



WESTERN UNIVERSITY

SUPERVISORS HANDBOOK
TO
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY

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1. Introduction

Supervisors have a legal obligation under the Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act with respect to workplace safety and this guide is directed to supervisors to aid them in meeting these obligations. This will provide supervisors with the University, with an overview of their responsibilities in the area of occupational health and safety. It also aims to familiarize them with the resources available within the University.

Specific responsibilities of individual supervisors will depend to a large extent on the type of work being performed and on the size and nature of the work unit. Therefore, this guide cannot provide a complete outline of the specific duties and responsibilities of every supervisory position.

2. Health and Safety Legislation

The Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act is the primary legislation governing workplace health and safety and its purpose is to protect workers against health and safety hazards in the workplace.

The Act sets out the rights and duties of all parties in the workplace and is based on the internal responsibility system that strives to have everyone work together to identify and develop solutions to workplace health and safety problems. A list of regulations made under the Occupational Health and Safety Act is provided in Appendix 1.

In addition to the Act, there are a variety of other specific provincial and federal legislation, regulations and municipal by-laws of which supervisors may need to be aware of, depending upon their particular job functions and the types of hazards with which they deal. A list of such additional legislation is provided in Appendix 2.

3. Supervisors and Workers

Supervisor

A supervisor is anyone who is either in charge of a workplace or has authority over a worker. This broad definition given in the Occupational Health and Safety Act is applicable in both the academic and administrative divisions of the University. Thus, in academic departments, individual faculty members or principle investigators may have charge of a workplace (e.g. a laboratory) or have authority over graduate students, teaching assistants, administrative staff, and other University employees. In such a case they are supervisors as defined in the Act. Among the administrative staff of the University the supervisory role is generally more clearly defined and outlined in position descriptions.

A supervisor shall ensure that a worker:

- works in the manner and with the protective devices, measures and procedures required by the Act and the regulations

- uses or wears the equipment, protective devices or clothing that the worker's employer requires to be used and worn
- advise a worker of the existence of any potential or actual danger to the health or safety of the worker of which the supervisor is aware
- where so prescribed, provide a worker with written instructions as to the measures and procedures to be taken for protection of the worker; and
- take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of a worker

In addition to the responsibilities outlined in the Act a supervisor must ensure that:

- they are knowledgeable about potential or actual health and safety hazards in the workplace and advise workers about these hazards
- equipment, materials and protective devices required by regulation are provided to workers and maintained in good condition
- workers follow workplace procedures and use protective equipment required by the University and by any applicable regulations
- workers are provided with information, instruction on safe work practices
- all hazardous materials present in the workplace are identified and labelled in the manner prescribed by regulations such as the WHMIS Regulation and that an up-to-date inventory of these materials is kept in the workplace

Worker

A worker is a person who is paid to perform work or supply services. Thus all University employees are workers. In addition, where students are paid to perform work (ex. Teaching assistants) they become workers under the Act. It is the policy of the University that it will be a safe and healthful place to work and study. Therefore students should be afforded the same protection that would be afforded workers under the Act.

A worker shall:

- work in compliance with the provisions of the Act and the regulations
- use or wear the equipment, protective devices or clothing that the worker's employer requires to be used or worn
- report to his or her employer or supervisor the absence of or defect in any equipment or protective device of which the worker is aware and which may endanger himself, herself or another worker; and
- report to his or her employer or supervisor any contravention of this Act or the regulations or the existence of any hazard of which he or she knows

4. Accident Reporting

All full-time, part-time, temporary, and training participant employees of the University are covered under the Workplace Safety Insurance Board Act for injuries and illnesses resulting from their employment. Coverage includes payment of health care costs and loss of earnings due to time lost from work.

Under the Act, the University is obligated to report to the Workplace Safety Insurance Board (WSIB) every accident to a worker which results in lost time from work past the day of the accident, or which necessitates health care from a medical facility or medical practitioner such as a physician, hospital, dentist, chiropractor or specialist within 3 days of it happening.

