

PORTAGE COLLEGE

health and safety at work

employee orientation

This booklet covers important health and safety information that employees, supervisors, management, and contractors should know and have access to.

RECORD OF HEALTH AND SAFETY PROGRAM UPDATES

Date	Version	Summary of changes	Approved by
March 31, 2020	Version 1.0	New document	Executive Committee
December 2021	Version 2.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated hazard assessment form. <p>Update: to reflect changes to OHS Act, Code and Regulations under Bill 47</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PSI need to be investigated, not reported immediately Renamed Health and Safety Committee to Joint Health and Safety Committee Updated JHSC responsibilities 	
October 2023	Version 3.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated 10.0 First Aid section – added emergency transportation to reflect HS updates. Added scent and fragrance awareness section. Updated 4.0 Inspections. It's no longer a responsibility of JOHS Committee members to conduct. 	

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HEALTH AND SAFETY AT PORTAGE COLLEGE

At Portage College we are committed to creating a workplace and learning environment where the overall health, safety and wellbeing of our students, employees, contractors, volunteers and visitors is our number one priority.

The work we do, no matter which campus or wherever your College work takes you, can be done safely. It's a responsibility we take seriously – and one we expect everyone else who enters our work sites to also follow. Whether you are driving for work, climbing a ladder, lifting heavy boxes, taking out hot cinnamon buns from the oven or pushing a lawnmower, always stop, think and act.

STOP

Safety is our number one priority – there isn't a job in our mind more important than preventing an injury or illness from happening. Our workers are not permitted to carry out any work if there is imminent danger to themselves or anyone else. If you notice a hazard that could potentially injure someone, stop working and notify a supervisor.

THINK

Before and during any job, ask yourself some questions to ensure you are prepared and understand the hazards and risks involved.

- Do I clearly understand the task?
- Do I have the right tools and PPE?
- Am I physically and emotionally ready?
- What could go wrong?
- How bad could it be?
- Has anything changed?

ACT

When you have collected enough information about a job, the hazards and risks, take action to make it safe. Wear appropriate PPE, use the right procedures and tools to eliminate or prevent injury. If it's beyond your means, be sure to report it to a supervisor immediately.

OUR HEALTH AND SAFETY STATEMENT

We value safety and we want to ensure our students, employees, contractors and visitors can work in a healthy and safe work environment and can participate in health and safety decisions. Here's how we ensure your health and safety at work:

- Identification and assessment of potential and existing hazards, including harassment and violence, and measures that will be taken to eliminate, reduce or control those hazards
- Having an emergency response plan
- Providing appropriate training and orientation to workers and supervisors
- Encouraging worker participation in health and safety in the workplace, which includes having a joint work site health and safety committee with representation from AUPE Local 071/008, the Faculty Association, and employer members.
- Procedures for investigating incidents, injuries and refusals to work, which will include participation from an employee member of the health and safety committee
- Providing equipment (including PPE), tools, material and procedures designed to control injury and illness.
- Providing first aid
- Encourage participation in personal well-being activities
- Complying with Alberta's OHS Act, Regulation and Code and any other relevant legislation, bylaws and standards, and also ensuring procedures for reviewing and revising the health and safety program at the College.

This Health and Safety Program and Employee Handbook is intended to provide managers and employees with an overview of these and other health and safety elements.

1.0 OBLIGATIONS OF WORKSITE PARTIES

1.1 EMPLOYER OBLIGATIONS

Health and safety are of outmost importance for Portage College. The College has the obligation of ensuring, as far as it is practicable for the College to do so, the health, safety and welfare of:

1. All workers engaged in work for the College;
2. Workers not engaged in work but present at the work site; and
3. Other persons at or in the vicinity of the work site who may be affected by hazards originating from the work site.

Portage College defines the employer as the President, Vice Presidents, and all other employees who are part of the Management Group at the College.

As the employer, the College also has the obligation to:

- Ensure workers are aware of their rights and duties under OHS legislation and of any health and safety issue arising from work being done at the work site
- Ensure that none of its workers are subjected to or participate in harassment or violence at the work site
- Ensure workers are supervised by a person who is competent and familiar with OHS legislation as it applies to work being performed at the work site
- Cooperate with the College's Health and Safety Committee and all Health and Safety Representatives to exchange information on health and safety matters and resolve concerns.
- Ensure all health and safety concerns are resolved in a timely manner
- Ensure workers are adequately trained in all matters necessary to protect their health and safety before a worker performs any work activity, uses new equipment or performs a new work process, or is moved to another work area or work site
- Cooperate with any person exercising a duty imposed by OHS legislation; and
- Comply with all OHS legislation.

