


POLICY

	Policy:	Work Alone Policy		
	Department:	Office of the CAO		
	Division:	Human Resources Division	By-Law No.:	N/A
	Administered By:	Manager, Human Resources	Approval Date:	November 13, 2023
	Replaces:	N/A		
	Attachment(s):	N/A		

1. POLICY STATEMENT

The Corporation of the Town of Amherstburg is committed to ensuring adequate protections are in place for employees who are performing duties while working alone.

2. PURPOSE

- 2.1. This policy defines the employer's general duty to take every precaution reasonable for the health and safety of the worker, as specified in the *Occupational Health and Safety Act, Section 25(2)(h)*
- 2.2. This policy provides measures to be taken to mitigate, minimize or control risks identified with working alone situations.
- 2.3. This policy ensures that adequate protections are put in place for employees who are performing their duties, in areas or conditions where they are required to, by routine or situations arising to work alone.

3. SCOPE

- 3.1. This policy applies to all Town of Amherstburg employees to ensure their awareness of the measures in place to protect them should they be required.
- 3.2. This policy more specifically applies to all Town of Amherstburg employees who are performing lone work activities that have the potential to result in exposure to hazardous materials, environments, conditions or equipment that pose a risk of injury or illness.
- 3.3. This policy does not apply to emergency response activities carried out by the Town's Fire Department. Personal accountability while performing lone work activities that have potential to result in exposure to hazards shall be mitigated using internal accountability procedures based on the guidance of the Ontario Fire Service Health and Safety Advisory Committee, formed under section 21 of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*.
- 3.4. This policy shall be reviewed every 5 years from the date it becomes effective, and/or sooner at the discretion of the Chief Administrative Officer.

4. DEFINITIONS

- 4.1. **Hazard** means any situation, thing or condition that may expose a person to risk of injury or occupational disease.
- 4.2. **Incident** means an unplanned, undesired event that causes or could cause injury, damage or loss.

- 4.3. **Near Miss** is an unplanned event that did not result in injury, illness or damage but had the potential to do so.
- 4.4. **Prohibited Activities** where there is considerable hazard in the activity and/or the work environment, and the risk is not minimized by control measures.
- 4.5. **Risk** is the chance or probability of a person getting harmed, or experiencing an adverse health effect if exposed to a hazard.
- 4.6. **Working alone** means an employee working at a site who is the only worker of the employer at that workplace, in circumstances where assistance is not readily available to the worker in the event of an injury, ill health or emergency.

Common definitions, acronyms, and terms are available in the Glossary located on the Town's Policies webpage.

5. **INTERPRETATIONS**

Any reference in this Policy to any statute or any section of a statute shall, unless expressly stated, be deemed to be reference to the statute as amended, restated or re-enacted from time to time. Any references to a By-law or Town policy shall be deemed to be a reference to the most recent passed policy or By-law and any replacements thereto.

6. **GENERAL CONDITIONS**

6.1. **Risk Assessments and Safety Plans**

- 6.1.1. An inventory of working alone activities shall be maintained by each area Supervisor and circulated to Human Resources for review.
- 6.1.2. A documented risk assessment shall be required to determine the associated risk level (low, medium, high) for all work performed alone or in isolation.
- 6.1.3. A Work Alone Safety Plan must be developed for any activities identified as medium risk. Low risk activities do not require safety plans. Residual risk shall be mitigated by adhering to the Standard Guidelines for Working Alone. Working alone activities identified as high risk are prohibited and cannot be performed alone or in isolation.
- 6.1.4. Safety Plans shall be completed by the Supervisor in consultation with the Human Resources/Health and Safety Business Partner.

6.2. **Prohibited Activities**

- 6.2.1. Working alone shall not be permitted where:
 - 6.2.1.1. Prescribed by regulations
 - 6.2.1.2. Prescribed by a Town policy or procedure, or
 - 6.2.1.3. Risk level of the work activity has been deemed "high" through the risk assessment process

6.3. **Communication Requirements**

- 6.3.1. An effective means of communication must be available to persons working alone. Communication methods may consist of:
 - 6.3.1.1. Landline or cellular phone communications
 - 6.3.1.2. Radio communications; or
 - 6.3.1.3. Some other effective means of electronic communication
- 6.3.2. Work activities requiring a safety plan must have a defined check-in procedure.

6.4. **Training and Instructions**

- 6.4.1. All employees shall receive training on this policy at the onset of their employment and annually thereafter.
- 6.4.2. Employees who perform lone work that has been deemed to require a Safety Plan shall receive training on the work alone procedure and applicable Work Alone Safety Plans annually.
- 6.4.3. Work Alone Safety Plans shall be readily available to employees performing lone work, including a list of relevant emergency contacts which will be posted on the health and safety communication boards.

7. **RESPONSIBILITIES**

7.1. **Council** has the authority and responsibility to:

- 7.1.1. Adopt the policy.
- 7.1.2. Support the Corporations efforts to ensure safety through work alone safety initiatives as well as providing adequate resourcing to ensure compliance with the policy.

7.2. The **CAO** has the authority and responsibility to:

- 7.2.1. Ensure appropriate oversight, resources and leadership behaviours are in place within respective areas of responsibility to ensure compliance with the policy.

7.3. **Management** has the authority and responsibility to:

- 7.3.1. Ensure appropriate departmental oversight to administer and comply with the policy.
- 7.3.2. Ensure policy is followed and where clarification is required, provide to ensure policy compliance.
- 7.3.3. Work in consultation with employees to identify which jobs and/or tasks include working alone assignments.
- 7.3.4. Complete a risk assessment for jobs identified in work alone activities.
- 7.3.5. Take all reasonable and practical steps to minimize or eliminate identified incident or injury risks.
- 7.3.6. Complete Work Alone Safety Plans for medium risk work activities.
- 7.3.7. Ensure all direct reports have completed required training and that training materials are readily available.

7.4. **Human Resources** has the authority and responsibility to:

- 7.4.1. Review completed risk assessments for work alone activities.
- 7.4.2. Complete Work Alone Safety Plans in consultation with Divisional Managers.

- 7.5. The **Joint Health and Safety Committee** has the authority and responsibility to:
 - 7.5.1. Review the risk assessments and provide recommendations to management to reduce the incident or injury risks.
 - 7.5.2. Maintain and update as required the Standard Guidelines for Working Alone.
 - 7.5.3. Maintain and update work alone activities prohibited by prescribed legislation.

- 7.6. **Staff** have the authority and responsibility to:
 - 7.6.1. Ensure their understanding and compliance with the policy and seek clarification where needed to follow the policy expectations.
 - 7.6.2. Participate in the risk assessment with the Supervisor concerning working alone.
 - 7.6.3. Comply with all established Health and Safety Policies and Procedures as set by the Town.
 - 7.6.4. Take reasonable care and precautions to look after their own health and safety.
 - 7.6.5. Report any incidents and near misses to their immediate Supervisor.

8. LEGISLATIVE REFERENCES

- 8.1. Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety
- 8.2. Occupational Health and Safety Act, R.S.O 1990, Section 25(2)(h)
- 8.3. Occupational Health and Safety Act, R.S.O 1990, Section 21