

Working Alone Program

Check-up and Annual Review

Does your workplace already have a working alone program or check-in system in place. Are you looking at creating a new program? This guide and checklist will help ensure that you have all the important points covered for staff that are working alone or in isolation.

Identify Staff Working Alone or in Isolation

Does your program identify who is working alone and what risks they may face?

Working alone or in isolation means to work in circumstances where assistance would not be readily available to the worker in case of an emergency or in case the worker is injured or in ill health. Ask yourself:

- Do we have staff that are working out of verbal or visual contact with other workers?
- Are staff travelling on an isolated rural highway or resource road that will have low traffic volumes in winter or poor conditions?
- What hazards will staff be exposed to while working?
 - Are there ways to reduce the hazards; or
 - Are there hazardous job tasks staff should not be doing if they are working alone or in isolation?
- As part of their duties, are staff driving as part of compliance or enforcement duties?
- Are small groups of staff working in isolated areas in the field where help may not be immediately available?
- Are staff telecommuting from home?

Check-in and Out Procedures

Is there an existing written procedure in place for checking the well being of workers who are working alone or in isolation? There may be different procedures for different staff e.g., office staff vs. field staff.

- Does the procedure include the time intervals between check-ins and consultation with the worker? Is the system proactive and require timed check-in/out to be completed?
- Has the check-in/out frequency and method been developed in consultation with the Joint Occupational Safety and Health Committee (JOSH), or the worker's Occupational Safety and Health Representative and the workers who will be using the system?
- Is there a person designated to establish contact with workers who are working alone or in isolation?
 - Who is the designated check in person?
 - Who will it be when the designate is absent or sick?
 - Is it a monitoring company? Is there a letter of agreement with another agency etc?
- Does the procedure include what the worker must do if they are ending their shift early or going to a public service worksite after check-in for the day?
- Does the procedure include a check-out for workers at the end of the work shift?
- Are check-in/outs documented?

Missed Check-in and Out

The working alone program must include a procedure to follow up in case the worker has missed a check-in and what steps to complete if they cannot be contacted. Does the procedure:

- Include provisions for a missed check-in/out
- Define how long after a missed check in/out the supervisor or established contact person will try and contact the employee
- Define what methods will be used to try and contact the person who missed their check-in/out
- Have a record of the worker's current work contact information
- Include up-to-date alternate methods of contact information. For example, personal cell phone, landline or email address
- Define any internal resources, outside help and coordination of outside agencies for a worker who has missed a check-in/out
- Determine when the employer will call for a wellness check from law enforcement at the person's last known location
- Include a copy of the worker's designated emergency contact in the event that they cannot be found

Program Management

Does the program include training for the workers and the persons who will check-in on the workers? You must be able to show the program is being used and records should be reviewed to ensure employees are using it.

- Clarify when employees will use the working alone program
- Ensure employees who work alone or in isolation are trained on the method and frequency of check-in/out, and what steps to follow if they miss a check-in/out
- Ensure supervisors are trained on the protocols to follow if an employee misses a check-in/out
- Document the content, dates and names of employees who attend training
- Keep a minimum two weeks of records and review them to ensure employees who worked alone or in isolation during that period were following the protocols

The working alone protocols should be reviewed at least annually or if the following occurs:

- The duties the employees are doing while working alone or in isolation has changed
- The location where employees are working alone or in isolation has changed
- There are any new risks or hazards that may change the interval of check-in/out

Review Completed by: _____

Date: _____

- Completed review sent to the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee for consultation

Date: _____