

# Proposed summary of changes



## Lead compliance code

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The proposed Lead compliance code (the code) provides practical guidance for those who have duties or obligations under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (OHS Act) and the *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017* (OHS Regulations) in relation to exposure to lead in the workplace.

In particular, the code provides information for duty holders about meeting their obligations under the OHS Act and Part 4.3 – Lead of the OHS Regulations in relation to managing health and safety risks, as well as how to identify hazards and control the risks associated with lead exposure in the workplace.

Currently, WorkSafe does not have a compliance code regarding lead exposure in the workplace, this code will be a new compliance code.

The following two existing documents have provided the foundations for the code:

- Code of practice for lead (2000 Code of practice), made in 2000 under the repealed *Occupational Health and Safety Act 1985* (OHS Act 1985)
- Lead – A guidebook for workplaces (2020 Lead guidebook), non-statutory guidance made in 2020.

While the code content is closely aligned with the 2020 Lead guidebook, there have been significant amendments from the 2000 Code of practice to reflect the current requirements of the OHS Regulations.

The changes incorporated into the code include:

- ❖ new definition of lead-risk work, as introduced by the *Occupational Health and Safety Amendment Regulations 2018* (2018 Amendment Regulations)
- ❖ lowered airborne lead exposure standard, as introduced by the 2018 Amendment Regulations
- ❖ updated requirements for the frequency of biological monitoring, as introduced by the 2018 Amendment Regulations
- ❖ reduced blood lead levels thresholds for removal from, and return to, lead-risk work, as introduced by the 2018 Amendment Regulations.
- ❖ greater detail on the duties owed by employers when lead processes and lead-risk work are being undertaken in their workplace

- ❖ examples of risk-control measures applicable to the removal of lead-containing paints, which is the most common lead process seen by WorkSafe inspectors
- ❖ information on consultation with employees and Health and Safety Representatives
- ❖ improvements to the structure and order of information across and within parts, for better readability
- ❖ style and language updates to ensure it is consistent with WorkSafe's advisory language framework, including appropriate use of 'must', 'needs to' and 'should'
- ❖ additional updates to align written content with general changes in the 12 compliance codes made in the last two years, including consistent information on employers' consultation duties and information, instruction and training.

Once finalised, the code will replace the non-statutory Lead guidebook as WorkSafe's main practical guidance for controlling risks associated with lead exposure in the workplace.