

# WORKING ALONE

## Background

Based on the Occupational Health and Safety Act and its regulations, this administrative procedure endeavors to ensure the safety of Northern Lights School Division who work alone. 'Working alone' means to be at the work site in circumstances where assistance is not readily available in the event of an injury, illness or emergency. Under this procedure, employees are on the work site when they reach the parking lot. For most staff members, the work site is a school. Some workers, including maintenance staff and certain Division office staff, may have a variety of work sites.

For the purposes of this procedure, the term 'supervisor' refers to the school Principal when referring to school based staff, the Transportation Supervisor when referring to transportation staff, the Maintenance Supervisor when referring to maintenance staff, and the Superintendent when referring to Division office staff.

Consistent with the Occupational Health and Safety publication, "Working Alone Safely: A Guide for Employers and Employees," this procedure recognizes five categories of employees:

1. Employees who handle cash.
  - ♦ These employees include school secretaries and some teachers who may be at risk for robbery.
2. Employees who travel to meet with others.
  - ♦ Certain student assistants, bus drivers, Division office staff and others fit this category.
3. Employees who do hazardous work but have no routine interaction with others.
  - ♦ On occasion, some of our maintenance personnel fit this category.
4. Employees who travel alone but have no routine interaction with others.
  - ♦ Maintenance staff frequently fit this category. Staff traveling to a conference may fit this category, particularly if they stay over night.
5. Employees whose worksite is isolated from the public view.
  - ♦ Custodial staff, teachers and administrators who access the school on evenings or weekends are examples of employees who fit this category.

## Procedures

1. All supervisors will conduct a hazard assessment to identify existing or potential hazards.
  - 1.1 The supervisor will ensure that employees have the opportunity to participate in the hazard assessment and the elimination or control of any hazard identified.
  - 1.2 The supervisor will take all reasonable steps to control or eliminate hazards.
  - 1.3 The supervisor will maintain a written hazard assessment document, including review dates and measures taken to eliminate or control hazards.

- 1.4 On an annual basis, the supervisor will review and update the hazard assessment with staff.
2. The supervisor will communicate the hazard assessment to all employees affected by the assessment.
3. The supervisor will establish an effective means of communication between any worker who works alone and persons capable of responding to the worker's needs.
  - 3.1 A radio, telephone or other electronic device constitutes an effective means of communication.
  - 3.2 Where radios, telephones or other electronic devices are impractical, a visit or other form of direct contact constitutes an effective means of communication.
  - 3.3 The intervals of time between contact periods will be determined by and appropriate to the degree of hazard.
  - 3.4 The contact method and interval will be part of the written hazard assessment document.
4. The supervisor will ensure that all employees receive training and are competent to work alone safely.
  - 4.1 Details of the training provided will be included in the risk assessment document.
5. The supervisor will ensure that all equipment and vehicles are in good working condition, meet appropriate regulatory standards, and are used in accordance with manufacturer's specifications.
6. The supervisor will ensure that First Aid supplies are available in accordance with applicable regulations.

Reference: Occupational Health and Safety Act, RSA 2000, c. 0-2  
General Safety Regulation (AR 448/83)  
Working Alone Safely: A Guide for Employers and Employees