid for the items personally, can I be reimbursed?**

No. The receipt would have to be made out to you not KDOT. Updated 1-22-2024

**17. What if I purchase a combo package, such as hat and gloves, and only the gloves meet PPE requirements. Can I be reimbursed for a portion of the cost?**

No. Items must be clearly valued on the receipt. KDOT cannot be placed in the position of giving values to items purchased. There would be no reimbursement. Updated 1-22-2024

**18. Home Depot provides e-mail receipts; does this count as an original receipt?**

Yes, an email receipt would be counted as an original receipt. You will need to print it off and sign the receipt when you submit it for reimbursement. Updated 10-27-2017

**19. The policy says that the receipt must be “submitted in the same fiscal year the items were purchased”. What is the last day I can turn in my receipt and still be reimbursed?**

The last day of the fiscal year is June 30; however, the cutoff for submitting these PPE reimbursement requests, per the PPE policy, is June 10<sup>th</sup> due to necessary processing time. Requests for reimbursement after June 10<sup>th</sup> are possible if legitimate circumstances prevented the purchase before June 10<sup>th</sup>. The employee will have to work with fiscal staff to be reimbursed.

**20. What is the official last day of employment for someone that is leaving KDOT?**

It is the last day on the payroll. Updated 9-8-2016

**21. Why do I have to turn in my original paid receipt? What if I need to return the item due to a defect?**

The requirement for the original receipt is a state reimbursement requirement and is a protection against fraud. I recommend that you make sure that the item fits and is not damaged before you submit the receipt for reimbursement. Make a copy of the receipt for your records before sending in the original receipt. Also, purchase your items in shops that have a return policy with which you are comfortable.

Updated 1-16-2001

**22. Can I be reimbursed for Shipping and Handling charges for mail order stuff?**

Yes. You should be reimbursed for the S & H charge to deliver your item. If you purchased non-reimbursable items on the same order, the shipping and handling charges should be split appropriately.

**23. Can I have package protection if I order something online?**

Yes, it can be included in the cost of shipping the item. Updated 9-9-2016

**24. I purchased a PPE item using a gift card; will I be reimbursed for my purchase?**

Yes, a gift card is like using cash to purchase the item. Updated 9-9-2016

**25. I had a \$20 rebate for work boots that I purchased. Will I be reimbursed the \$20 rebate for the PPE item purchased?**

You will be reimbursed for the boots minus the \$20 rebate. Updated 9-9-2016

**26. My parents paid for my PPE but needed to keep the original receipt. Can I just photocopy the receipt to get reimbursed?**

We need the *original receipt*, or the store will need to issue a duplicate receipt to the employee for this purchase before they can be reimbursed. Updated 9-9-2016

**27. I purchased a PPE item while I was out on sick leave; can I be reimbursed for the purchase?**

Yes, the purchase can be reimbursed if it meets the policy requirements. Updated 9-9-2016

**28. I bought items using a Menards rebate; can I get reimbursed for the rebate?**

No, Reward points, rebates or coupons are not reimbursable. Updated 9-19-2017

**29. I purchased PPE items on eBay; can I be reimbursed for the items?**

Yes, if it is a PPE eligible item. The item is not eligible if it is posted by a KDOT employee who had received a PPE reimbursement for the product they are selling. Updated 2-2-2018

**30. I purchased PPE items using my store account; can I be reimbursed for the items?**

Yes, if it is a PPE eligible item and you have an official store receipt for the item. Updated 6/27/2018

**31. I am an equipment mechanic. It says in the policy that work jeans are PPE reimbursable; can I be reimbursed for work jeans?**

Since KDOT is providing work clothing for Mechanics they are not eligible to be reimbursed for work jeans. Updated 7/10/2020

**32. What summer help and intern positions qualify to receive \$100 for work boots?**

Those positions that require the employee to be in the field performing tasks that work boots would help protect the employee. The positions would include summer help (temporary utility workers) performing field work including mowing and weed eating, construction interns and temporary utility technicians performing field work and part-time employees that have a portion of their responsibilities being field work. Temporary snowplow operators will not be eligible. Updated 5/29/2024

## **Requirements:**

- 1. I didn't KNOW I'd have to go out into the field today because I thought I'd be in the shop all day...it's not fair to discipline me. Had I known, I would have brought them.**

You MUST be prepared to perform any function of your job at a moment's notice. Plans change along with the weather and many other factors. It is the nature of our business. All appropriate safety equipment should be available at the beginning of each day.