If a supervisor fails to report the incident to Occupational Health and Safety within the required time a fine will be charged to that department. It is therefore extremely important that all work related accidents, injuries, or occupational diseases be reported within 24 hours of occurrence.

All accidents, incidents, and near misses must be reported on an official [Accident Incident Reporting Form](#) in accordance with the [Accident Incident Investigation Procedure](#).

The University also requires that all accidents to students or visitors be reported on the same accident/incident form to Occupational Health and Safety.

Reporting of Critical Injuries

A critical injury is one of a serious nature which either:

- places life in jeopardy
- produces unconsciousness
- results in substantial loss of blood
- involves the fracture of a leg or an arm
- involves the amputation of a leg, arm, hand or foot
- consists of burns to a major portion of the body
- causes the loss of sight in an eye

Any critical injury must be immediately reported to Occupational Health and Safety.

Supervisors are responsible for:

1. Procuring immediate medical attention;
2. Notifying the appropriate emergency services by calling 911
3. Notifying Occupational Health and Safety (519-661-2111 ext. 84741) immediately. Further reporting of the injury by OHS is required to the Ministry of Labour and the University's Occupational Health and Safety Committee.
4. Ensuring that the site of the accident remains undisturbed and isolated, until all investigations are complete
5. Preparing a written report of the circumstances of the accident on an [Accident Incident Reporting Form](#)

Injuries While Outside of Ontario

Staff members injured while performing their job outside of the Province of Ontario may be covered for benefits under the Workplace Safety Insurance Board Act. Ontario

residents are automatically covered for up to six months while temporarily working outside of Ontario. If a staff member will be working outside of Ontario for longer than six months, an extension of coverage must be approved by the Workplace Safety Insurance Board.

Supervisors must notify the WSIB coordinator with the names of all staff who are working outside Ontario. Include details of the destination, reason for going, and length of stay. The WSIB coordinator will seek approval for the extension of coverage from the WSIB and notify the department of approval. Accidents occurring outside of Ontario must be immediately reported to the home department, which must then notify Occupational Health and Safety.

5. Transitional Accommodation

Western University is committed to supporting employees experiencing occupational and non-occupational illness and injury. The Transitional Accommodation Program (TAP) utilizes a collaborative, proactive approach to assist employees to remain at work or to return to work in a timely manner. The University will make an effort to collaboratively develop a TAP as soon as possible when the employee shows willingness to participate in the program so they can continually progress toward full hours and/or duties.

Roles and Responsibilities

Supervisor

- Provides a supportive environment for employee and his/her coworkers
- Provides input regarding employee's position and potential modified duties
- Participates fully in the development, implementation and evaluation of the TAP
- Attends TAP meetings as required

Employee

- Promptly reports illness/injury to identify accommodation needs
- Provides consent for Rehabilitation Services to communicate with treating practitioners regarding capabilities and precautions
- Participates fully in the development, implementation and evaluation of the TAP, including regular follow up with Rehabilitation Services
- Promptly communicates to supervisor that there has been a change in status and provides follow up to Rehabilitation Services
- Promptly seeks medical attention as indicated and follows the treatment plan recommended by his/her treating practitioner
- Works within recommended capabilities and precautions

Further information on [Rehabilitation Services](#) and any of their programs can be found on their website.

6. Joint Health and Safety Committee

Western University as an employer is responsible under the Occupational Health and Safety Act for establishing and maintaining a Joint Health and Safety Committee. This committee is an advisory body composed of representatives of workers and management; their main function is to identify hazards and to make recommendations to management with respect to workplace health and safety. In order to carry out these duties they perform regular inspections of the workplace.

