

Employee Wellness and Occupational Safety and Health (EWOSH): Policy

Application

This policy applies to all Virginia Department of Health (VDH) employees, Local Health Districts, volunteers, non-state workers (contingent workers/contractors), appointees, and interns.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) specific guidance and resources to reduce the incidence of work-related accidents, injuries, and illnesses, and to provide procedures and guidelines to facilitate Virginia Department of Health employee wellness and occupational safety and health.

The primary goal of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 is to reduce workplace hazards and implement job safety and health programs for both employers and their employees. The Virginia Occupational Safety and Health (VOSH), state OSHA plan, requires employers to have a compliant safety program that addresses and mitigates hazards found in the workplace.

Policy

The Virginia Department of Health Employee Wellness and Occupational Safety and Health Program provides the framework for safe working conditions and safe work practices. This program will be updated as regulations change, and modifications are necessary.

1.0 Scope:

It is the intent of this policy to provide guidance and procedures to assist employees in the Virginia Department of Health to achieve:

- A safe and healthy work environment.
- A place of employment which is free from recognized hazards that are likely to cause death or serious physical harm to our employees (OSHA's General Duty Clause -5(a)(1)).
- A safety culture by instilling safety awareness, employee wellness and health, and safe and compliant practices in all employees.
- Superior safety training that results in a safe and healthy work environment.
- A reduction in accidents, incidents, and injuries due to a reduction in hazards.
- Better health and safety of all employees, the public, and the environment.
- A reduction in property damage or losses which include a reduction in cost.

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- Correction of potential hazards and unsafe conditions through safety site surveys, hazard analysis, corrective action plans, and methods to reduce potential for injury in the work environment.
- Proper recordkeeping and documentation as required by regulatory agencies.
- Guidelines and procedures to meet all applicable regulatory mandates and/or best practices.

2.0 Guidelines and Procedures (available @[Occupational Safety and Training – Employee Wellness and Occupational Safety and Health \(virginia.gov\)](#))

This program defines the general activities of VDH employees at work and includes safety and health topics that apply to regulations found in both General Industry and Construction regulatory sections (depending upon the activities) of OSHA. Authority, responsibility, and accountability for each guideline/procedure must be clearly assigned to avoid confusion and uncertainty.

Guidelines/procedures are under development and include but are not limited to the following:

- 1.0 Post-Incident Reporting Procedures
- 2.0 Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Guidelines
- 3.0 Hazard Communication Procedures
- 4.0 Respiratory Protection Procedures
- 5.0 Chemical Hygiene Guidelines
- 6.0 Hearing Conservation Guidelines
- 7.0 Confined Space Procedures
- 8.0 Lock Out Tag Out Procedures
- 9.0 Indoor and Outdoor Safety Guidelines
- 10.0 Back and Musculoskeletal Injury Prevention Guidelines
- 11.0 Personal Protective Equipment Procedures
- 12.0 Lone Worker Safety Guidelines
- 13.0 Vehicle and Equipment Safety Guidelines
- 14.0 Spill Response Procedures
- 15.0 Fall Protection Procedures
- 16.0 Emergency Action Plan Guidelines
- 17.0 Fire Prevention Procedures
- 18.0 Asbestos and Silica Safety Guidelines
- 19.0 Electrical Safety Procedures
- 20.0 Responder Safety Guidelines
- 21.0 Site Safety Survey Procedures

When a hazard exists in which there are no direct guidelines/procedures that apply to mitigation of this hazard, we must apply the **General Duty Clause** which states that the expectation is to furnish a place of employment which is free from recognized hazards that are likely to cause death or serious physical harm to our employees (OSHA's General Duty Clause -5(a)(1)).

3.0 Operational Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.1 **Employees-** Each employee has a right to work in a safe and healthful

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environment. Safety requires cooperation and communication. Any employee who notices unsafe work conditions or has safety concerns should either correct the issue themselves (if possible) or notify a supervisor or Manager without fear of retribution. Something as simple as discarding excess paper products or cardboard can qualify as correction of a safety issue. Following safe procedures and guidelines are paramount to ensuring safe work activities. Employees will not face negative repercussions from safety or training suggestions, from bringing safety concerns forth, or from requesting additional training to perform a task they perceive as hazardous. All employees must:

- Be familiar with, and follow policies and procedures set forth in the VDH EWOSH Guidelines and Procedures.
- Perform work assignments in a safe manner.
- Use any necessary safety devices and proper personal protective safety equipment.
- Notify others of unsafe work conditions or practices.
- Report any accident/incident immediately or as soon as is practical to the Supervisor.
- Practice good housekeeping.
- Attend safety training classes.

3.2 Managers and Designees

Managers are responsible for providing a safe work environment for all staff by following posted health and safety guidelines and procedures. Managers are responsible for ensuring employees tasked with jobs involving all hazards are properly trained prior to performing assigned tasks. Managers are responsible for identifying any existing or potential safety hazards for which PPE is required for hazard mitigation.

