

Policy Type: Human Resources	Policy Number: HR-09
Policy Title: Health and Safety	Policy Approval Date: May 28, 2025
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Introduction:

The library board and CEO are committed to the establishment of a healthy and safe workplace and to the integration of health and safety practices in all areas of the workplace. Employees at every level, including management, are responsible and accountable for Norfolk County Public Library’s overall safety initiatives. Management supports Health and Safety participation by all employees and provides proper equipment, training, and procedures.

Purpose:

Employees are responsible for following all procedures, working safely, and improving safety measures whenever possible. Any Health and Safety concerns must be addressed immediately to the CEO and the Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC).

Section 1: Legislative Requirements

1. The **Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA)** requires those who have any degree of control over the workplace to ensure a safe and healthy work environment.
2. The requirements of the **OHSA** apply to every worker who is being paid, regardless of the location where the work is performed. If workers work at home and are being paid or are driving and being paid en route, they are covered under the Act.
3. If a paid worker suffers a critical injury, the **OHSA** requires that the employer immediately notify the Ministry of Labour Health & Safety Contact Centre and the Workplace Health and Safety Representative. The employer and employee health and safety representative must prepare a written report (see Section 4) and forward it to the director of the Ministry of Labour within 48 hours.
4. The **OHSA** sets out duties with respect to workplace safety, and materials and equipment in the workplace. [Section 25\(2\)](#) of the [Occupational Health and Safety Act](#) requires employers to prepare and review at least annually a written occupational health and safety policy and develop and maintain a program to implement that policy.

5. **Ontario Regulation 297/13 Occupational Health and Safety Awareness and Training** requires a worker to complete a basic occupational health and safety awareness training program.

Section 2: Rights of the Worker

1. A worker has the following rights:
 - a) to participate in the process of identifying and resolving workplace health and safety concerns
 - b) to know about potential hazards to which they may be exposed
 - c) to refuse work that the employee believes is hazardous to either their own health and safety or that of another worker
 - d) all other rights indicated in the **Occupational Health and Safety Act**

Section 3: Responsibilities

1. The Ontario **Occupational Health and Safety Act** (OHSA) and its regulations impose a legal duty on employers and on supervisors for ensuring the well-being of workers under their supervision and to take reasonable measures to protect their safety.
2. The Library Board delegates authority to administer and direct health and safety to the Library CEO.
3. The Library CEO is responsible for:
 - a) ensuring adherence to the principles of this policy
 - b) ensuring compliance with all applicable health and safety legislation
 - c) ensuring training and procedures for effective health and safety program management, including adequate allocation of funds and resources
 - d) investigating all accidents involving personal injury and reporting incidents to proper authorities when required
 - e) addressing employees' safety concerns promptly
 - f) ensuring that health and safety infractions are addressed
4. Managers are responsible for:
 - a) making sure that work is done safely
 - b) ensuring employees are aware of hazards and how to protect themselves
 - c) maintaining an orderly and uncluttered work area
 - d) providing adequate training to employees to protect their health and safety
 - e) investigating the presence of the employee health and safety representative, refusals to work or, if they are not available, a fellow employee
5. Employees are responsible for:
 - a) knowing procedures to follow in the case of accidents or sudden illnesses
 - b) reporting any known hazards to their supervisors

- c) reporting any accidents or injuries to their supervisors
- d) understanding the hazards associated with any materials they use and all relevant safety information regarding their use
- e) reporting any missing or defective equipment
- f) maintaining an orderly and uncluttered work area
- g) operating equipment safely
- h) knowing the locations of the first aid kit(s), fire extinguishers, and emergency exits
- i) knowing how to operate the fire extinguisher(s)
- j) participating in fire drills and other emergency evacuation procedures

Section 4: Emergency Response Information for Employees with Disabilities

1. In accordance with ***Ontario Regulation 191/11 Integrated Accessibility Standards*** the library will provide individualized workplace emergency response information for an employee who has a disability, if the disability is such that the information is necessary, and the library is aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability.
2. With the employee's consent the workplace emergency response information shall be provided to the person designated to aid.
3. The individualized workplace emergency response information shall be reviewed when:
 - a) the employee moves to a different work location
 - b) the employee's overall accommodation needs are reviewed, and
 - c) the overall emergency response procedures are reviewed

Section 5: Health and Safety Representative

1. The ***OHSA*** requires that a workplace with fewer than twenty, but more than five employees, have a workplace Health and Safety Representative. In accordance with [Section 8](#) of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*:
 - a) employees will appoint one health and safety representative from among the workers who do not exercise managerial functions and have powers as set out in Section 8(11) of the ***OHSA***
 - b) the library board will pay the representative while conducting their duties
2. The Health and Safety Representative will, in accordance with [Section 8](#) of the *OHSA*:
 - a) identify workplace hazards
 - b) inspect the workplace at least once a month
 - c) be consulted about workplace testing
 - d) make recommendations to the CEO
 - e) investigate work refusals and serious accidents

- f) maintain a health and safety bulletin board which will include but not be limited to:
 - i. a copy of the **Occupational Health and Safety Act**
 - ii. copies of the following Norfolk County Public Library policies: **HR-09 - Health and Safety**, **HR-08 - Prevention of Workplace Violence**, and **HR-07 - Workplace Harassment and Discrimination**
 - iii. the most recent version of the poster from the Ministry of Labour entitled **What You Should Know About the Ontario Employment Standards Act**
 - iv. the most recent version of the poster from the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board entitled **In Case of Injury—1234**
- g) be trained in basic first aid by an accredited agency
- h) maintain the first aid box which meets the requirements of the **Workplace Safety and Insurance Act Regulation 1101**

Section 6: Working Alone

1. Working alone describes a situation where a person is the only employee in the library, or where the employee does not have direct contact with a co-worker.
2. The library board directs the CEO to develop a plan for working alone. The plan identifies the occupational hazards, risks, procedures for personal safety, special training, and emergency assistance in the event of an incident when working alone. Employees will not work alone in the library except for custodial and maintenance staff.
3. Employees may be temporarily alone in a Branch during another employee's scheduled 30-minute unpaid meal break, provided:
 - The CEO has approved a Working Alone Procedure covering this circumstance.
 - The employee has received training in lone worker protocols.
 - Safety measures such as communication tools and emergency procedures are in place.
 - The total duration of working alone does not exceed 30 consecutive minutes."

Any employee who fails to follow the guidelines set out in this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Related Documents:

Norfolk County Public Library – Working Alone Plan
Norfolk County Public Library HR-07 - Workplace Harassment and Discrimination
Norfolk County Public Library HR-08 - Prevention of Workplace Violence
Occupational Health and Safety Act, R.S.O. 1990, chapter O.1
Ontario Regulation 191/11 Integrated Accessibilities Standards s. 27
Ontario Regulation 297/13 Occupational Health and Safety Awareness and Training

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