1.2 SUPERVISOR OBLIGATIONS

A supervisor holds the responsibility of overseeing the work of a worker. At Portage College, it includes individuals with a job title as supervisor, team lead, coordinator, manager, director, associate director, dean, associate dean, vice president and president – essentially, it's any individual with one or more direct reports.

Supervisors, must, as far as reasonably practicable to do so:

- Ensure he/she is competent to supervise workers under their supervision
- Take all precautions necessary to protect the health and safety of the workers they supervise

- Ensure workers under their supervision work in a manner and accordance with procedures and measures as set out in OHS legislation
- Ensure workers under their supervision use hazard controls and properly use and wear PPE designated or provided by the employer or required under OHS legislation
- Ensure workers under their supervision are not subjected or participate in harassment or violence in the workplace
- Advise workers under their supervision of all known or reasonably foreseeable hazards to health and safety in the area where the worker is performing work
- Report to the employer concerns about unsafe or harmful work site acts or conditions that have either occurred or exist
- Cooperate with any person exercising a duty imposed by OHS legislation; and
- Comply with all OHS legislation.

1.3 WORKER OBLIGATIONS

Workers at Portage College have the responsibility to protect the health and safety of not only themselves, but of all others at the College. This includes anyone employed at Portage College in casual, term, or continuous positions, and also volunteers and others doing work at Portage College. Workers must:

- Take reasonable care to protect the health and safety of not only themselves, but of other persons at or in the vicinity of the work site while the worker is working
- Cooperate with their employer, supervisor and any other person for the purpose of protecting their own health and safety and that of other workers engaged in work of the employer, and other workers not engaged in work of the employer, but present at the work site at which work is being carried out
- At all times, when the nature of the work requires, use all personal protective equipment (PPE) designated and provided by the employer for the worker's protection, or as required by OHS legislation
- Refrain from causing or participating in harassment or violence
- Report to their supervisor or employer concerns about unsafe or harmful work site acts or conditions that have either occurred or exist
- Cooperate with any person exercising a duty imposed by OHS legislation; and
- Comply with all OHS legislation.

1.4 OBLIGATIONS OF CONTRACTORS, SERVICES PROVIDERS AND OTHERS

All contractors, service providers, suppliers, self-employed persons and others working on College-owned properties have obligations for Occupational Health and Safety. These groups share many of the same obligations as the employer, supervisors and workers, including taking reasonable care to protect their own health and safety and that of other persons, cooperating with any person exercising a duty imposed by OHS legislation and complying with all OHS legislation.

Additional responsibilities:

Contractors also have the primary responsibility of ensuring work under their control does not endanger health and safety.

Suppliers must ensure their products are safe to use and must include user instructions for all equipment, including leased equipment. Suppliers must also provide notice when their equipment or product does not comply with law.

Service providers must ensure their services comply with law, are provided by a competent person and do not create a hazard.

Self-employed persons must ensure they do not create a hazard to others.

2.0 YOUR FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

2.1 ROLE OF WORKERS IN HEALTH AND SAFETY PROGRAM

Employers have a clear responsibility to protect the health and safety of all individuals who work, study or visit our work sites. In order to protect workers from injury, illness and disease, all workers have health and safety rights and obligations under the OHS Act.

Workers are afforded three fundamental rights:

- The right to know (about hazards)
- The right to refuse (unsafe work); and
- The right to participate (in health and safety)

Portage College goes further to emphasize that all workers should view these three fundamental rights as also responsibilities and obligations. It therefore becomes our responsibility to know about hazards in the workplace, our responsibility to refuse unsafe work and our responsibility to participate in health and safety decisions.

RIGHTS vs. RESPONSIBILITIES

A right is a freedom that is protected by legislation, while a responsibility is a duty or something you should do. To ensure everyone's safety, Portage College asks all workers to view your three rights as also responsibilities.

For example, it's not enough to say you have a right to refuse unsafe work, it's also your responsibility, as that potentially dangerous situation could put the health and safety of others at risk, or your own.

Right/Responsibility
to know

Right/Responsibility
to refuse

Right/Responsibility
to participate

2.2 RIGHT TO KNOW

All workers have the right and responsibility to know about hazards at worksites that have been identified and how those hazards might affect workers. Key highlights include the right and responsibility to:

- Know about hazards in the workplace and what the employer is doing about it
- Receive proper training to manage risks of getting hurt
- Know how to perform a task or do their work safely and properly
- Know about safety procedures to reduce the risk of injury
- Know about our emergency response procedures and where first aid supplies are located
- Know the answers to these questions BEFORE they start working.

