

Working Alone

Background

Foothills School Division has established this Working Alone protocol in order to ensure that individuals working alone in our schools and properties can do so safely. Safe working environments are those where individuals are following proper protocols and procedures to ensure that they are safe when working alone. Current Occupational Health & Safety legislation requires employers to implement processes where those working alone can do so in a safe manner.

The Assistant Superintendent, Corporate Services and the Manager of Risk and Materials Management are responsible for the administration of this administrative procedure.

Definition

“Working Alone” means to work alone in or at a work site in the circumstances where assistance is not readily available in the event of an injury, illness or emergency. If you must work late or be in the school/facility early in the morning, on evenings, weekends, etc. you must adhere to this Administrative Procedure.

Procedures

All employees that are considered to be “working alone” must comply with the following procedures, prior to proceeding to work by themselves:

1. Principals/Supervisors:
 - 1.1 Must conduct a hazard assessment to identify existing or potential safety hazards in the workplace associated with working alone
 - 1.2 Will Implement safety measures to eliminate or reduce risk to workers from the identified hazards
 - 1.3 Ensure workers are aware of and are following protocol for communications before, during, and upon conclusion of working alone.
2. Employee’s/workers:
 - 2.1 Will participate with the working alone risk assessment and risk management decisions with your supervisor
 - 2.2 Follow safe practices outlined in the communication “Buddy System” procedure.
 - 2.3 Maintain regular communication as directed by supervisors.
3. Implement a “Buddy System”

- 3.1 Every employee who is working alone will designate a “buddy” with whom he/she will interact with as follows:
 - 3.1.1 Call the “buddy” (can be a friend, supervisor, spouse, etc. who is over 16 years of age) when the employee arrives at the building and tell them how long they will be there
 - 3.1.2 Tell them where you will be working within the building and how long you will be there
 - 3.1.3 You have 2 hours to call back your buddy. Should you be working longer than 2 hours, then prior to the 2 hours expiring you will need to call the buddy to renew your working alone time.
 - 3.1.4 Upon leaving the building notify your buddy that you are no longer working alone at a school or division facility.

- 3.2 Emergency Response - Should the individual working alone at the school/facility not make the second call to the buddy within the 2 hour time frame, your buddy will attempt to contact the employee on their land-line, cell phone, pager/text. If the buddy cannot contact the employee after calling them at their designated numbers, the buddy will wait for ten (10) minutes for the employee to respond. If there is no response within 10 minutes the buddy will assume there is an emergency and contact the employee’s supervisor/designate (number given out to buddy by the employee) at which time the supervisor or designate will then go the last known location of the employee and investigate.

Reference: Relevant Legislation & Guidelines