	Safety Policy Working Alone	
Document Owner: SD63 Health and Safety Department	Approved By: Ryan Lacasse	Last Revised Date: September 27th, 2022

Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to provide measures to protect the health and safety of, and minimize risk to, any employee working alone or in isolation. Compliance with this process meets the requirements of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations as outline in the Workers compensation Act.

Definitions

Working alone or in isolation – To work in circumstances where assistance would not be readily available to the worker in a case of emergency or in case the worker is injured or in ill health.

Readily Available – In order to determine if readily available conditions have been met, the following should be considered:

- Presence of others: Are people in the vicinity?
- Awareness: Will other persons capable of providing assistance be aware of the workers need?
- Willingness: Is it reasonable to expect others to help the person?
- Timeliness: Will assistance be provided within a reasonable timeline?

Emergency Assistance – Means of communication to gain assistance in the event of an emergency involving an accident or serious injury, illness or threat of violence.

Hazard – Situation, condition, process, material or tool that may cause an injury or illness to an employee

Assigned to work alone or in isolation – Being assigned to work alone means that the worker

- Is directed or expected to work during scheduled or predetermined period of time, such as a specified work shift or a specified portion of a work shift
- During that time, it is anticipated or expected that the worker will be working alone or in isolation

Note: Short or intermittent periods of time without being directed to do so are not considered assigned work. Workers that come in early, work late, or coming in on a day off are not considered to be assigned to work alone. Section 4.20 would not apply; however, a process should still remain in place to ensure the safety of staff.

Legislative Information OHSR 4.20

Hazard Identification and Control

Before a worker is assigned to work alone a hazard assessment shall be completed.

Risks must be minimized to the lowest practicable level using the hierarchy of controls.

Checking in Process

A written process must be developed for checking-in on the well being of workers assigned to work alone.


The process must include pre-determined check in times, and how to respond if a check in is missed.

Hazard Assessment and Saanich Schools Procedure

Through review of positions and “assigned to work alone or in isolation” legislation it has been determined that two separate procedures are to be developed for working alone.

One procedure will be utilized for staff in a building alone but they do not meet the legislative requirements of section 4.20. This procedure focuses on what individuals are allowed to do and the associated check in process.

The second procedure is for those employees that are assigned to work alone, this will normally consist of trades or custodial employees.

	<p align="center">Safe Work Procedure Working Alone – Non-assigned</p>	
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Roles and Responsibilities

Supervisor

- 1) Identify individuals required to work alone.
- 2) Review tasks and determine if there are any high-risk activities
- 3) Take steps to eliminate or reduce hazards

Employee

- 1) Participate in the evaluation of tasks being performed
- 2) Follow Working alone procedure
- 3) Advise supervisor of any arising concerns

Risk Assessments


Workers that are in early, stay late, or are in on days off alone are not to perform any high-risk activities, these may include shop work, working from heights, lab work. operation of lifts or heavy-duty equipment and any other tasks identified as high risk by the direct supervisor.

The following tasks are identified as approved for non-assigned work.

Tasks	Hazards	Controls	Risk Ranking
Administrative Tasks (lesson plans, grading, etc.)	Ergonomics	Only lift items safe to do so for one person.	LOW
		Task rotation (do not sit in one place for extended periods of time)	
		Stretch and take micro breaks	
	Trips, Slips, Falls	Wear appropriate footwear	LOW
		Housekeeping in work area (watch for cords or other items)	
	Fire or other emergencies	Alarm system in place.	LOW
		Review evacuation protocol	
	Violence in the workplace	Keep exterior doors locked	LOW
		Notify supervisor or designate you will be in the building	

Procedure

- 1) Each school location must establish a process for employees to notify supervision or a designate that they are in the building alone.
 - a. Example: Text or Phone call
 - b. Supervisors must assign a designate or not allow access outside of scheduled hours if they are not available
- 2) As the work is not assigned, staff must notify the supervisor or designate when they arrive and when they leave the school location. Interval check-ins are not required.
- 3) Schools may wish to implement a sign in process so school alarms are not armed while others are in the building.
- 4) If an alarm is accidentally triggered, please call the alarm company to notify.
 - a. Telus (Prices) – 250-384-2353
- 5) In case of emergency contact 911.

	<p align="center">Safe Work Procedure Working Alone – Assigned Work</p>	
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Purpose

This procedure is particularly for custodial staff that are assigned to work alone, however trades, clerical, or other employees may also be assigned to work alone during regular scheduled hours.

Employees that meet the legal definition of working alone or in isolation must follow this process to be compliant with section 4.20 of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations.

