



## STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

### Title: HLI – Working Alone or In Isolation at St Paul's Hospital Facilities

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<b>Procedure:</b>	<b>HLI-Safety 005 (1)</b>	<b>Supersedes:</b>	<b>NEW</b>
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#### **Description**

- The Centre for Heart Lung Innovation is committed to taking all reasonable steps to ensure HLI members are safe while carrying out work-related activities. Part of that commitment involves ensuring the safety of all HLI staff and students who work alone or in isolation

#### **Scope**

- This policy applies to all HLI members who may be assigned to work alone or in isolation and defines whom to report to, where to report and responsibilities for reporting and follow up actions.

#### **Policy**

- Every reasonable effort will be made to limit the occurrences of HLI members working alone or in isolation. When this is not operationally possible, HLI is committed to having procedures in place to secure the safety of all HLI members, to prevent incidents and to check on the wellbeing of those who are required to work alone or in isolation.
- Whenever possible, preference should be given to implementing available and practical engineering controls to minimize the risks from hazards. When this is not practical or not sufficient to reduce risks, administrative controls are to be developed and implemented.

#### **Procedures**

- The following general procedures can be used as a guideline for developing additional and site-specific lab or group procedures. Refer to the BC Occupational Health and Safety Regulation 4.20-4.23 for additional information. Prior to any HLI member working alone or in isolation, Principal Investigators and managers must identify any potential workplace hazard that could reasonably be anticipated. Hazards and corrective actions can be identified through a Risk Assessment process.
- A procedure to check the well-being of all HLI members must be developed in consultation with those affected. In this procedure, HLI members will check in at regular, predetermined intervals if they are planning to work alone or are unexpectedly required to do so. The check ins must be made to a designated person and results are to be recorded and retained on an annual basis. Higher risk facilities/situations should perform check ins more frequently than low risk sites/situations.
- HLI members have the right to refuse unsafe work or work for which they are not sufficiently supervised or trained

- In the event the HLI member has reasonable cause to believe that the work process will create an undue hazard to their health and safety, he/she has the right to refuse unsafe work and immediately report that to their supervisor, manager or Safety Team member.

## **Call in Procedure**

- If you expect other HLI members to be working at the same time, you can use each other as a check in designates. Check in with each other every 2 hours.
- If you find you are working alone, call the designated contact number (call in centre such as [safetylineloneworker.com](http://safetylineloneworker.com) or a specific designated person) at the start of your working alone or isolation time period. Include the following information
  1. Your name and location (building, floor, room number) where you are working
  2. What you are doing and how long you expect to be there
  3. Advise approximately what time you expect to leave
  4. If you plan to stay longer than your expected leave time, call in before the expected leave time and advise of your revised leave time.
  5. Call when you are leaving. It is very important to call to advise you are leaving as lack of checking out may initiate an emergency protocol to check on your wellbeing.

## **Roles and Responsibilities for Supervisors/Principal Investigator (or delegate)**

- Ensure every attempt has been made to limit the occurrences of HLI members working alone or in isolation, including planning regular work hours to occur between normal business (0800-1700) hours Monday to Friday as much as operationally possible.
- Identify and then eliminate or minimize any risk of hazards to any HLI members working alone or in isolation by implementing control measures.
- Develop and maintain site-specific written procedures in consultation with HLI members for working alone or in isolation, including a check-in and an Emergency Response Protocol to take action if the HLI member does not check in.
- Designate a person to establish contact at predetermined intervals. All contact info (time called, person's name, date) must be logged into a form by the designated person and records kept for one year.
- Review procedures annually or more frequently as needed and advise the Safety Team if there is a change in work arrangements that could adversely affect one's well-being or safety.
- Ensure appropriate training is provided if an HLI member is required to work alone or in isolation.
- Ensure appropriate communication training and tools are available to complete the person-check procedure.

## **HLI Member (includes, staff, students, PI's)**

- Be familiar with and follow all established safe work procedures and guidelines to ensure personal safety when working alone
- Assist in the development and review of check in and follow up procedures

- Be aware of how to make contact with your designated check in or designate, refer to SOP's in your
- Communicate any hazards, issues or changes in risk to your supervisor or Principal Investigator
- Report all injuries, incidents, exposures or near misses to your supervisor, PI and HLI Safety Coordinator
- Use or wear protective equipment, devices and clothing as required by UBC policy or by regulation
- Attend and actively participate in training on established safety procedures for working alone safely
- Ensure all contact information, including cell phone number, is up to date and on file with your supervisor or Principal Investigator.