- 2. Can I opt out of the reimbursement program so that I can continue to wear my tennis shoes on the job?**

No. Turning receipts in for reimbursement is optional but wearing the proper safety equipment on the job is not. You will still be required to wear proper footwear suitable for the task performed. Updated 2-10-2017

- 3. If you send me home because I don't have my work boots, or other job required PPE item, will that be without pay? ... Even the first time?**

You will be required to wear all appropriate safety equipment. If you are putting yourself or others at risk of injury on the job, you will be subject to appropriate discipline. Typically, discipline without pay applies to repeat offenders.

- 4. I was just hired by KDOT to fill a position that is PPE eligible; I will start my job next week; they told me in the interview I will need work boots; when can I purchase and be reimbursed for items I buy?**

Due to PPE Policy requirements, the items must be bought after the individual is officially on the payroll. Reimbursement is allowed from the start date of employment. Updated 2-13-2017

## **Items:**

- 1. Can I buy three pairs of \$100 work boots?**

Yes. You can buy and be reimbursed for any quantity of items on the list up to allotted PPE. If you buy multiple items and the total of the receipts goes over your allotted PPE, then you will only be reimbursed your maximum allotted amount. Updated 4-7-2011

- 2. I've been told I need steel-toed boots, but the policy does not require them. Who do I believe?**

There are certain jobs that may require steel-toed boots, i.e., a job on railroad right-of-way. If you are an employee that must wear steel-toed boots on some jobs, you may either purchase steel-toed boots and wear them on all jobs, or you may want to consider purchasing each style (steel and non-steel toed). Your senior manager will determine for what jobs you must wear steel-toed boots.

### **3. Are fiberglass-toe boots covered?**

Yes, if you are required to have toe protection on the job, then make sure any boot you purchase is ANSI compliant. Updated 2-14-2017

### **4. What are Limited Slip Shoe Devices?**

There are several manufacturers of slip-on traction devices. They are recommended for use on ice and snow and should not be worn on hard surfaces such as on a shop floor or tile floor. Contact your local safety specialist or the safety office in headquarters for vendors of these devices. Updated 5-8-2009

### **5. Why would I go buy a hard hat or safety glasses with my own money, even if I will be reimbursed, if I can go and get them from the stockroom?**

You can do either. Since the stockrooms will have a very limited selection of styles and sizes, some people may not find the items stocked to their liking. If you can shop for safety items that meet your personal tastes, you are going to be more likely to wear them.

### **6. I heard leather gloves would be stocked in the stockroom. Is this correct?**

Yes. Leather gloves will be stocked in each of the district stockrooms. The employee has the option whether to use the stocked glove or purchase their own and be reimbursed.

### **7. Why aren't back braces (lifting belts) on the list?**

Lifting belts are not recommended for general use by KDOT employees. Research has shown that they are not an effective protection device.

### **8. My doctor recommends that I wear arch supports. Will KDOT pay for these?**

No. This policy covers the SAFETY equipment necessary to perform work tasks safely.

**9. I purchased a shirt with a KDOT logo on it. Can I be reimbursed for the cost of the logo?**

The logo, when affixed to an approved PPE item and billed as one price, makes it reimbursable. This means that there is only the price of the item, not a separate line for the logo cost. Updated 9-9-2016

**10. I don't like the safety vests the stockroom issues. Can I purchase my own?**

KDOT will NOT reimburse for safety vests. We currently have several styles of safety vests on contract. One of these vests should meet the needs of most of our employees. If you have certain special needs, discuss this with your Senior Manager and possible accommodation can be made. Updated 10-17-2002

**11. What if I need special safety equipment to do my job? Can I be reimbursed?**

Possibly, you will need to get approval from your Senior Manager and from the KDOT Safety Director and a determination will need to be made on its taxability.

**12. I like to wear lightweight, non-insulated coveralls when it's not too cold, can I be reimbursed for these?**

No. The policy covers insulated and disposable coveralls only.