Roles and Responsibilities

Supervisor (Field Level)

- 1) Identify individuals required to work alone.
- 2) Review tasks and determine if there are any high-risk activities
- 3) Take steps to eliminate or reduce hazards
- 4) Fill out Working Alone Check In Document

Employee

- 1) Participate in the evaluation of tasks being performed
- 2) Follow Working alone procedure
- 3) Advise supervisor of any arising concerns

Supervisor (Manager Level)

- 1) Ensure staff are aware of the working alone process
- 2) Review with field level supervisor the requirements of the program
- 3) Ensure check in documents are filled out when required

Risk Assessments

Each individual manager/supervisor shall review the specific hazards at the workplace with their employee.

A general list of hazards that may be encountered are in the following table:

Staff that are working alone shall not perform high risks tasks. If custodial or maintenance employees are required to perform high risk tasks another employee must be readily available in case of emergency.

All hazards associated with your tasks while working alone should be discussed with your supervisor, to ensure controls are in place.

Tasks	Hazards	Controls	Risk Ranking
Wet and Dry Mopping	Slips and Trips	Utilize wet area signs to provide reminders of potential water hazards	LOW
		Use appropriate non-slip footwear	
		Leave mop and bucket in a location that can be seen	
	Ergonomics	Utilize light weight or ergonomic mops provided	
		Practice safe mopping techniques and do not overreach	
		Rotate tasks throughout the shift	
Surface wiping	Biological hazards	Utilize proper chemical solutions	LOW
		Wear disposable gloves	
		Review Biohazards Procedure	
Chemical Mixing	Contact with chemicals (eyes, hands, face)	Use only approved chemicals and review SDS's (most are now biofriendly)	MED
		Wear assigned PPE (glasses, gloves)	
Equipment Use (Auto Scrubber)	Improper Use	Ensure you have received training on the equipment	LOW
		Ensure maintenance is done as per manufactures guidelines	
Wet and Dry Vacuuming	Electrical Shock	Check all cords for damage prior to use	LOW
	Ergonomics	Empty bins regularly to reduce weight	
		Do not reach and utilize proper attachments for the task	
Empty Trash / Lifting Items	Ergonomics	Do not overload bins when moving to garbage disposal	MED
		Use caution when climbing steps to bins	
		Use safe lifting techniques	
Moving Furniture	Ergonomics	Only small furniture is to moved while working alone, if needed request assistance	MED

*Emergency work by maintenance (electrical, mechanical, alarms) should be discussed prior to work occurring. If low or medium risk in nature the work can occur alone, while following check in procedures. If the task requires high risk work another employee must be present. This can include the custodian in the building, the maintenance supervisor, a co-worker, an administrator, or a facilities manager.

Procedure

Contact Process

1. At the beginning of the work shift, the employee working alone must contact their supervisor and notify them they have begun their shift.
 - a. For custodial staff, employees working alone are usually pre-determined by that days scheduling
2. The employee working alone must contact their direct supervisor every 2 hours or as determine by their shift.
 - a. Example: Custodian is required to work a 4 hour shift alone at a school starting at 4:00 pm. The employee shall contact the supervisor at 4:00pm, 6:00pm, and at the end of shift 8:00pm.
3. At the end of the work shift or when the employee transitions to a place they are no longer working alone the employee must notify the supervisor

Acceptable Methods of Communication

The following are acceptable methods to check in with a supervisor:

- Phone Call (By cell or school phone)
- Text Message
- Email

Employee Missed Call-in

1. In the event the employee fails to check in at the 2-hour interval by 10 minutes the supervisor will
 - a. Attempt to contact the employee by phone call
 - b. Physically visit the site or have another designate visit the site within an additional 10 minutes
 - c. If the employee is found to be in medical distress 911 shall be called
 - d. Failure to check in multiple times may result in discussion with the area manager

Documentation of Check-ins

For all employees working alone the supervisor will maintain a log of check-ins on the Working Alone Check-In Document.

Other Contact Information

Additional information is supplied for employees working alone outside of normal work hours.

1. In case of immediate emergencies please **call 9-1-1.**
2. If the security alarm is accidentally set off please call Telus Security **(250-384-2353)**
3. For facilities related emergencies (power outage, when leaving sick, trouble lights) please call the Facilities Manager on call **(250-514-2696)**
4. For custodial assistance please call the custodial supervisor **(250-920-8347)**



Working Alone or in Isolation – Check in Document

Date:	Department/Area:
Supervisor:	Contact (if different than supervisor):

Name of Worker (Working Alone)	Location	Communication Method Established (phone, text, email etc.)	Check in Intervals (Every 2 hours, write down time)	
			Start Time:	
			2-hour check:	
			4-hour check:	
			6-hour check:	
			End Time:	

			Start Time:	
			2-hour check:	
			4-hour check:	
			6-hour check:	
			End Time:	

			Start Time:	
			2-hour check:	
			4-hour check:	
			6-hour check:	
			End Time:	

			Start Time:	
			2-hour check:	
			4-hour check:	
			6-hour check:	
			End Time:	

Comments (Please note any missed check-ins or hazards not identified in the procedure):

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End of shift time:	Supervisor Sign-off:
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