## **Occupational Health and Safety**

- Provide consultation, education and subject matter expertise to guide compliance with Workers
- Compensation Act and the Occupational Health & Safety Regulation
- Advise on the development of Working Alone policies/procedures according to individual facility requirements and applicable legislation.
- Liaise with the SPH Safety Committee and UBC JOHSC leaders as needed

## **Related Guidelines, Tools, and Forms**

- WorkSafeBC Occupational Health and Safety Regulation Part 4, 4.20 -4.23
- Interior Health Authority – Persons Working Alone or in Isolation AV0200
- Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety, Violence in the Workplace Guide.
- The Occupational Health and Safety Agency for Healthcare in BC– OHSAH (BC) Preventing Violence and Aggressive Behavior, 2005

## **Related Policies**

- [CPT2700: Workplace Violence Prevention Policy](#)
- [CPT2800: Right to Refuse Unsafe Work](#)
- [UBC Policy 131: Sexual Assault and Other Sexual Misconduct](#)
- *UBC Policy 7: University Safety*
- *HLI Policy 4: Staff, Student and Researcher Code of Conduct*

## **Definitions**

- **HLI members** refers to all employees (including management and leadership), students at all levels, visiting scientists, medical staff and clinicians (including physicians, clinical lab members working in HLI,), residents, health care professionals

- **Working alone or in isolation** refers to work in circumstances where assistance would not readily be available in the case of an emergency or if the HLI member is injured or in ill health.
- **Engineering controls** means the physical arrangement, design or alteration of workstations, equipment, materials, production facilities or other aspects on the physical work environment, for the purpose of controlling risk. Examples of engineering controls are:
  - Redesigning waiting areas to provide welcoming, calming surroundings;
  - Controlling access/egress to an area by using access cards;
  - Installing security lighting, protective barriers & remote control door locks;
  - Improving surveillance and visibility where there is a potential for offending behaviours; and,
  - Environmental restraints such as seclusion rooms.

**Administrative controls** means the provision, use and scheduling of work activities and resources in the workplace, including planning, organizing, staffing and coordinating, for the purpose of controlling risk. Examples of administrative controls are:

- Having a balance of experienced staff and students working after hours
- Avoiding HLI members working alone for high risk situations in community settings;
- Providing personal alarms systems or panic buttons
- Training and instruction

**Working Alone or Check-In Procedures** refers to a work practice designed by both the Supervisor, Principal Investigator and staff of a department to ensure that an appropriate mechanism is in place for checking on the wellbeing of an HLI member working alone or in isolation. This includes a defined Emergency Response Protocol for use in the event that an HLI member fails to check-in.

### **Steps to take when working at any time to ensure safety**

- Use good judgment and common sense. Be aware of surroundings.
- Secure all personal items and information.
- Know where to obtain assistance.
- If at any time you feel threatened, immediately leave the area and when you are safely away from the threat, call Code White (Aggression) "7111".
- Ensure doors with access control are secured and locked
- If working in pairs, ensure your work partner knows your location and you have an agreed upon method of communication – eg lab phone or cell phone.

### **Working alone outside regular hours**

- Enter and exit the Hospital through brightly lit entrance and exits such as the Comox Street (Emergency) exit/entrance or Thurlow entrance/exit.
- If at any time you feel threatened you should call Code White (Aggression) "7111".

### **Walking alone to car or home at night**

- Let your family and friends know your home travel route and estimated arrival time.

- If you feel unsafe and require an escort, Call SPH Security (radio phone 69164). Wait for them to arrive. They can walk you to the SPH parking lot or to the edge of the building footprint.
- Do not wear headphones.
- Have your car keys ready.
- Refer to the SPH Emergency Preparedness Manuals in your area for more details about **CODE WHITE (Aggression)**. Also see the **SPH Security Contact Information Sheet**.

### **Appendix**

- Sample Questions to Aid in Determining Risk (Appendix A)
- Example of Emergency Response Protocol for Failure to Check-in (Appendix B)
- sample Working Alone Log (Appendix C)