

WORKING ALONE POLICY

Working alone and working in isolation in certain circumstances or environments may be unsafe and requires special arrangements to minimize risks of injury. Employees and supervisors are required to make every effort to assess hazards, to take steps to avoid unnecessary risk, and to make available methods by which misfortune can be managed to minimize damage or injury. This policy is in consideration of Manitoba Regulation 217/2006 and applies to all Division employees.

DEFINITIONS

Working alone means the performance of any work function by a worker who:

- a) is the only worker for that employer at a workplace at any time; and
- b) is not directly supervised by the employer, or another person designated as a supervisory by the employer, at any time.

The fact that the employee may be in contact with people from another employer or the general public does not eliminate the concept that the employee is working alone and, therefore, assessments and requirements applicable to the risks of the work will still apply.

Working in isolation means working in circumstances where assistance is not readily available in the event of an injury, ill health or emergency.

Workplace means any site, building, office, workshop, laboratory, mobile vehicle, or any other premises or location, whether indoors or outdoors, in which work is conducted.

RISKS

This policy was developed to deal with risks identified for workers who are required by the nature of their job to work alone, not in the presence of a co-worker or supervisor.

Risks May Include:

1. Sudden and severe illness and injury to workers on the job site inside buildings or on school grounds.
2. Exposure to threats of violence or violent acts perpetrated by the public who may be in schools for legitimate school functions or permits or unauthorized intruders who are able to gain access to school buildings.

Methods to Minimize Risk

1. The establishment of an effective communication system that consists of:
 - a) Radio communication.
 - b) Telephone or cellular phone communication.
 - c) Any other means that provides effective communication given the risks involved.
2. Any of the following:
 - a) A system of regular contact by the employer with the worker working alone or working in isolation.
 - b) Limitations on or prohibitions of specified activities.
 - c) The establishment of training requirements.
3. Where applicable, the provision of emergency supplies for use in traveling or working under conditions of extreme cold or other inclement weather conditions.
4. Employees who feel their safety is in immediate danger should pull the nearest fire alarm and if possible proceed to the school entrance where the fire alarm panel is located. Employees should familiarize themselves with this location. This is an extreme measure and should only be taken if immediate assistance is required, the employee is in severe distress and they believe they cannot wait for assistance from their supervisor or co-workers or make a call on their own to 911.
5. Staff who are in a building with co-workers should ensure that they check on each other every few hours during their shift (at breaks).
6. Staff should keep a prearranged routine so that their family members or friends are aware of times they expect to arrive and can take appropriate action in case the employee has had some difficulty leaving his/her place of work. These home contacts should be provided with the phone numbers of supervisors.
7. A personal first aid kit should be available to employees who work alone or in isolation.
8. Supervisors and employees shall identify the risks arising from the conditions and circumstances of the employee working alone or working in isolation.
9. Safe Work Procedures should be developed and implemented to eliminate or reduce the identified risks to workers working alone or in isolation.