ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE NO. 459

WORKING ALONE

Background

The Division believes that all staff have a right to be safe on school property and while attending to duties as part of their conditions of employment. Based on the Occupational Health and Safety Act and its regulations, “Working Alone” means to be at the worksite, or performing work related duties, 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 Division employees, including maintenance, transportation and central office staff, may have a variety of work sites.
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.

   1.1 This includes school secretaries and other school staff who may be at risk for robbery.

2. Employees who travel away from Division office or their base office.

   2.1 Employees such as transportation staff, maintenance staff, I.T. staff, and Central Office staff fit this category.

3. Employees that perform tasks that have increased risk but have no routine interaction with the public.

   3.1 On occasion, some maintenance and I.T. staff fit this category.

4. Employees that travel alone but have no routine interaction with the public.

   4.1 Maintenance and I.T. staff frequently fit this category. Staff travelling to a conference may fit this category if they stay overnight.

5. Employees whose worksite is isolated from public view.

   5.1 Custodial staff, maintenance staff, teachers, administrators, and contractors who access a school on evenings or weekends may fit this category.

Procedure

1. Principals and work site managers will conduct a hazard assessment of their site to identify existing or potential hazards. (Form XX is for school sites and Form YY is to be used for maintenance sites.)

   1.1 The principal or site manager will ensure that all employees have the opportunity to participate in the hazard assessment and the elimination or control of any hazard identified.

   1.2 The principal or site manager will take all reasonable steps to control or eliminate hazards.

   1.3 The principal or site manager 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 principal or site manager will review and update the hazard assessment with staff.

   1.5 The principal or site manager will monitor the school or worksite to ensure that employees are working in a safe manner and complying with regulations.

2. The principal or site manager will communicate the hazard assessment to all employees affected by the assessment.

3. The principal or site manager 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 (i.e. working alone in a classroom at night or working alone in a CTS classroom).

3.4 The contact method and interval will be part of the written hazard assessment document.

4. The principal or site manager will ensure that all employees receive training and are competent to work alone safely. Employees must be made aware of the hazards associated with working alone and be versed in the preventative steps that can be taken to reduce or eliminate the potential risks.

5. The principal or site manager will ensure all equipment and/or Division owned vehicles are in good working condition, meet appropriate regulatory standards, and are used in accordance with manufacturer's specifications.

   5.1 Any private vehicle used to transport staff to conferences or other activities must:

      5.1.1 be properly equipped to handle all road conditions;

      5.1.2 be in good running order; and

      5.1.3 have appropriate equipment such as a spare tire, jack, emergency road tools, emergency provisions or an emergency first aid kit.

6. The principal or site manager will ensure that First Aid supplies are available in accordance with applicable regulations.

7. The principal or site manager will report accidents and/or hazards to the Superintendent and the WCB as required.

Reference: Sec. 60, 61, 133 School Act
Occupational Health and Safety Act
General Safety Regulation (AR 448/83)
Working Alone Safely: A Guide for Employers and Employees

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