

Working Alone Safety Program

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1. Some job functions in Facilities Management will be performed by lone workers. This program is to encourage awareness and promote safe work procedures for employees who work alone. Working alone describes situations when an employee is:
 - 1.1.1. The only worker at the workplace or work site
 - 1.1.2. Not directly supervised
 - 1.1.3. Working at a site where assistance may not be readily available
 - 1.1.4. In an area where direct contact with a co-worker or supervisor is not available
 - 1.1.5. In a dangerous area (either due to work processes or likelihood of being assaulted or accosted)
 - 1.1.6. Traveling away from campus
 - 1.1.7. This program does not include employees who work administrative positions from home or alternate approved work site.
- 1.2. The objectives of the Working Alone Program are:
 - 1.2.1. Identify hazards to workers working alone and to try to eliminate, minimize or control them
 - 1.2.2. Provide assistance for workers working alone in the event of an accident or emergency
 - 1.2.3. Identify responsibilities of employees and supervisors
 - 1.2.4. Recognize who should not work alone
 - 1.2.5. Provide training assistance
- 1.3. The Working Alone Program applies to Facilities Management employees whose job duties require them to work alone in any facets of the job.

2.0 Responsibilities

2.1 Facilities Management Safety Officer

- 2.1.1 Maintains, reviews, and updates the Working Alone Safety Program and;
- 2.1.2 Provides assistance and recommendations at the request of supervisors and employees.

2.2 Employees Working Alone are responsible for:

- 2.2.1 Recognizing uncontrolled/unmitigated hazards associated with their jobs and how to minimize them.
- 2.2.2 Reporting hazards to supervisors.
- 2.2.3 Working alone only when necessary, rescheduling assignments (when possible) to keep from working alone.

2.2.4 Carry a cell phone, iPad or two-way radio. Ensure sufficient operation and battery life.

2.3 Supervisors are responsible for:

2.3.1 Communicating these guidelines to employees and students through training programs.

2.3.2 Ensuring work performed alone or in isolation has a completed risk assessment that has been shared with the lone worker.

2.3.3 Adequate control measures are implemented prior to approval of work.

2.3.4 Consulting and training employees, students and visitors that work alone.

2.3.5 Provide communication devices such as cell phones and radios.

2.3.6 Ensure lone workers understand the risks associated with their work and that the necessary safety precautions are carried out.

2.3.7 Provide guidance in situations of uncertainty.

2.3.8 Implement controls to eliminate or control hazards prior to lone work.

2.3.9 Supervision of health and safety issues when checking the progress and quality of work; periodic site visits and discussions in which health and safety issues are raised.

3.0 Risk Assessment

3.1 Before allowing a worker to work alone, the employee should consider the following:

3.1.1 Identification of hazards within the area.

3.1.2 Identification of methods and frequency of communications.

3.1.3 Can any temporary access equipment, such as portable ladders or trestles, be safely handled by one person?

3.1.4 Can all the machinery and goods involved in the workplace be safely handled by one person?

3.1.5 Are there any chemicals or hazardous substances being used that may pose a risk to the worker?

3.1.6 Does the work involve lifting objects too large for one person?

3.1.7 Is more than one person needed to operate essential controls for the safe running of equipment or workplace transport?

3.1.8 Possibility of violence.

3.1.9 History of client/customer – is it safe to visit alone?

3.1.10 Medical fitness of the person working alone – possibility of illness.

3.1.11 Possibility of accidents – consider the activities taking place e.g. accessing ladders or steps

3.1.12 If the lone worker's first language is not English, are provisions made for clear communications, especially in

case of emergency?

3.1.13 How can supervision/advice be provided easily?

3.1.14 Methods of raising the alarm in the event of no contact within an agreed time.

3.1.15 Can a person be left alone at their place of work?

3.2 The risk assessment should help decide the right level of supervision.

3.3 Identify the hazards of the work, assess the risks involved, and put measures in place to avoid or control the risks.

3.4 It is important to talk to employees and their safety representatives as they are a valuable source of information and advice. This will help to ensure that all relevant hazards have been identified and appropriate controls chosen.

4.0 Who shouldn't work alone?

4.1 Some job functions have inherent hazards that will require more than one employee at the job site.

4.2 Some examples of work functions that present hazards that require more than one worker include:

4.2.1 Permit-required Confined Spaces

4.2.2 Cryogenic (low temperature) materials/processes

4.2.3 Toxic gases, liquids or solids

4.2.4 Flammable liquids

4.2.5 High pressure or high voltage systems

4.2.6 Using fall arrest equipment and scaffolding

4.2.7 Equipment or machinery requiring spotters

4.2.8 Extreme weather conditions

4.2.9 Services where cash or goods are handled that may attract criminals

4.2.10 Tree takedowns and elevated work

4.2.11 Transient camp inspection and cleaning

5.0 Training:

5.1 Training is particularly important where there is limited supervision to control, guide and help in situations of uncertainty. Training may be critical to avoid panic reactions in unusual situations. Lone workers need to be sufficiently experienced and /or trained to understand the risks and how to fully take precautions.

5.2 Set limits for the worker as to what can and cannot be done while working alone.

5.3 Ensure employees are competent to deal with circumstances which are new, unusual or beyond the scope of training, such as when to stop work and seek advice from a supervisor.

- 5.4 Those individuals working alone must have the appropriate training for the identified hazards, training can include providing workers with a safety checklist to assist them to identify and anticipate their own hazards.
- 5.5 Individuals who perform hazardous work will be provided safe work procedures by the supervisor.
- 5.6 All equipment must be used as intended, according to the manufacturer's specification and as set out in the safe work procedure. All equipment must be maintained in good working order.
- 5.7 Appropriate first aid and emergency supplies will be provided by the employer. The employee must know where first aid and emergency supplies are stored and how to use them properly. Employees shall also be trained in methods of notifying the OCC or a supervisor when the needs arise.
- 5.8 Individuals who may be at risk of violence because they work alone may need training in the use of different communication equipment and/or how to behave when confronted with a situation such as an intruder. The employee will work with the supervisor to identify the potential situation, options for its resolution and the supervisor will arrange for appropriate training, as required.