

# WORKING ALONE POLICY

## Scope and Application

This procedure applies to any situation where it may be necessary for an employee to be out of direct contact with co-workers and working alone for a period of time. Examples would be someone working in a remote location or doing field work, a small retail operation, home health care workers, emergency restoration or utility workers, construction or maintenance workers, or office workers performing duties in a remote area of a worksite or office.

## Implementation

Implementation of this program is the responsibility of Management.

## Procedure

### 1.0 Perform a Risk Assessment

- A. Assess hazards associated with materials and/or chemicals handled, processes and equipment, travel, work environment, weather, security, entering and leaving the site and employee and public safety.
- B. Determine any work holds or special procedures based on conditions.
- C. Get input from employees for any issues not considered to reduce potential risk.
- D. Investigate previous incidents to establish risks involved.
- E. Provide training and education to employees regarding communication for check-in, check-out procedures, and emergency procedures.
- F. Identify the emergency response (9-1-1) availability, if necessary get GPS coordinates of the location.
- G. Determine a means of communication for check-out and check-in procedures.
- H. Consider any medical conditions that may affect the ability to work alone.
- I. Establish any needed controls, surveillance, communication, training and other specific controls based on the Risk Assessment. Update as needed.

### 2.0 Establish Check-Out and Check-In Procedures

- A. The immediate supervisor or designated co-worker must be able to verify the check-out and check-in of the employee while working.
- B. Check-out procedures:
  1. Leave written communication of employee's itinerary to include:
    - a. Location of where the employee will be working – destination.
    - b. Expected time of arrival.
    - c. Expected time of return.
    - d. Contact information for the employee, how they will check in and how often.
    - e. Identify mode of travel, whether public transportation or private vehicle.

- f. Identify back-up, or alternate plans in the event of bad weather, traffic problems, or other delays.
  - g. A copy of the employee's itinerary shall be at the primary reporting station. If leaving from another location the employee must call the person responsible to let them know.
  - h. If the location is unknown or changes are made, the employee must leave a new phone message for the responsible contact person, including detailed directions to the new site.
  - i. The contact person should call or visit periodically to check on the safety of the employee.
- C. Check-in procedure:
- 1. Check-in must be completed at the pre-arranged time or a "*no-later-than time.*"
  - 2. The check-in method must be clarified: By phone, radio, or in person.
  - 3. It is the responsibility of the main contact person to ensure the employee checks in on time.
  - 4. If the main contact is not available, voice mail should be checked, and a back-up person must always be in place.
- D. Follow up procedure:
- 1. If check-in is not on time, the next person on the list needs to be notified to go to the location.
  - 2. Send a designated employee to the last known location from which the employee checked in.
  - 3. If the employee is not there, the supervisor should be notified and follow proper company search and rescue procedures. If needed call 9-1-1.
  - 4. Activate the emergency action plan if the employee does not check in on time.

**3.0** Factors to consider when assessing the need for a work alone safety policy.

- A. Severity of risk and frequency of exposure.
- B. Work and environmental conditions.
- C. Length of time the employee will be alone.
- D. Does the work activity require more than one person, or is it safe to do the activity alone? e.g., chemical use, personal protective equipment use, equipment of process hazards, confined space, lockout/tagout, etc.
- E. When will the employee be alone – are there emergency systems available?
- F. Communication and surveillance:
  - 1. What forms of communication and surveillance are available?
  - 2. How remote is the work area or travel route?
  - 3. Is there adequate phone or communication service or signal?
  - 4. Is there a communication device in the vehicle? The employee will need a device when leaving the vehicle.
  - 5. Is there a language barrier?
- G. Location:

1. Is the worker in a remote location or adverse environmental situation, e.g., heat, cold etc.?
2. Are there any hazards associated with animal contact?
3. Are First Aid and Emergency supplies and trained staff available?
4. Is there the potential for extreme temperatures? Provide training and supplies for hot or cold weather conditions.
5. Is any exchange of money involved? Potential for robberies.
6. Is the area well lit, under surveillance, and easily accessed by emergency services?