Supervisors have the following responsibilities with respect to the Joint Health and Safety Committee:

- be aware of the committee and the names of the management and worker co-chairs of the committee
- if one of their staff is a member of the committee, to provide that individual with paid time off work to carry out his/her duties as a committee member; these include time off to prepare for and attend meetings, and to perform inspections on the workplace
- provide information and assistance to members of the committee who are inspecting the supervisor's work area
- take action on remedying health and safety deficiencies in the workplace identified through committee inspections
- if a written recommendation is received from the committee, provide a written reply to that recommendation within 21 calendar days

7. Work Refusals

The Occupational Health and Safety Act gives a worker the right to refuse work that he or she believes is unsafe. The right to refuse may be exercised if the worker has reason to believe that:

1. any equipment, machine, device or thing he/she is to use or operate is likely to endanger himself/herself or another worker; or
2. the physical condition of the workplace is likely to endanger himself/herself; or
3. any equipment, machine, device or thing he/she is to use or operate or the physical condition of the workplace is in contravention of the Act or regulations and such contravention is likely to endanger himself, herself or another worker

Supervisors should follow the [Work Refusal Procedure](#) and direct any questions to Occupational Health and Safety.

8. Training

It is the duty of the supervisor to ensure all of their workers have the proper training that is required to perform their job safely. The [Training Requirements Matrix](#) gives an outline of the training needs in different departments and should be used as a guide to

select appropriate training sessions. Supervisors should be aware of the hazards in their work area and should know what training is best suited to their workers.

As University employees, all staff must take WHMIS before commencing work. This is available to all staff on [WebCT](#) and their certificate should be printed out upon completion.

In addition, any students or volunteers in a laboratory setting must also complete WHMIS training and any other training that may be required for that work area.

9. Additional Resources

Fire Prevention

Fire Prevention in Physical Plant is the University's liaison with the City of London Fire Department in all fire related matters. The University workplace is required to comply with the Ontario Fire Marshall's Act, the Ontario Fire Code, and all other referenced codes and standards.

Supervisors must ensure that their staff is informed of the fire alarm and emergency procedures when they begin work.

Staff/Faculty Health

Staff/Faculty Health Services is dedicated to achieving and maintaining an optimum quality of health for all staff. Supervisors are responsible for notifying Staff/Faculty Health Services of all new employees and for ensuring that the [Position Hazard Communication Form](#) is completed for each of their employees. The form must be completed when:

1. a new employee is hired
2. an employee is reclassified
3. the hazards change
4. the position changes

10. Policy Summary

The following is only a brief description of each of the policies and the full policies should be referred to for further information.

[Health and Safety Policy](#)

The policy states the University's commitment to maintaining a safe and healthy environment in which to work and to study.

[Smoking Policy](#)

It is the policy of the University that smoking is prohibited in all University buildings and within 10 meters of building entrances and air intake units, except where posted.

Occupational Health Care Policy

This policy is designed to ensure that all occupational health care provided by the University to all employees (full-time, part-time, temporary) is provided through Staff/Faculty Health Services.

Emergency Response and Preparedness

This policy identifies the procedure to follow in cases of fire, accident, release of dangerous or hazardous materials to the air, and theft for all individuals. Supervisors are responsible for adhering to the policy and ensuring their staff are familiar with and also adhere to the policy.

Eye Protection Program

The purpose of this program is to minimize the potential for eye injury, by the provision and use of the correct type of eye protection, in compliance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act. Supervisors of areas where potential eye hazards exist are responsible for ensuring that persons wear suitable eye protection in areas designated as such.

Respiratory Protective Equipment Program

The purpose of this program is to ensure that the correct respiratory protection is provided and properly used by personnel at the University as dictated by the use situation.

Resolution of Unsafe Conditions Policy

University employees (both non-supervisory and supervisory), Occupational Health and Safety, and University Safety Committees all share responsibility for identifying and recommending corrective action respecting situations which are or could be unsafe.

Electrical Equipment Policy

This policy is designed to ensure that all electrical equipment currently in use at the University, or purchased, loaned to, demonstrated to, fabricated or modified by, or otherwise obtained by the University shall meet the provisions of the Power Commission Act of Ontario.