Managers are responsible to identify employees that require training prior to working around potential hazards and to review this program periodically. Managers or their designees should be able to identify existing and predictable hazards and identify hazardous working conditions. Managers and their designees should have the authorization to take prompt corrective measures to eliminate hazards and prevent employee injury and illness caused by these hazards.

3.3 Office/District Leadership

Leadership will approve this policy and ensure these guidelines and procedures are implemented and followed appropriately. The Office/District Leadership will ensure a place of employment which is free from recognized hazards that are likely to cause death or serious physical harm to our employees.

3.4 EWOSH Team

The Occupational Health and Safety Team, also known as the Employee Wellness and Occupational Safety and Health Team, will partner with safety coordinators, as well as Offices and District staff to assist in safety program compliance. The EWOSH team will

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assist in organizing safety and health documentation, perform site surveys, provide reports and assist with corrective action plans, ergonomic assessments, local safety plan development, as well as assist in preparation for wear of personal protective equipment (respirator wear) through medical clearance and respirator fit testing. The EWOSH team will be a resource to assist VDH staff in implementation of this policy.

3.5 Office or District Safety Coordinator

The Safety Coordinator will lead Safety Committee Meetings, check medical clearance status, and respirator fit testing has been completed as required. The Safety Coordinator will be the primary point of contact for employees when information is needed about guidelines and procedures, ensure those trained in CPR/AED/first aid are up to date as needed, and make available any necessary personal protective equipment.

- Formulate, recommend, oversee, and administer the Local Health District Safety Program.
- Provide all levels of management the services and technical advice needed for proper administration of the Safety Program.
- Make all Safety Meeting minutes available to all employees under Coordinators' supervision.
- Work with all employees to ensure OSHA regulations and standards are followed and enforced.
- Identify and communicate to EWOSH any programs that require hazard mitigation in facilities, operations, and sites.
- Assist management in identification of employee safety and health training needs.
- Ensure OSHA Form 300 log is completed and ensures this information is posted in place where employees can see them on each job for the required timeframe.
- Develop and maintain accident investigation and reporting procedures and systems.
- Enter documentation into appropriate systems.
- Post applicable guidelines/procedures per OSHA/VOSH requirements.

3.6 Safety Committee

Safety Committees are created for the benefit of all employees. The purpose of the Safety Committee is to regularly bring employees together in a cooperative atmosphere to promote safety and health in the workplace. Each Committee is led by District or Office area Safety Coordinator. The committee is made up of at least one person from each work area or department. The meeting purpose is to facilitate safety discussions with employees to communicate safety concerns and develop corrective and preventive action plans.

- Recommend options for improving health and safety in the workplace.
- Define and identify safety issues (along with Managers).
- Review incident investigations.
- Identify possible hazards and recommend options for corrective actions.

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- Help identify any safety training needs.

Each Safety Committee is composed of a Safety Coordinator or designee, members of each Department at the location, and other invited members. Meetings should be held at the minimum on a quarterly basis and should be documented. This documentation will include incidents, corrective actions, safety issues, and any recommended improvements in workplace safety and health. This information will be shared with the local Health Director/Office Director or designee. The local Health/Office Director or designee is responsible to ensure corrective actions are completed, any safety issues are resolved in a safe manner, and any recommended improvements are considered and implemented if practical.

4.0 TRAINING AND PRACTICE IMPROVEMENTS

Safety Training is required by OSHA on an annual, periodic, or according to best practices basis. A training matrix will assess the needs of each role. Safety Training is completed in TRAIN.

New employees will complete specific safety training prior to the start of their new duties. The new employee will receive training on general safety topics and those that pertain to their specific jobs.

It is the supervisor's responsibility to ensure that employees receive the necessary training required for their job tasks. Additional trainings may be offered as required to meet Regulatory Standards through the year.

Authority

16 Virginia Administrative Code 25 Chapters [60](#) & [85](#)

29 Code of Federal Regulations Parts [1904](#) & [1910](#)

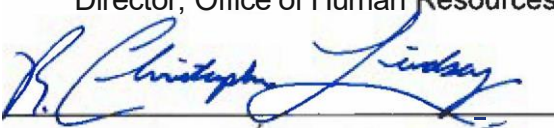
Related Policies, Procedures, and/or Resources


Glossary

Employee Wellness and Occupational Safety and Health (EWOSH): Policy

Policy Approval

Reviewer: Twinkle Oliver
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 Date: 8/21/2025

Reviewer: 
 R. Christopher Lindsay
 Chief Operating Officer
 Date: 8/25/2025

Approver: 
 Dr. Karen Shelton
 State Health Commissioner
 Date: 9/23/2025

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Policy History

| EFFECTIVE DATE | DESCRIPTION |
|----------------|---------------------|
| 09/01/2025 | Policy established. |
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