**13. Are Jeans covered under the PPE Policy?**

Yes, all employees eligible for PPE allowance may choose to divert up to a maximum of \$150 of their PPE to purchase work jeans. Bib overalls can be purchased in lieu of work jeans for those that prefer them. When bib overalls are worn at work, they must have both shoulder straps buckled and worn as always intended. The material for both Jeans and Bib Overalls must be cotton denim, cotton duck or cotton canvas with no fashion tears or worn areas (distressed denim) in the fabric. There are no color requirements for these items. **Work jeans and Bib Overalls are considered taxable by IRS regulations and will be reported in the payroll system as a fringe benefit to the employee.** Updated 7/17/2020

**14. I like stretchy jeans; can I get reimbursed for them?**

Stretch denim is made of a denim cotton/polyester blend. Some jeans incorporate spandex, Lycra or other synthetic material into the fabric. No more than a 6% blend with cotton is allowed to be reimbursed. Updated 9/15/2021

**15. I have to stand in knee deep water from time to time to help clean out culverts. Can I buy hip waders and be reimbursed?**

Possibly, the policy allows for other work-related items as determined by the Many of these items will be approved based upon the application in which they will be used. You will need to get approval from your Senior Manager and from the KDOT Director of Safety and provide details on how they will be used and why they are needed. Updated 6/3/2023

**16. Can I be reimbursed for knee pads?**

Knee pads are a specialized item that is reimbursed on a case-by-case basis. You will need to get approval from your Senior Manager and from the KDOT Director of Safety and provide details on how they will be used and why they are needed. Updated 6/3/2023

**17. I want to purchase ear protection with a radio or blue tooth in the earmuffs. Can I be reimbursed for that?**

Ear protection of this type is not reimbursable under the PPE program. Updated 9-9-2016

**18. Why aren't respirators on the reimbursement list?**

KDOT will stock respirators for employees that need them for their jobs. There are federal standards that require respirators be "fit tested" so that they provide proper protection. By issuing the respirators from the stockroom, we can keep track of who needs the fit testing service.

**19. Why aren't fall protection harnesses covered by the policy?**

A fall protection harness will be made available on an "as needed" basis purchased by your District. The storeroom manager must get approval from the Division of Safety before purchasing fall protection. Updated 6/3/2023

**20. Can an ET purchase tools with PPE funds?**

Currently non-mechanic positions are not covered under the KDOT Employee Tool Reimbursement Policy. If there are tools that are required by an ET to complete their job duties, those should be provided by KDOT. Updated 9-9-2016

**21. Can I be reimbursed for a weed eater harness?**

No, these are not reimbursable, but the stockroom can supply them. Updated 6/7/2017

**22. Are hydration packs reimbursable if they are Hi-vis?**

Hydration packs are not reimbursable, even if they are in Hi-Vis colors. Updated 8/9/2017

**23. Can I buy 2 gear bags? One for the basic PPE and one for specialized PPE?**

Yes, if they meet the reimbursement requirements. Updated 5/20/2020

**24. Can I purchase the cowboy hard hat version?**

Yes, if it is orange and it meets the minimum; ANSI Z89.1, Type 1, Class G (General). Updated 5/20/2020

**25. The PPE Policy states that Rain Suits can be purchased. Does that mean I can only purchase a rain suit, not a raincoat or rain pants individually?**

You can purchase a rain suit, raincoat or rain pants individually, as long as they are 100% waterproof and meet the Hi Vis Class 3 requirements.

**26. Can I purchase snake gaiters using PPE funds?**

Possibly, the policy allows for other work-related items as determined by the Senior Manager and KDOT Safety Director. Many of these items will be approved based upon the application in which they will be used. You will need to get approval from your Senior Manager and from the KDOT Director of Safety and provide details on how they will be used and why they are needed. Updated 6/3/2023

**27. Can I purchase a diaper bag as a gear bag for PPE reimbursement?**

Diaper bags are not reimbursable under the KDOT PPE reimbursement policy. 12/1/2023

**28. I would like to purchase a Guardian Angel personal strobe light. It has a flashlight feature built in that meets the lumens for the flashlight shown in the policy, is it reimbursable?**

No, the Guardian Angel strobe is not reimbursable. The flashlight feature is secondary to the strobe. This is something that may be purchased by Districts for their flagging kits. 12/15/2023

## **29. Is Under Armor eligible for reimbursement?**

Under Armor would fall in the same category as long underwear. It is not considered an outer garment and as such, this would not be an eligible item under the PPE program. 1/22/2024

## **Safety Glasses:**

### **1. Can I get reimbursed for the Oakley sunglasses I just purchased?**

For the safety glasses to be eligible for reimbursement, they must meet ANSI standard Z87.1 or Z87+ at a minimum. To meet ANSI Z87.1, they must have “Z87.1 or Z87+” printed on the glasses frame and at least one of the lenses if the lenses are removable. For non-prescription safety glasses with molded non-removable lenses the frames must be marked Z87.1 or Z87+ at a minimum. If they do not have this on the frame and on one of the lenses, they don’t meet the standard and are not eligible. Updated 5/20/2020

### **2. I was reimbursed for safety glasses. I bought more than I needed and would like to sell them to my co-worker. If I do this, can he be reimbursed for the purchase?**

No; KDOT will reimburse only once for an item. In addition, if an employee is selling reimbursed items for personal gain, it would be considered an abuse of the program. This type of abuse would warrant disciplinary action for the employee and could put the entire program in jeopardy.

