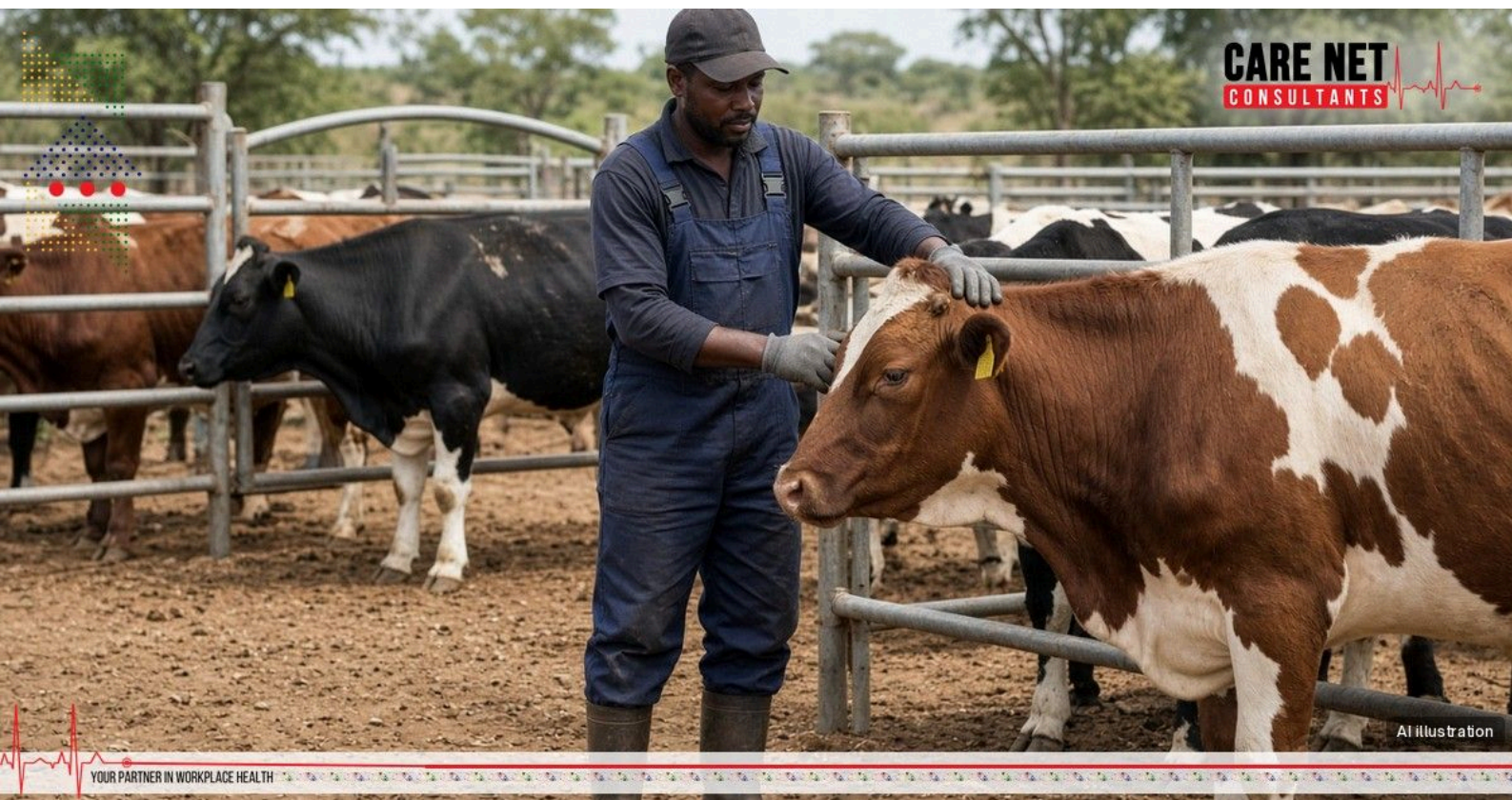


INDUSTRY HEALTH PACK

# ABATTOIR HEALTH PACK

Zoonoses, cold, knives and the medicals from entry to exit



The line moves fast, knives are sharp and gloves tear. On most days nothing happens. A surveillance programme exists for the day something does. This pack sets out the law for abattoirs, the medicals that follow a worker from entry to exit, and the checks that keep your file in order.

