



AV0200 – WORKING ALONE OR IN ISOLATION

1.0 PURPOSE

Interior Health (IH) will foster a safe and healthy workplace and commits to eliminating or minimizing the risk of harm to workers working alone or in isolation.

The purpose of this policy is to establish and communicate the process and assignment of responsibilities to the workplace parties, including workers, Managers/Supervisors, Senior Leadership, and others to develop, implement and use effective procedures that ensures the health and safety of workers assigned to work alone or in isolation. The specific requirements for meeting the WorkSafeBC Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Regulation are outlined in Part 4, General Conditions, [Section 4.20.1 to 4.23](#).

For brevity, the Working Alone or In Isolation Program is referred to as the “Working Alone Program” in this policy.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
Hazard	A thing or condition that may expose a person to injury or occupational disease. ¹
Control Measures	Methods to eliminate or reduce risk from identified hazards to the lowest level practicable through the hierarchy of controls before assigning a worker to Work Alone or In Isolation.
Manager/Supervisor	A person who instructs, directs, and controls workers to perform their duties.
Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment	A Working Alone or In Isolation Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment is a tool used for identifying hazards (things, situations, processes, etc.) that may cause harm. Evaluate the likelihood and severity of risk presented by an identified hazard and then decide what measures should be in place to effectively prevent or control the harm from happening.
Time intervals	Refers to the frequency of checking on a worker working alone or in isolation. Time intervals should be based off of the level of risk the worker is exposed to, with lower risks allowing for longer intervals between checks. ³
Worker	Refers to all IH employees (contract and non–contract), medical practitioners, volunteers, and students.
Working alone or in isolation	"To work alone or in isolation" means to work in circumstances where assistance is not readily available to a worker: (a) in case of an emergency; or (b) in case the Worker is injured or in ill health. ²



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3.0 POLICY

3.1 Scope

This policy applies to all sectors and workers of IH. If a worker cannot be seen or heard by persons capable of providing assistance in a timely manner, then they must be considered as working alone or in isolation.

3.2 General

All IH workplaces will identify hazards, assess levels of risk, and implement control measures appropriate for the level of risk, according to the definition and requirements outlined in BC OHS Regulation, [Section 4.20.1 to 4.23](#)

All workplaces will implement effective, written procedures for checking the well-being of all Workers as per the BC OHS Regulation, [Section 4.21](#).

3.3 Roles and Responsibilities

Senior Leadership:

- Support the provision of the Working Alone Program by ensuring Directors, Managers, Supervisors, workers, Medical Practitioners, and volunteers are aware of the working alone or in isolation requirements.
- Ensure the provision of preventative measures and resources, including required technologies, and education/ training of employees.
- Support the implementation and sustainability of the Working Alone Program initiatives which may include designating responsibility and directing human and fiscal resources as required to meet legislated requirements.

Managers/Supervisors:

- Identify hazards and appropriate control measures to reduce the risk **before** the worker is assigned to work alone or in isolation.
- Communicate the risks and the appropriate control measures to be followed including the required check-in procedures to workers that work alone.
- Ensure procedures are developed, maintained and communicated to all workers that work alone.
- Consult with the JOSHC/Worker Health and Safety Representative when developing a site/department/program, [Working Alone Procedure](#) including appropriate time intervals between checks.
- Consult with affected workers as to the time intervals for checking a worker's well-being.
- Ensure appropriate education and training is available for all workers.
- Ensure workers attend required training programs to ensure their safety and that all new workers that will work alone receive orientation.
- Ensure training is documented and maintained by the department.
- Ensure the site/department/program Working Alone Procedure is reviewed at least [annually](#).
- Investigate all reported incidents.

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Workers:

- Provide feedback, as requested, to Manager/Supervisor on developing and implementing site/program specific hazard identification, risk assessment and check in/check out procedures.
- Participate in applicable education and training.
- Follow all written procedures as required for work/task risk assessments, related work procedures and check in/check out procedures. If unclear on any procedures will ask Manager/Supervisor for direction prior to working alone or in isolation. Avoid unnecessary risks and advise Manager/Supervisor if there are any concerns regarding the effectiveness of the procedures, hazards are identified or conditions change.
- Report any issues/malfunctions with necessary communication equipment.
- Follow [incident reporting procedures](#).

Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOHSC)/Worker Health and Safety Representatives:

- Be familiar with Working Alone Program requirements.
- Promote the site specific implementation of the Working Alone Program procedures where required.
- Participate with manager/supervisor in assessing risk and establishing appropriate control measures for the program/site Working Alone Program procedures.
- Monitor effectiveness of the Working Alone Program procedures through review of incident reports and investigations and make recommendations to management as required, to improve the program.

Protection Services

- Where applicable, ensure the contracted security service provider is aware of their role as per departmental Working Alone Program procedures.

Employee Relations Advisor

- Provide support to Managers/Supervisors in the development, implementation and evaluation of the Working Alone Program.

Workplace Health and Safety Department (WHS):

- Provide guidelines and tools that assist Managers/Supervisors with the development of program/site Working Alone Program procedures to ensure the safety of workers and compliance with regulatory requirements.

4.0 PROCEDURES

[The Site Managers Guide to Implementing Working Alone or In Isolation Procedures](#) on the InsideNet will assist Managers/Supervisors to identify hazards, determine risk levels, and implement appropriate control measures that meet legislated requirements and ensure the safety

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of workers. Risk assessment, appropriate worker check-in procedures, and emergency response protocols will vary with services provided, location, weather conditions and a number of other local or client-specific circumstances.

4.1 Training/Education

All workers who work alone and any person assigned to check on the worker must be trained on the site/department-specific written procedure for checking the worker's well-being, including the failure to check in process.

4.2 Procedure Review

Managers/Supervisors will ensure that the procedures referred to in this policy must be reviewed [at least annually](#) or more frequently if there is:

- (a) a change in work environment arrangements that could adversely affect:
 - (i) the effectiveness of policy or procedures, or
 - (ii) a worker's well-being or safety, or
- (b) a report that the procedures, policies or work environment arrangements, as applicable, are **not working** effectively.

5.0 REFERENCES

1. WorkSafeBC, Occupational Health and Safety Regulation, [Part 1: Definitions](#)
2. WorkSafeBC, Occupational Health and Safety Regulation, [Part 4.20.1-4.23: General Conditions - Working Alone or In Isolation.](#)
3. ["Working Alone: A Handbook for Small Businesses,"](#) WorkSafeBC, 2012.
4. Working Alone Program, Fraser Health Authority
5. Interior Health Resources
 - Policies
 - [AV0100 – Occupational Health and Safety Program](#)
 - [AV1100 – Employee Incident Reporting and Investigation](#)
 - [AV2500 Violence Prevention Program](#)
 - [Code White Response Plan – Procedural Guideline](#)
 - [Manager's Guide to Implementing Working Alone or In Isolation Procedures](#)
 - [Flexible Work Location Guidebook](#)

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