Working Alone

San José State University

One Washington Square

San José, California

Environmental Health & Safety

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1. **Purpose and Scope**

The Working Alone policy limits work at San José State University (University) in cases where an inherent hazard could result in an injury or exposure that would render an individual unable to take appropriate emergency actions, such as when an individual may …

* 1. Be splashed with a corrosive chemical that blinds him or her.
  2. Be exposed to a chemical or trauma that impairs consciousness.
  3. Be burned or sets a fire.
  4. Receive severe electrical shock or arc-flash injury.
  5. Fall from an unprotected elevation above 6 feet.
  6. Be struck or trapped by a heavy object or suspended load.
  7. Become trapped in or by moving machinery.
  8. Be injured by a powered cutting tool.
  9. Be exposed to a risk of injury by working after regular work hours.

1. **Standards, Regulations and References**
   1. California Code of Regulations,   
      Title 8, Section 3202. The Injury and Illness Prevention Program.[[1]](#footnote-1)
   2. California Code of Regulations,   
      Title 8, Article 24, Section §1670. Personal Fall Arrest Systems, Personal Fall Restraint Systems and Positioning Devices.[[2]](#footnote-2)
   3. California Code of Regulations,   
      Title 8, Section 2940. High-Voltage Electrical Safety Orders.[[3]](#footnote-3)
   4. California Code of Regulations,   
      Title 8, Section 5157. Permit Required Confined Spaces.[[4]](#footnote-4)
2. **Working Alone Policy**

Workers are not authorized to work alone when the inherent hazards associated with their work could incapacitate them in such a way that that they could not "self-rescue" or activate emergency services.

* 1. The policy does not address activities "commonly performed by the general public" that include hazards commonly accepted by the public, the control of which requires little or no specialized guidance or training. These activities include walking or driving while alone, or the consequences of personal medical conditions that may arise while at work.
  2. The policy is consistent with the University’s commitment and duty to provide a safe and healthful work environment for all employees, students and visitors from the exposure to the hazards of working alone.

1. **Roles and Responsibilities**
   1. **The University**

The University is committed to and has a duty to provide a safe and healthful work environment for all employees, students and guests from the exposure to the hazards of working alone.

* 1. **Environmental Health & Safety**

Environmental Health & Safety will …

* + 1. Establish, implement and maintain the Working Alone Policy which is designed to eliminate or minimize employee exposure to the hazards of working alone.
    2. Develop, modify and update as necessary, a standardized working alone authorization form to be used as the basis for the documentation of objective information concerning the specific working alone activities and required limitations.
    3. Retain records for three years.
    4. Audit and review the Working Alone Policy annually.
  1. **Department Management**

Each affected College or Department will implement the policy by…

* + 1. Assessing its work activities and finding those in which the risk of inherent hazards may be severe and prevent workers from self-rescuing or activating emergency services in the event of an accident.
    2. Completing a “Working Alone Authorization Form” when workers are expected or request to work alone or after hours.
    3. Collaborate with Environmental Health & Safety, if necessary, in the worker hazard determination process.
    4. Developing and enforcing work practices and methods designed to eliminate or control the risk of exposure to the hazards of working alone.
    5. Authorizing Working Alone only when inherent hazards can be reasonably eliminated or controlled.
    6. Communicating to all affected workers when working alone is authorized or prohibited.
  1. **Workers**

Every worker who is at risk of exposure to the hazards of working alone will …

* + 1. Follow the prescribed work practices and methods designed to eliminate or control the risk of exposure to the hazards of working alone.
    2. Maintain regular communication as directed by responsible managers.
    3. Report incidents to the manager and, if necessary based on severity, to the University Police Department immediately.

1. **Policy Audit**

Environmental Health & Safety will perform an audit of the policy annually and make improvements to the Working Alone Policy as regulations and conditions change.

1. **Document History and Control**

The San José State University Working Alone Policy described herein supersedes all prior policy or program documents.

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| ***Rev #*** | ***Document Revision History*** | ***Author*** | ***Reviewer*** | ***Date*** |
| 00 | Revision No Change  Initial Document | David Krack Director Environmental Health & Safety |  | July 17, 2013 |
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**Working Alone Procedure**

The university is committed to and has a duty to provide a safe and healthful work environment for workers from the exposure to the hazards of working alone.