### **3. Will I be reimbursed for necessary repairs to my boots or prescription safety glasses under the PPE Program?**

No. You will be reimbursed for the original purchase, but each employee is responsible for the maintenance cost. Claims for damage to an employee’s eyeglasses shall be submitted to Workers Compensation on Form WC-00, “Replacement of Prescription Eyeglasses” in accordance with SOM 2.2.5, “Workers Compensation.” Updated 2-14-2017

### **4. Can I be reimbursed for my eye exam along with my prescription safety glasses?**

No. Reimbursement is for the glasses and not the exam. See question #6. Updated 2-13-2017

### **5. Can I be reimbursed for new prescription lenses for my safety glasses?**

Yes. See question #6. Updated 2-13-2017

**6. The policy says that if my insurance pays for my safety glasses, I am not eligible for reimbursement. What if my insurance only pays for a portion of my safety glasses?**

You may be reimbursed for the portion that is not covered by insurance or reimbursements from any other sources, such as, Flexible Spending Accounts or Health Savings Accounts. If your insurance pays \$100 for the prescription safety glasses and the total bill is \$150, then you may be eligible to be reimbursed for \$50.

Updated 8-16-2017

**Hi-Vis and ANSI:**

**1. Why do my T-Shirts have to be ANSI Class 3? What does this mean anyway?**

FHWA requires anyone who is working (on foot) in the travel way or within the right-of-way to be wearing ANSI Class 3 (2015) High Visibility Apparel. For a garment to receive an ANSI classification, it must meet certain visibility standards. ANSI classifies High Visibility Apparel based on how much approved background material and how much approved reflective material the garment has. ANSI 107 - 2015 Class 3, T-shirts, sweatshirts, jackets, and rain suits will all have reflective striping and a tag attached to the garment stating their compliance with this standard.

Updated 5-8-2009

**2. Can I be reimbursed for a bright hooded sweatshirt?**

A hooded sweatshirt should be considered the same as a cold weather jacket or T-shirt, but REMEMBER, all shirts, jackets, and rain suits must be ANSI Class 3 and high visibility orange or strong yellow green to be eligible for reimbursement.

Updated 6/18/2020

**3. Can I be reimbursed for insulated bib overalls with a jacket?**

You would be reimbursed for the insulated bib overalls since they are considered the same as insulated coveralls. To be reimbursed for the jacket, it would have to be ANSI Class 3 and high visibility orange or strong yellow green.

**4. Can I order insulated coveralls/bib coveralls in camouflage coloring or are they restricted to standard duck coloring? Any color requirements for rain suits?**

There are no color restrictions on coveralls. As of July 2, 2007, Rain Suits must be ANSI Class 3 and must be high visibility orange or strong yellow green to be reimbursed. Updated 7-3-2007

**5. What are the approved colors for Class 3 apparel?**

High visibility orange and strong yellow green are approved colors for Class 3 apparel. Updated 5-8-2009

**6. How much of the garment needs to be the high-visibility color (orange or strong yellow green)?**

Most of the garment material must be a colored fluorescent material which is intended to be a highly conspicuous high visibility orange and/or strong yellow-green color. Updated 2/9/2017

**7. Can I be reimbursed for orange or yellow-green sweatshirts or a long sleeve T-shirt?**

Yes, if it is ANSI Class 3. Updated 5-8-2009

**8. I've heard that high visibility T-shirts must be 100% polyester to be reimbursable; is this true?**

The shirts must be high visibility color and ANSI Class 3. This means that they must be at least as bright and visible as the KDOT vests that are currently being stocked. There are few, if any, examples of 100% cotton shirts that would meet this requirement. If you buy a 100% cotton shirt, you may be asked to demonstrate that the color meets the above standard. 100% cotton shirts are typically not as bright as polyester, and they do not hold their color near as well. There are many companies offering 100% polyester shirts made with a breathable and moisture-wicking material that meets the color requirements. Updated 5-8-2009

**9. Can I buy a Water-Resistant Jacket and be reimbursed? The policy says that Rain Suits are eligible.**

No. For rain gear to be reimbursed, it must be listed as "WATERPROOF" and it needs to be ANSI Class 3 and high visibility orange or strong yellow green. Many times, water-resistant garments will shed water for only a few minutes.

