

The University of Wisconsin System
UPS OPERATIONAL POLICY: GEN 11



SUBJECT: Workplace Safety

Original Issuance Date: July 1, 2015
Last Revision Date:

1. POLICY PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to establish workplace health and safety procedure parameters for all University employees which include the elements required by [Wis. Stat. § 36.115\(4\)](#).

2. POLICY BACKGROUND:

Under [Wis. Stat. § 36.115\(4\)](#), the new University of Wisconsin System personnel systems must include a workplace safety policy.

Under [Wis. Stat. § 101.055](#), all state employees, including UW System employees, are granted rights and protections relating to occupational safety and health equivalent to those granted to employees in the private sector under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970. The Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services has adopted and enforces virtually all OSHA regulations at state government workplaces, including at UW System institutions.

Under [Wis. Stat. § 101.11](#) (the safe-place statute), an employer has a duty to provide safe employment.

There are other agencies with regulatory authority over specific subjects affecting employee safety and health. These subjects may be most efficiently covered under this workplace safety policy.

3. POLICY DEFINITIONS:

Please see UPS Operational Policy [GEN 0: General Terms and Definitions](#) for a list of general terms and definitions.

Definitions specific to this policy:

“Employer” means a UW System institution that engages the services of university employees, and the term includes a person acting on behalf of an employer within the scope of his or her authority, express or implied.

4. POLICY:

Under state law, employers have a duty to provide safe employment, which includes having a safe place to work. UW System institutions are responsible for the maintenance of occupational health and safety standards and for the promotion of workplace health and safety.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that each UW institution attains the following objectives.

Management Commitment and Employee Involvement

- Establish written performance/accountability standards and objectives for upper level administration, directors, managers, and supervisors to prevent and control occupational injuries and illnesses and enhance workplace health and safety.
- Establish written performance/accountability standards for employees in following workplace health and safety rules.
- Establish occupational health and safety committees consisting of representatives from all levels and areas of the organization.
- Designate an individual to serve as the institution's Occupational Health and Safety Coordinator to assist in coordinating its occupational injury/illness prevention program.
- Provide adequate authority and resources so that everyone can meet their assigned responsibilities.
- Establish adequate reporting systems for periodic management review of the institutional occupational health and safety program, and provide to UW System Administration an annual summary of the campus occupational health and safety program.

Worksite Analysis

- Establish a procedure for conducting periodic occupational health and safety inspections/surveys so that potential hazards are detected and corrected or controlled in a timely manner.
- Establish a means for employees to notify management about potentially hazardous conditions or work practices, and provide timely responses.
- Establish a timely process of investigation and analysis of workplace accidents, incidents, “near misses,” and reported hazards to determine their causes and to create prevention strategies.

Hazard Prevention and Control

- Minimize the risk of occupational injuries and illnesses by the use of loss prevention and control techniques.
- Elimination or control of hazards in a timely manner.
- Planning and preparing for emergencies and conducting emergency training and drills.

Safety and Health Training

- Provide adequate occupational health and safety training and education for managers, supervisors, and employees.
- Promote occupational health and safety awareness and safe work practices.

Safety Equipment

Employees shall be reimbursed, in accordance with institution policy, for safety and protective equipment if, in the performance of their assigned duties, the equipment is required by the employer. These payments are likely taxable.

- Protective Clothing - The employer shall furnish, in accordance with institutional limits, required protective clothing and equipment necessary for the performance of assigned duties. Such equipment shall be in accordance with the standards established by regulating agencies.
- Protective Shoes - If the employer requires the purchase of safety shoes necessary in the performance of assigned duties, the employer shall pay an allowance, in accordance with institutional limits, toward such purchase as an expense check.
- Safety Glasses - If the employer requires the purchase of safety glasses and/or safety sunglasses for the performance of assigned duties, the employer shall reimburse the employee for such expense, in accordance with institutional limits, including the cost of any eye examination required for such purposes and not covered by any health insurance program. Reimbursement for eye examinations under this provision shall not exceed one per fiscal year.

5. RELATED DOCUMENTS:

[UW System Office of Risk Management Health and Safety Website](#)
[State of WI Executive Order #194](#)

6. POLICY HISTORY:

In July 1993, Governor Tommy Thompson issued an executive order recognizing the importance of protecting the health and safety of state employees. Executive Order #194 required all state agencies to develop a comprehensive written occupational health and safety program that included a range of activities designed to improve worker safety in government agencies. Among the required components of the safety program was to “provide adequate health and safety training and education for managers, supervisors and employees.”

Reviewed by the Board of Regents, December 7, 2012