1. **The Working Alone Policy is designed to eliminate or minimize occupational exposure to the hazards of working alone. It includes the following key elements:**
   1. Working Alone Hazard Determination
   2. Completing the Working Alone Hazard Authorization Form
   3. Hazard Levels
   4. Recordkeeping
   5. The Working Alone Authorization Form
2. **Definitions**
   1. **A worker** is considered an employee, student, contractor or visitor who is assigned work or a project and is granted access to the campus facilities under the guidance of a responsible manager.
   2. **Working Alone** occurs when a worker performs work out of sight or earshot of anyone who can help in the event of an emergency.
   3. **Working Accompanied** occurs when a worker performs work with:
      1. A second person within sight or earshot
      2. An available second person who agrees to and understands the responsibility to monitor the worker’s safety periodically.
      3. If the second worker has to leave the area, the activity is considered to be Working Alone, and must terminate if prohibited in the work authorization.
      4. Working Accompanied is also referred to as the “Buddy System”.
   4. **Buddy System** is a system of organizing work so that the worker can always be seen and heard by at least one other worker. In addition, the buddy system must include periodic checking of the person’s safety.
   5. **Regular Weekday Hours** are the hours between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday, excluding any weekday when the University is officially closed.
   6. **After Hours** are the hours between 5:00 PM and 8:00 AM weekdays, Saturday, Sunday, University holidays and any other day the University is officially closed.
   7. **Hazard Determination** is a process that the manager performs to identify hazards, determine the appropriate risk and to develop work procedures that will effectively eliminate or control and reduce the risk to a reasonable level. Some of the key elements of a hazard determination is the identification of the workers and the work location, identification of hazards and the development of a plan to reduce the risk, communication systems, and an emergency action plan that details how emergency assistance will be obtained in the event of an injury or incident.
   8. **Hazard Level** is a standard by which a level of risk is assigned to the work that will guide the manager in making a hazard determination and decision to grant or deny access.
   9. **Authorization / Granting / Denying Access** is the process where the appropriate responsible manager will review the “Working Alone Authorization Form” and decide to grant or deny access to workers working alone based on the overall determined hazard level.
3. **Working Alone Hazard Determination**
   1. A hazard determination is made with the worker and the responsible manager by identifying key work elements and the hazards associated with the work.
   2. The “Working Alone Authorization Form” is completed to assist the manager in completing the hazard determination and, if possible, reducing the risk by eliminating or controlling the hazards.
4. **Completing the Working Alone Hazard Authorization Form**
   1. The “Working Alone Authorization Form” is completed by the worker and reviewed by the responsible manager for the College or Department. A decision is made to grant or deny authorization to work alone.
   2. A copy of the completed “Working Alone Authorization Form” is given to the workers before they commence work and must be kept with them at the job site and shown to managers and University Police officers upon request.
5. **Hazard Levels**
   1. Authorization is granted when the risk is reduced to an acceptable ***Hazard Level of I or II*** as defined in the “Hazard Level Table”.
   2. Authorization shall not be granted if unable to eliminate or effectively control the hazards as defined in ***Hazard Level III.***
   3. “Hazard Level Table“.

(See next page).

| **Hazard Level Table** | **Hazard Description** | **Control Methods** | **Permit Conditions** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Hazard Level I** | There is minimal risk with respect to the activity and the work environment.  Examples include and are not limited to general office work, computer work, writing reports. | Telephone systems readily available with 911 call capability to University Police. | **Working Alone Permitted** |
| **Hazard Level  II** | Some minor hazards exist in the activity and/or work environment and the risk is decreased by the control measures in place.  Examples include and are not limited to maintenance & custodial services and laboratory work with minimal risk. | Telephone systems readily available with 911 call capability to University Police. | **Working Alone Permitted**  **Accompanied worker optional based on hazard determination.** |
| **Hazard Level  III** | There is considerable hazard in the activity and/or work environment and the risk is not minimized by multiple control measures.  Examples include and are not limited to working from heights, electricity, hazardous substances, high pressure, or conducting repairs and maintenance to heavy equipment. | Within visual and audible shouting distance of an accompanied worker or “buddy”.  Telephone systems readily available with 911 call capability to University Police.  Radio communications to University Police. | **Working Alone Not Permitted**  **Accompanied worker must be knowledgeable in the work activity and emergency procedures.**  **Work must be terminated if the accompanied worker leaves the worksite.** |
| **Hazard Level  III Activities** | * 1. \_\_Be splashed with a corrosive chemical that blinds him or her.   2. \_\_Be exposed to a chemical or trauma that impairs consciousness.   3. \_\_Be burned or sets a fire.   4. \_\_Receive severe electrical shock or arc-flash injury.   5. \_\_Fall from an unprotected elevation above 4 feet.   6. \_\_Be struck or trapped by a heavy object or suspended load.   7. \_\_Become trapped in or by moving machinery.   8. \_\_Be injured by a powered cutting tool.   9. \_\_Be exposed to working after regular work hours. |  |  |

