**Working Alone**

**Purpose**

Working alone or in isolation presents hazards to employees. Okanagan College has developed this SWP to provide guidelines for establishing specific procedures when employees are working alone or where assistance is not readily available if the employee is injured or ill.

**Scope**

This SWP applies to all Okanagan College locations and worksites. Each worksite or work area will develop a Site-Specific Procedure (SSP) for Working Alone and workers will be trained in the Working Alone program requirements.

**Procedure**

Download the OC Safe App to your Smart Phone – Search your app store for “OC Safe”.  Download for free. (Insert picture of OC Safe here)

Initiate a Work/Study Alone Session on the OC Safe App. Insert picture here

Contact your supervisor to advise them that you are working alone and that you have initiated a Work/Study Alone session.

**1.0 Hazard Assessment**

A Working Alone Procedure and a Working Alone Hazard Assessment must be completed if working alone hazards have been identified.

These assessments shall be available for the workers to review and workers shall be trained in the requirements of the procedure.

Working alone hazards will be eliminated or controlled.

**2.0 Potential Hazards**

Potential hazards include:

* Loss of communication needed for requesting assistance;
* Delays in reporting times;
* Injury requiring assistance;
* Weather and road conditions; and
* Transportation problems.

**3.0 Equipment and Training Requirements**

1. Okanagan College will, for any worker working alone, provide an effective communication system consisting of:
	* Radio communication;
	* Landline or cellular telephone communication; or
	* Some other effective means of electronic communication that includes regular contact by Okanagan College or designate at intervals appropriate to the nature of the hazard associated with the worker’s work.
2. If effective electronic communication is not practicable at the work site, Okanagan College will ensure that:
	* A Okanagan College supervisor or designate visits the worker;
	* The worker contacts Okanagan College or designate at intervals appropriate to the nature of the hazard associated with the worker’s work;
	* Every worker who works alone must have a designated “Working Alone Contact”; and
	* The “Working Alone Contact” may be a co-worker, a permanently staffed work site control room, a third-party emergency answering service, or an automated working alone tracking system.

**4.0 Working Alone Plans**

**4.1 Low Risk Working Alone Procedure**

Daylight Hours, Normal Weather Conditions, Non-hazardous location:

* Initiate a Work/Study Alone session on your OC Safe App; or
* Notify your “Working Alone Contact” of check-in times and locations of work;
* If multiple travel routes are an option, restart your session at the end of each route, or advise your supervisor of your selected route; and
* If your arrival at a check-in location is delayed by more than one hour, you must restart your session or notify your “Working Alone Contact” of your new estimated time of arrival.

**4.2 High Risk Working Alone Procedure**

Hazardous or Remote Locations, Call-outs, Adverse Weather Conditions:

* Start your Work/Study Alone session prior to departure; or
* Notify your “Working Alone Contact” prior to departure, and advise your contact of your estimated time of arrival at the location;
* Notify your “Working Alone Contact” of arrival at location;
* Conduct a hazard assessment of the problem or job scope, notify your contact or a competent person, discuss the hazards of job, work procedure to be used, any additional required safeguards, and provide an estimate of how long you will be at the location;
* Start a Work/Study Alone session when you are finished and ready to leave; or
* Notify your “Working Alone Contact” when you are finished and ready to leave the location and estimated time of arrival at next work site, base, or home;
* Notify your “Working Alone Contact” of arrival at the next check point, base, or home;
* If you are delayed or expect to be delayed arriving at your next check-in point by more than one hour, restart your Work/Study Alone session or notify your “Working Alone Contact” of amended estimated time of arrival, and
* During adverse weather conditions, notify your “Working Alone Contact” of your exact route to be followed. Shorter check-in time intervals are recommended.

**4.3 Overdue Worker Response Plan**

* The Overdue Worker Response Plan shall be initiated when Okanagan College has been notified by the OC Safe App that a worker has not checked in, or is one hour overdue.
* The worker’s “Working Alone Contact” shall:
	+ Attempt to contact the overdue worker by cell phone or radio;
	+ Immediately notify the worker’s supervisor of the circumstances;
	+ The supervisor will discuss options with the “Working Alone Contact” and together they will agree on an action plan; and
	+ The action plan may include any or all of the following:
		- Continued attempts to contact the overdue worker by cell phone or radio;
		- The “Working Alone Contact” or other designated individual will drive the route taken by the overdue worker in an attempt to contact the worker. Specific PPE safety equipment may be required for rescue activities by those involved with the Overdue Worker Response Plan;
		- The “Working Alone Contact” or the supervisor may request search assistance resources in the area who have been identified in the contact list;
		- The “Working Alone Contact” or supervisor will call the local hospital(s) to establish whether an injured person has been admitted; and
		- The “Working Alone Contact” or supervisor may notify the local police or RCMP of the circumstances with a request for assistance.

**4.4 Working Alone Prohibitions**

Working alone is not permitted in the following circumstances as determined by a hazard assessment prior to beginning work:

* Work which is being performed on or near live electrical conductors or within safe approach distances to energized equipment as set out in Working in the Vicinity of Electrical Lines and Cables;
* Entering or working in confined spaces as defined in Confined Space Entry;
* Entering or working in any atmosphere that is or might become hazardous by reason of exceeding an OEL for a contaminant, or that exceeds 10% of the LEL or where the oxygen concentration is not between 19.5% and 23.0% by volume; and
* Entering or working in any area, building, equipment, vessel, or facility that may become hazardous to a lone worker and where assistance is not available in a reasonable amount of time to ensure the safety of the worker.

**5.0 Documentation**

If not using the Work/Study Alone feature on the OC Safe App:

* Each individual worker shall be required to provide a detailed list of the “Working Alone Contacts” (colleagues, supervisor, answering service, and/or industry co-workers) that they intend to use.
* A copy of this list is to be kept by all “Working Alone Contacts” and the worker’s supervisor.
* A Working Alone Log is mandatory and must contain the following information:
	+ Worker name;
	+ Date;
	+ Scheduled check-in time;
	+ Actual check-in time;
	+ Location and work activity; and
	+ Working Alone Logs shall be made available for audit purposes and filed for two years.

**6.0 Review**

The response plan will be reviewed annually under the direction of the Emergency Response Manager to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of the corporation and its workers.

**Forms**

* Working Alone Log Sheet

**References**

* British Columbia Occupational Health and Safety Regulation, Part 4: General Conditions, Section 4.21-4.23 Working Alone or in Isolation.<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/law-policy/occupational-health-safety>
* WorkSafe BC, Working Alone or in Isolation.<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/health-safety/hazards-exposures/working-alone>