

 <b>Policies and Procedures</b>		Number <b>6410</b>	Title <b>Working Alone or in Isolation</b>	
		Replaces	B6000.4	
		Effective	2019.05.01	Next review :
Executive Responsibility	Administrative Responsibility	Recommended by Policy Review Committee	2019.04.17	
VP College Services/CFO	Director, Human Resources	Recommended/Approved by Education Council	N/A	
		Approved by President	2019.04.30	

#### A. PURPOSE

To provide for measures to protect the health and safety of, and minimize risk to, any worker that works alone or in isolation during the course of their employment as defined in the Workers Compensation Act, *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation*, (Sections 4.20-4.23). Adherence to this policy will help to meet health and safety legal requirements and demonstrate due diligence when working alone or in isolation.

#### B. SCOPE / LIMITS

This policy applies to all Selkirk College employees (faculty, staff and paid students) who have been assigned to work alone or in isolation under OHSR Sections 4.20.1-4.23.

#### C. PRINCIPLES

Selkirk College is committed to implementing a system to support the safety and security of employees working alone. Each department or school must conduct a risk assessment and eliminate or control the hazards of working alone. Where hazards cannot be eliminated, the College will ensure sufficient training, implement safe operating procedures, and provide appropriate personal protective equipment. The risk assessment must be reviewed on an annual basis or when work processes are introduced or changed.

#### D. DEFINITIONS

**Hazard** A condition or thing that may be dangerous to the safety or health of employees.

**Risk** The chance that somebody could be harmed by hazards, as well as how serious the harm could be.

**Administrative Controls** The provision, use and scheduling of work activities and resources in the workplace, including planning, organizing, staffing and coordinating to manage risk (the modification of work processes or activities to minimize risk).

**Engineering Controls** The physical arrangement, design or alteration of workstations, equipment, materials or other aspects of the physical work environment (the modification of the physical work environment to minimize risk).

**Risk Assessment** A proactive process designed to protect workers by identifying hazards in the workplace and how those hazards may put workers at risk. A rating system is used to determine the level of risk, and controls are put in place based on the outcome of the rating.

**Supervisor** A person, including a teaching or research supervisor, department head, dean, manager and any other person in a position of authority, authorized by an employer to oversee or direct the work of workers

or students.

**Worker** Any person engaged in an occupation in the service of an employer, including faculty, staff, and students.

**Working Alone or in isolation** According to the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation, working alone or in isolation means “to work in circumstances where assistance would not be readily available to the worker in case of an emergency or in case the worker is injured or in ill health.” In these circumstances extra precautions and requirements may be warranted. A variety of work environments and situations call for various interpretations of “working alone or in isolation.”

**Work Site** Any place where work is performed, including locations such as laboratories, offices, field locations, maintenance sites, vehicles and other off-site locations.

## **E. PROCEDURE**

All supervisors and all individuals working in a supervisory capacity at Selkirk College are responsible to be aware of the Working Alone or In Isolation Policy and its Procedures, and to ensure so far as is reasonably practical that the Policy and Procedures are complied with.

Working alone or in isolation may be hazardous depending on the circumstances and the degree of risk. All situations where persons may be working alone or in isolation will be assessed to determine the degree of risk, which will depend on a number of factors including, but not limited to, the location and nature of the work to be performed. Following the completion of the assessment, the College shall take steps, so far as is reasonably practicable, to eliminate or control the identified hazards. The control of risks includes the development of appropriate safe work or operating procedures and the provision of relevant training. Where, despite controls, activity involves a degree of risk of serious injury, it may be determined that the work activity cannot be performed when the individual is working alone or in isolation. A working-alone plan that is appropriate to the activity and the level of risk must be developed for each case of working alone or in isolation.

Well in advance of a working-alone situation, the supervisor must:

- (1) determine if there is a need to work alone or in isolation,
- (2) complete a Hazard Identification and Risk Management Survey (Appendix A), and provide this information to the employee,
- (3) detail a strategy to ensure safety and regulatory compliance, and
- (4) complete a Working Alone or in Isolation Information Form (Appendix B) and submit the form in advance of the scheduled work to the Health and Safety Coordinator and Human Resources.

## **F. RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **1. Deans and Departments Heads will:**

- a. Direct supervisors in their areas to develop and implement a site-specific policy and appropriate preventative and response procedures for working alone or in isolation; and monitor to ensure the policy and measures are communicated, enforced and effective.

### **2. Supervisors are required to review all workplaces under their jurisdiction and:**

- a. identify all workers who work alone or in isolation;

- b. conduct a risk assessment to identify potential hazards and the risks associated with those hazards, and ensure workers know the associated hazards and risks;
- c. take necessary steps, so far as is reasonably practicable, to eliminate the hazard(s) and minimize the risk(s) from the hazard(s) by using administrative or engineering controls or combination of the two;
- d. educate workers on emergency procedures, contacts and numbers (e.g. First Aid). The worker must know what to do in case of emergency/injury;
- e. develop a site-specific Working Alone or in Isolation Policy and Procedure to address the risk(s);
- f. communicate the site-specific Working Alone or in Isolation Policy and Procedure to all workers under their jurisdiction;
- g. ensure understanding and compliance with the Policy and Procedure;
- h. review the site-specific Policy and Procedure annually; and
- i. maintain documentation of the site-specific Working Alone or in Isolation Policy and Procedure within each department.

**3. Individuals required to work alone or in isolation will:**

- a. cooperate in the development of risk assessment and site-specific Working Alone or in Isolation plan;
- b. comply with the site-specific Working Alone or in Isolation Policy;
- c. communicate any unsafe conditions to the supervisor; and
- d. follow all job procedures and use proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

4. Occupational Health and Safety will provide guidance and act as a resource.

## **G. REGULATIONS**

<http://www2.worksafebc.com/publications/OHSRegulation/Part4.asp#SectionNumber:4.20.1>

## **H. OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES**

6400 Violence in the Workplace

6420 Occupational Health and Safety

6030 Sexual Violence Prevention and Response

6010 Human Rights, Harassment and Discrimination

**Key words:** violence, WCB Regulations, incidents, victim