1. **Recordkeeping**
   * 1. The completed “Working Alone Authorization Form” is kept by the College or Department manager and retained until the end of the semester after the work is completed.
     2. Each College or Department will review all of the completed forms at the end of each academic semester to evaluate the effectiveness of the policy in preventing injury or accidents with workers who work alone.
     3. Send completed forms to Environmental Health & Safety at the end of each semester to be retained for 3 years.
2. **The “Working Alone Authorization Form“.**

(See next page.)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Working Alone Authorization Form** *(Completed by Requestor)* | | |
| 1. Request Date: |  | 1. Work Location Building: \_ \_\_\_\_\_\_ Room \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| 1. Work Requestor: |  | Proposed Work Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_ Times: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_to |
| 1. Responsible Manager: |  | Proposed Work Date: \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_ Times: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_to |
| 1. College / Dept: |  | Proposed Work Date: \_\_\_\_\_ \_ \_\_\_\_ Times: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_to |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. **Hazard Determination** *(Completed by Requestor)* | List work elements.  Identify inherent hazards. | Develop Control Measures  that will reduce the hazard. |
| **Work Element** | **Hazardous Element Identification** | **Hazard Control Method** |
| *1.* |  |  |
| *2.* |  |  |
| *3.* |  |  |
| *4.* |  |  |
| *5.* |  |  |
| **Overall Hazard Determination 🡪** | **Level I\_\_\_\_\_ II\_\_\_\_\_ III\_\_\_\_\_** | ***(See Hazard Level Table)*** |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. **Authorized Worker Names** *(Completed by Requestor)* | **Worker Signatures** | **Telephone Number** |
| *1* |  |  |
| *2* |  |  |
| *3* |  |  |
| *4* |  |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. **Work Plan / Limitations----🡪** *(Completed by Responsible Manager)* |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| 1. **Means of Access-------------🡪** *(Completed by Responsible Manager)* | Key ID **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** | Omni Code \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| 1. **Authorization ----------------🡪** *(Completed by Responsible Manager)* | Granted \_\_\_\_\_\_Denied\_\_\_\_\_\_ | Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| 1. **Responsible Manager** |  |  |
| Name | Signature | Telephone Number |

**<<NOTES>> *Workers must keep a copy of the Working Alone Authorization Form with them while on the job.***

***Return the Working Alone Authorization Form to the Department or College for recordkeeping.***

***(Page 1 of 2)***

**Working Alone Authorization Form (continued page 2 of 2)**

| **Hazard Level Table** | **Control Methods** | **Authorization Conditions** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **\_\_\_\_\_Hazard Level I**  There is minimal risk with respect to the activity and the work environment.  Examples - general office work, computer work, writing reports. | Telephone systems readily available with 911 call capability to University Police. | **Working Alone Permitted** |
| **\_\_\_\_\_Hazard Level II**  Some minor hazards exist in the activity and/or work environment and the risk is decreased by the control measures in place.  Examples - maintenance & custodial services and laboratory work with minimal risk. | Telephone systems readily available with 911 call capability to University Police. | **Working Alone Permitted**  **Accompanied worker optional based on hazard determination.** |
| **\_\_\_\_\_Hazard Level III**  There is considerable hazard in the activity and/or work environment and the risk is decreased by multiple effective control measures.  Examples - working from heights, electricity, hazardous substances, and high pressure, or repairs and maintenance to heavy equipment. | Within visual and audible shouting distance of an accompanied worker or “buddy”.  Telephone systems readily available with 911 call capability to University Police.  Radio communications to University Police. | **Working Alone Not Permitted**  **Accompanied worker must be knowledgeable in the work activity and emergency procedures.**  **Work must be terminated if the accompanied worker leaves the worksite.** |
| **Hazard Level III Activities**   1. \_\_Be splashed with a corrosive chemical that blinds him or her.    1. \_\_Be exposed to a chemical or trauma that impairs consciousness.    2. \_\_Be burned or sets a fire.    3. \_\_Receive severe electrical shock or arc-flash injury.    4. \_\_Fall from an unprotected elevation above 4 feet.    5. \_\_Be struck or trapped by a heavy object or suspended load.    6. \_\_Become trapped in or by moving machinery.    7. \_\_Be injured by a powered cutting tool.    8. \_\_Be exposed to working after regular work hours. |  |  |

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1. <https://www.dir.ca.gov/Title8/3203.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://www.dir.ca.gov/Title8/1670.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <https://www.dir.ca.gov/Title8/2940.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. <https://www.dir.ca.gov/Title8/5157.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)