Contaminated Biological Waste Disposal Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all lab generated waste, which may be contaminated with hazardous biological material, is rendered non-infectious prior to disposal. This policy is also meant to ensure safe methods of disposal that comply with regulations and legislation. It outlines decontamination procedures and methods of disposal as they relate to different types of hazardous biological material.

Preventative Health Program for Animal Handlers Policy

This policy ensures that all staff, faculty, and students who are handling mammals and other animals are monitored at pre-placement and at regular intervals by health screening for the presence of zoonotic diseases.

[Rabies Immunization Policy](#)

This policy is designed to ensure that all students, faculty and staff working with dogs, cats, and/or wild mammals receive protection from the rabies virus. The program includes health education, immunization, and on-going monitoring.

[Hepatitis B Immunization Policy](#)

This policy is designed to ensure that all students, faculty, and staff who have direct patient contact, or who handle human blood, body secretions, tissue or other sources of infection, are made aware of the hazard associated with exposure to Hepatitis B virus and are offered immunization.

[Food Service Employees Health Screening Policy](#)

This policy ensures that all University employees who work in food preparation areas are regularly monitored for communicable diseases and/or infections, required by legislation.

[Roof Maintenance Procedures Safety Policy](#)

This policy is designated to ensure that maintenance procedures performed on roofs of University buildings have fume cabinet exhausts, are performed such that employees in the vicinity of the outlets are protected from exposure to toxic materials or emissions.

As this is only a guide for supervisors it may not cover all policies that are relevant to all work areas. Supervisors are advised to familiarize themselves with policies specific to their area and their type of work.

Appendix 1

Regulations Made Under the Occupational Health and Safety Act

Economic Sector Regulations

Construction Projects (O.Reg.213/91)
Industrial Establishments (O.Reg.851)
Mines and Mining Plants
Critical Injury Defined (O.Reg.834)
Diving Operations
Elevated or Suspended Work Places on Building Facades
Fire fighters' Protective Equipment
Health Care and Residential Facilities (O.Reg.67/93)
Oil and Gas – Offshore
Roll-over Protection Structures (O.Reg.856)
Teachers
University Academics and Teaching Assistants
Window Cleaning

Hazardous Substance Regulations

Designated Substance – Acrylonitrile
Designated Substance – Arsenic
Designated Substance – Asbestos
Asbestos on Construction Projects and in Building and Repair Operations
Designated Substance – Benzene
Designated Substance – Coke Oven Emissions
Designated Substance – Ethylene Oxide
Designated Substance – Isocyanates
Designated Substance – Lead
Designated Substance – Mercury
Designated Substance – Silica
Designated Substance – Vinyl Chloride

Miscellaneous

Control of Exposure to Biological or Chemical Agents
Hazardous Material Inventories
Inventory of Agents or Combinations of Agents for the Purpose of Section 21 of the Act
Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS)
X-Ray Safety

Appendix 2

Additional Legislation and Regulations

Worker's Compensation Act (Ontario)
First Aid Requirements

Ontario Fire Marshall's Act
Ontario Fire Code
Ontario Building Code

Environmental Protection Act (Ontario)
Air Pollution – General Requirements
Waste Management – General Regulation
Hauled Liquid Industrial Waste Disposal Sites
Waste Management – PCB Regulation
Guidelines for the Management of PCB Wastes
Environmental Protection Act (Canada)
Chlorobiphenyl Regulations
Biotechnology Regulations
Environmental Contaminants Act (Canada)

Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act (Canada)
Dangerous Goods Transportation Act and Regulations (Ontario)
Hazardous Products Act (Canada)
Regulations Respecting Controlled Products

Atomic Energy Control Act (Canada)
Transportation Packaging of Radioactive Materials Regulation
AECB Regulatory Guides
RED Act

American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Z136.1 – 1993
“Standard for the Safe Use of Lasers”

Pest Control Products Act (Canada)
Pesticides Act and Regulations (Ontario)
Public Health Act
Public Hospitals Act
Healing Arts Radiation Protection Act (Ontario)
Smoking in the Workplace Act (Ontario)
City of London By-Laws
WM-2