

Safe Work Guideline Working Alone

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Revised By:
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Part 28 of the Alberta Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Code establishes requirements for employers and employees to follow if employees work alone. Working alone means to work alone at a worksite or in areas of a building that are isolated from view or hearing distance (e.g. rooftop; boiler room; separate wing of a large building etc.). A worksite also includes a vehicle used by an employee as part of their job. When working alone, visible or audible contact with a person capable of providing assistance in the event of an injury, illness or emergency may not be readily available.

Working Alone Protocol:

1. Wherever possible, principals and decision unit administrators shall first consider strategies to eliminate situations where employees work alone. If employees do not work alone then the requirements of the Code do not apply.
2. Employees should never work alone conducting work tasks that present a higher risk of injury. Examples of higher risk tasks include working:
 - At heights above 10 feet;
 - With students having a known pattern of violent behavior;
 - In confined spaces;
 - With high voltage electrical systems; and
 - With equipment that poses a higher risk for serious injury (e.g. chain saws, table saws etc.)
3. If employees work alone, principals and decision unit administrators shall:

Identify all employees that work alone and ensure a **written hazard assessment** is conducted to identify existing or potential hazards arising from the conditions and circumstances of the employee's work. The employee(s) affected by the hazard shall participate in the hazard assessment.

 - A. Ensure that the **hazard assessment is communicated** to all employees affected by the assessment and that further hazard assessments are conducted at intervals of time appropriate to the conditions and circumstances of the work.
 - B. Take all reasonable and practicable steps to **eliminate and/or control the hazards** identified by the hazard assessment. Employees affected by the hazard should participate in the elimination or control of identified hazards.

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- C. Establish an **effective communication system** between the employee and person(s) capable of responding to their needs in the event of injury, illness or emergency. This may include mechanical or electronic communications systems and/or a check in procedure at intervals appropriate to the nature of the hazard.
- D. Establish a **written site specific protocol** outlining the safe work procedures or practices in place to protect employees working alone and **educate** employees on the site procedures for working alone.

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