# WHAT THE LAW ASKS OF YOU

These are the South African rules that matter most for a typical abattoir employer. They are summarised from the regulations themselves; read the gazetted text for the full duties.

| LAW                                                                                     | WHAT IT ASKS OF THE EMPLOYER                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Meat Safety Act 40 of 2000</b>                                                       | Promotes meat safety and the safety of animal products and sets essential national standards for abattoirs. In force since 01/11/2000. Red meat and poultry regulations are made under it. <sup>[1]</sup>                                                                                                      |
| <b>Regulations for Hazardous Biological Agents, 2022 (GN R1887)</b>                     | Assess which biological agents workers may be exposed to, control the exposure, inform and train, and provide medical surveillance where the risk assessment shows it is needed. <sup>[2]</sup>                                                                                                                |
| <b>Hazardous Chemical Agents Regulations, 2021 (GN R280), regulation 7</b>              | Disinfectants, sanitisers and degreasers used in cleaning. Medical surveillance where an employee may be exposed to a listed agent or the practitioner recommends it. Initial evaluation before or within 14 days of starting; then at intervals not exceeding two years. <sup>[3]</sup>                       |
| <b>Noise Exposure Regulations, 2024 (GN 5953)</b>                                       | 85 dBA rating limit; 82 dBA action level where ototoxic chemicals or whole-body vibration are present; risk assessment at least every 24 months; baseline and periodic audiometry with written informed consent; records for 40 years. The 2003 NIHL Regulations were repealed on 06/09/2026. <sup>[4,5]</sup> |
| <b>Physical Agents Regulations, 2024 (GN 5952, as amended by GN 7149 of 20/02/2026)</b> | Cold stress in chillers and freezers. Risk assessment at least every 24 months, medical screening where the assessment calls for it, records for 40 years. They replaced the Environmental Regulations for Workplaces, 1987 on 06/09/2026. <sup>[6,7,8]</sup>                                                  |
| <b>Ergonomics Regulations, 2019 (GN R1589)</b>                                          | Assess and control ergonomic risk, train workers, and provide medical surveillance where indicated. Repetitive cutting and heavy lifting are typical ergonomic risks. <sup>[9]</sup>                                                                                                                           |
| <b>OHS Act 85 of 1993, section 8</b>                                                    | Provide and maintain, as far as reasonably practicable, a working environment that is safe and without risk to health. <sup>[10]</sup>                                                                                                                                                                         |

Numbers in red refer to the sources on the last page. This pack is general information, not legal or medical advice.

# THE MEDICALS **YOUR TEAM NEEDS**

Medical surveillance follows the exposure. Your risk assessment decides who is tested and for what, and your practitioner sets the programme. A typical abattoir employer plans for three moments in a worker's career.

| WHEN                             | WHAT IT IS FOR                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Pre-employment (baseline)</b> | Before the person starts, or for chemical exposure immediately before or within 14 days of starting (HCA regulation 7). Sets the baseline that later results are compared with. <sup>[3,11]</sup>                |
| <b>Periodic</b>                  | At the interval your risk assessment and occupational medicine practitioner set. For hazardous chemical agents, at intervals not exceeding two years unless the practitioner specifies otherwise. <sup>[3]</sup> |
| <b>Exit</b>                      | When the person leaves the job or the exposure. It closes the record and shows the worker's health at the end of exposure. <sup>[11]</sup>                                                                       |

## Tests and certificates to plan for

| TEST                          | NOTES                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Baseline</b>               | Vision and depth, hearing, spirometry, skin examination, musculoskeletal check, and serology (hepatitis B, and brucellosis or leptospirosis where indicated). <sup>[12]</sup> |
| <b>Ad hoc</b>                 | After a cut, a zoonotic exposure or a traumatic incident. <sup>[12]</sup>                                                                                                     |
| <b>Biological monitoring</b>  | Serology after a potential zoonotic exposure; patch testing for dermatitis where indicated. <sup>[12]</sup>                                                                   |
| <b>Risk-based form</b>        | Employers submit an Annexure 3 (job spec) form for each worker so the medical is tailored to the exposures. <sup>[12,13]</sup>                                                |
| <b>Certificate of fitness</b> | Issued against that form, with any restrictions recorded. <sup>[13]</sup>                                                                                                     |



### Planning medicals?

Tell us the headcount, the site and the exposures. A sales executive replies the same working day with a fixed-price proposal.<sup>[14]</sup>

#### Request a quote:

[carenetconsultants.co.za/forms/quote-request.html](https://carenetconsultants.co.za/forms/quote-request.html)

# THE MAIN RISKS, AND WHAT HELPS

Prevention starts at the source: remove or reduce the hazard first, then protect the person. Medicals check that the controls are working.

## Zoonoses

Infections that pass from animals to people, such as brucellosis, leptospirosis and Q fever, through cuts, splashes and contact.

**Prevention:** Cut-resistant gloves, face and eye protection, wound care, surveillance where the assessment calls for it.

## Cuts

Knives and saws on a fast line.

**Prevention:** Sharp, maintained knives, mesh gloves, first aid and wound reporting.

## Cold

Chillers and freezers.

**Prevention:** Insulated clothing, warm breaks, time limits.

## Noise

Saws, compressors and chilling equipment.

**Prevention:** Hearing protection, audiometry.

## Strain

Repetitive cutting and lifting carcasses.

**Prevention:** Rotation, lifting aids, a musculoskeletal check.

## Chemicals and skin

Disinfectants and wet work.

**Prevention:** Gloves, safety data sheets, skin checks.



## For your notice board

Our World Hand Hygiene Day poster is part of the free Care Net Health Awareness Pack, with posters for the South African health calendar in A4, A3 and A0.