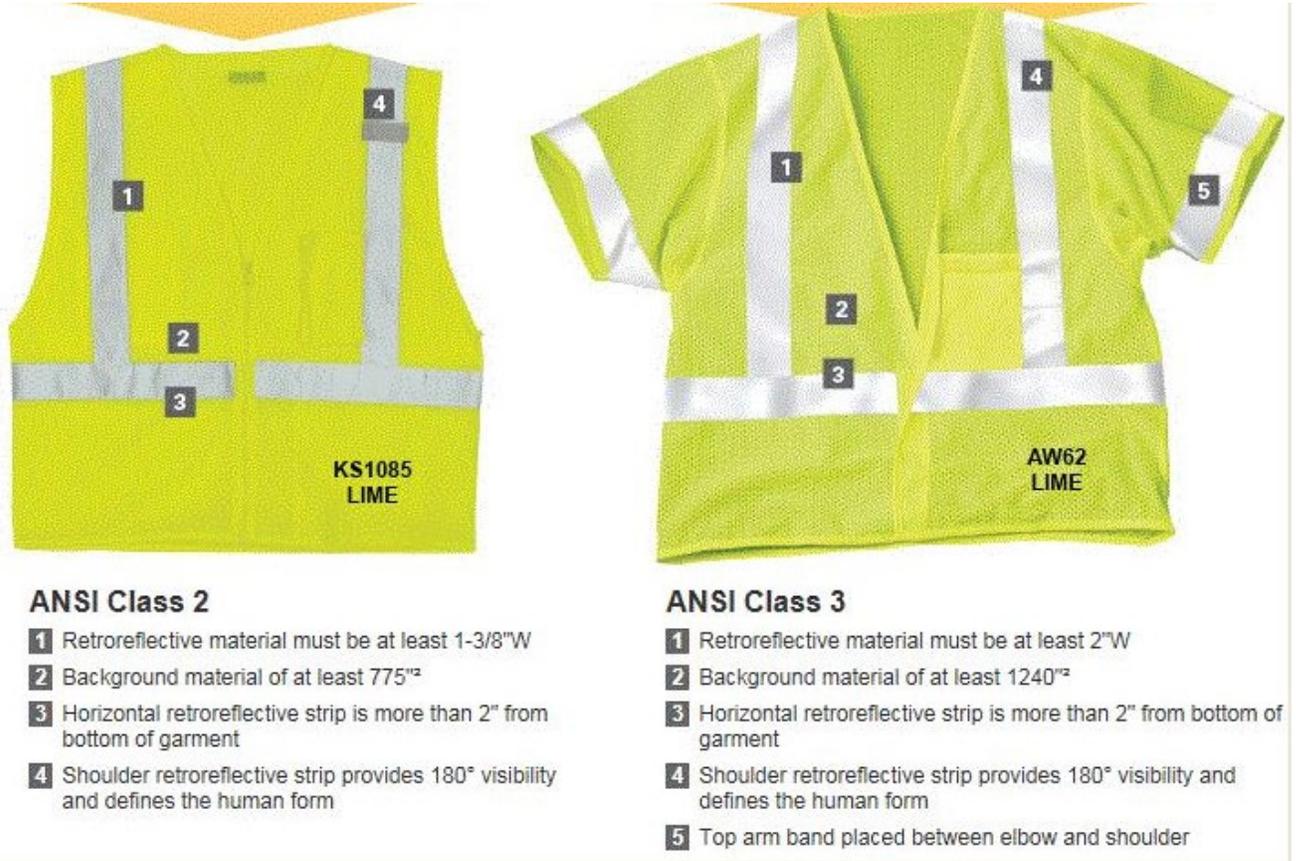
**10. Can I be reimbursed for purchasing an orange ball cap to use for flagging?**

No. The only hat eligible for reimbursement is an ANSI compliant Orange Hard Hat. The KDOT orange ball cap for flagging is provided through the stockroom. Updated 6/3/2023

**11. I have bought an ANSI compliant Orange Hard Hat that meets the PPE requirements and want to buy safety reflectivity to put on it; can I be reimbursed for the reflectivity kit?**

The hard hat is reimbursable, but the reflective striping is not. Update 9-9-2016

**The difference between ANSI Class 2 and ANSI Class 3 clothing.**



**Added June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2019 Sunshade for a ball cap:**



**Added July 1st 2020, Employee Gear Bag (minimum size 2900 cu in):**

