



## Standard Operating Procedure

**UBCV-RMS-OHS-SOP****14-001****Department of Risk Management Services**[www.rms.ubc.ca](http://www.rms.ubc.ca)

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## Working Alone or in Isolation

### 1. SCOPE

This SOP applies to all UBC employees.

The purpose of this guideline is to provide information on when an individual is considered to be working alone or in isolation. This includes criteria for determining if an individual has assistance that is readily available.

### 2. BACKGROUND

The guideline is intended to safeguard individuals, as defined in the Workers Compensation Act ("Act"), who is assigned to work alone or in isolation. In addition, the requirements only apply when assistance is not readily available to the worker in the event of an emergency, injury, or illness.

### 3. RESPONSIBILITY

- Procedures will be developed and documented by an employee's direct supervisor and may include participation of unit staff, Local Health and Safety Committee members, and knowledgeable persons.
- Supervisors shall include the procedures within all worker orientation processes.
- The processes shall be revisited on a set schedule to be determined by the supervisor and as work processes change.

### 4. REFERENCES AND DEFINITIONS

WorksafeBC Occupational Health Regulations Part 4.20-4.23, Working Alone or in Isolation.

### 5. PROCEDURE

1. This procedure applies to workers considered to be working alone or in isolation. This includes criteria for determining if a worker requires assistance and if assistance is readily available.
2. In cases where workers are permitted to work alone outside of their regular assigned working hours, the manager and supervisor must perform a risk assessment relating to the hazards the worker may be exposed to while working



- alone. Following this risk assessment, the supervisor and manager must take the necessary measures to ensure the worker's safety.
3. The risk assessment will be conducted by the manager, head, worker safety representative and the affected workers.
  4. The risk assessment will determine the hazards which will cause injuries and determine the consequences. Considerations include length of time the person will be working alone, what forms of communication are available, the location of the work, type or nature of the work, and first aid availability.
  5. Once the risk assessment has determined the severity of the hazard(s) for a person working alone, a procedure will be developed by the manager, head and worker safety representative and affected workers.
  6. The procedure for checking a worker's well-being must include a time interval between checks and a procedure to follow in case the worker cannot be contacted and provisions for emergency rescue and first aid.
  7. A designated person must establish contact with the worker at predetermined intervals. These intervals and contact times must be recorded by the designated person who will include a final check at the end of the work shift.
  8. Time intervals for checking a worker's well-being must be developed in consultation with the worker assigned to work alone or in isolation.
  9. A worker or any person assigned to check on the worker must be trained in the written procedure for checking the worker's well-being. The supervisor is responsible to ensure the worker is trained in the safe work procedures of working alone or in isolation.
  10. If a worker is assigned to work alone or in isolation late at night and there is any risk of harm from a violent act to the worker, then
    - a. there must be a written procedure to ensure the worker's safety, and
    - b. workers assigned to work late night hours must either:
      - I. ensure that the worker is physically separated from the public by a locked door or barrier that prevents physical contact with or access to the worker;
      - II. or assign one or more workers to work with the worker during that worker's assignment

Note: High risk activities require shorter time intervals between checks. The preferred method for checking on workers is visual or two-way voice contact. In cases where such a system is not practical, a one-way system which allows the worker to call or signal for help and which will send a call for help if the worker does not reset the device after a predetermined interval is acceptable.

## 6. REVIEW AND RETENTION

This SOP is reviewed annually or whenever deemed necessary by the responsible departmental representative in Risk Management Services.



### 7. DOCUMENT APPROVAL SIGNATURES

<b>Initial Creation Date: July 18, 2013</b>			
<b>History:</b>			
<b>Revised By:</b>			
		Occupational & Research Health and Safety	Chief Risk Officer
Name	Sonny Dhasi	Bruce Anderson	Ron Holton
Date	July 18, 2013	July 19, 2013	
Name			
Date			