[carenetconsultants.co.za/health-awareness-pack.html](http://carenetconsultants.co.za/health-awareness-pack.html)

# YOUR ONE-PAGE CHECKLIST

Print it, tick it, and file it with your risk assessment. Anything left unticked is your next action.

- ☐ Biological agents risk assessment done for every task on the line
- ☐ Annexure 3 job spec completed for each worker before the medical
- ☐ Baseline medical, including serology where indicated, before starting
- ☐ Post-incident medical process for cuts and zoonotic exposures
- ☐ Cut-resistant gloves, face and eye protection issued and worn
- ☐ Wound reporting and first aid on every shift
- ☐ Cold stress assessed for chillers and freezers
- ☐ Noise assessed; baseline audiograms on file
- ☐ Chemical register and safety data sheets for all cleaning products
- ☐ Ergonomic risks on the line assessed
- ☐ Exit medical when a worker leaves
- ☐ Medical records stored confidentially (POPIA)
- ☐ Emergency numbers 10177 and 112 posted

Checked by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

## FIVE-MINUTE TOOLBOX TALK

# EVERY CUT COUNTS

On a busy line, a small cut is easy to ignore. In an abattoir it can let an infection in. Five minutes on what to do.

1. Report every cut, however small, to your supervisor and the first aider.
2. Wash the wound, then cover it with a waterproof dressing before going back to the line.
3. Wear your mesh glove and eye protection. Replace a torn glove straight away.
4. Keep your knife sharp. A blunt knife needs more force and slips more.
5. A fever, aching joints or flu-like illness after work: tell the clinic you work in an abattoir.
6. Wash your hands before eating, drinking or smoking.

**Talk it through**

- Where is the first aid kit on our line?
- Who needs new gloves?
- What do we do after a splash to the eyes?

Ambulance from  
a landline**10177**Emergency from  
a cellphone**112**

Save both numbers in your phone today. Know where the first aid kit is and who the first aider is on your shift.

Talk given by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ Number attending: \_\_\_\_

# HOW CARE NET CAN HELP

Abattoir medicals from entry to exit, at a clinic or with a mobile unit on site, matched to biological, cold and noise exposures. Every medical includes a risk-based exposure form and a review by an occupational health nursing practitioner, and is captured in My Clinic Online, our POPIA-aware record system.<sup>[15]</sup>

**4**

## fixed clinics

Walk-ins welcome. Busiest 8am to 2pm; afternoons are quieter. Saturdays for booked groups of more than 10.<sup>[16]</sup>

**16**

## mobile clinic units

From 10 employees on one site, Monday to Saturday. Most units carry inverters and battery packs.<sup>[14]</sup>

## Our fixed clinics

### Midrand

875 16th Road Midrand, Unit 2 Alphen Square  
North, Randjespark, Midrand, 1685  
+27 60 070 2723

### Elandsfontein

Cnr North Reef and Atlas Road, Shop 2 Delmond  
Centre, Elandsfontein, 1429  
+27 60 070 2723

### Brackenfell, Cape Town

Cnr Kruis and Capricorn Way, Unit 15 Reserve 1,  
Western Cape, 7560  
+27 60 070 2723

### Gqeberha

40 6th Avenue, Gqeberha, 6045  
+27 60 070 2723

## Get in touch

### Request a quote

[carenetconsultants.co.za/forms/quote-request.html](https://carenetconsultants.co.za/forms/quote-request.html)

A sales executive replies the same working day with a fixed-price proposal.<sup>[14]</sup>

### Book medicals

[carenetconsultants.co.za/forms/booking-request.html](https://carenetconsultants.co.za/forms/booking-request.html)

### Call or WhatsApp

+27 60 070 2723 | [wa.me/27600702723](https://wa.me/27600702723)

### Email

[salesdesk@carenetconsultants.co.za](mailto:salesdesk@carenetconsultants.co.za)

Ambulance from a  
landline

**10177**

Emergency from a  
cellphone

**112**

In a medical emergency call these first. Care Net clinics are not emergency services.

# SOURCES

Accessed October 2026. Legal summaries are drawn from the gazetted regulations on gov.za, labour.gov.za and health.gov.za, and from Acts Online. Health facts come from the named organisations. Care Net service details come from carenetconsultants.co.za.

1. Meat Safety Act 40 of 2000 (gov.za). <https://www.gov.za/documents/meat-safety-act>
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13. Care Net Consultants: Agriculture and abattoir medicals. <https://carenetconsultants.co.za/agriculture-abattoir-medicals.html>
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16. Care Net Consultants: Contact us and clinic addresses. <https://carenetconsultants.co.za/contact.html>
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This pack is general information for employers. It is not legal or medical advice. Read the regulations for the full requirements, and speak to a qualified practitioner about individual health concerns. Worker medical information is special personal information under POPIA: keep it confidential and share fitness outcomes, not diagnoses.

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