2.3 RIGHT TO REFUSE

Under the OHS Act, workers have the right (and responsibility) to refuse and report work they believe in good faith is unusually dangerous to themselves and/or others.

If a worker believes the assigned work is dangerous, the refusal and reason for the refusal must be immediately reported to the supervisor and OHS Office so the dangerous condition can be remedied. If the condition is not immediately corrected, the work refusal will be inspected/investigated by the employer, the worker and an employee member of the Health and Safety Committee (HSC) prior to any work being completed.

All work refusals will be reported to the Health and Safety Committee.

A worker who has refused to do work, which they believe in good faith to be unusually dangerous, is entitled to the same wage and benefits the worker would have received had the worker continued to work. However, the College may reassign the worker temporarily to alternate work and this shall not be considered discriminatory action.

Workers should not be subjected to any discriminatory action as a result of a work refusal. Until the dangerous condition is remedied, the worker who reported it may continue to refuse the work.

2.4 RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE

The purpose of this fundamental right (and obligation/responsibility) is to ensure workers have an opportunity to participate in decisions that affect their health and safety at work.

At Portage College, and at most worksites in Alberta, this participation is supported by a joint workplace health and safety committee (HSC) or a health and safety representative. The College has both. Portage College has established a Health and Safety Committee that has representation from our workers, who are members of the Faculty Association and AUPE, as well as the employer. The health and safety committee represent all of our campuses.

3.0 JOINT HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

3.1 JOINT HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Portage College has one overarching centralized workplace Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) to represent all workers. The JHSC is comprised of both worker and employer members. The names and contact information of current HSC membership and Health and Safety Representatives is available in the College's shared OHS file and on the CanoeNet.

3.2 ROLES AND OBJECTIVES

The JHSC at Portage College has the following responsibilities/duties:

- The receipt, consideration and disposition of concerns and complaints respecting the health and safety of workers
- Participation in the identification of hazards to workers or other persons arising out of or in connection with activities at the work site
- The development and promotion of measures to protect the health and safety of persons at the work site and checking the effectiveness of such measures
- Cooperation with an officer exercising duties under the OHS Act, regulations and code.
- The development and promotion of programs for education and information concerning health and safety
- The making of recommendations to the employer, prime contractor or owner respecting the health and safety of workers
- The review of worksite inspection documentation.
- Such other duties as may be specified in the OHS Act, Regulations and Code.

3.3 JOINING THE JOINT HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

The JHSC is composed of 13 members, which includes five employer members designated by the College. Members of the Faculty Association are responsible for selecting four of its members to the JHSC. Members of AUPE are also responsible for selecting four of its members to the JHSC. Joint Health and Safety Committee representatives must serve a minimum term of one year.

The Director, HR and Compliance will be responsible for notifying the Faculty and AUPE if one of their members resigns from the Committee.

3.4 RELATED GUIDELINES

The Terms of Reference for the Health and Safety Committee are available as part of [E.2.1 Occupational Health and Safety](#).

4.0 WORKSITE INSPECTIONS

4.1 INSPECTIONS

Regular inspections are important to ensure the health and safety of the workplace by identifying unsafe conditions and acts and then eliminating or controlling those hazards. Portage College has a system of inspections that are both scheduled and unscheduled with the goal of education and making the workplace safe for everyone.

Inspections serve three main purposes:

1. It provides information on new hazards or potential hazards not previously been identified
2. It provides confirmation that controls used to eliminate or reduce risks are working; and
3. It provides opportunity to listen to concerns of workers and supervisors.

4.2 PROCESS FOR INSPECTING THE WORKPLACE

Portage College's Occupational Health and Safety Office has developed a library of worksite inspection checklists to accommodate the needs of each type of area to ensure a thorough process.

Portage uses electronic inspection checklists that can be completed using smartphones, tablets and computers.

During an inspection, we look at how work is performed and identify unsafe and unhealthy conditions and acts that can cause an injury or illness. We also pay attention to items or acts that have the potential to develop into unsafe or unhealthy conditions because of stress, wear, impact, heat, vibration, corrosion, chemical reaction or misuse. During inspections we essentially look at all workplace elements: the people, environment, equipment and process.

After the inspection is completed, the individual conducting the inspection is responsible for immediately reporting to the area supervisor or the College's OHS Office any unsafe or harmful condition so we can correct or eliminate the hazard as soon as possible. If possible, the individual conducting the inspection should correct minor hazards at the time of the inspection, but still report in the inspection checklist that the hazard existed, but was corrected during the inspection.

4.3 INSPECTION FREQUENCY

The College's Health and Safety Office will send out regular notices, usually prior to a scheduled Health and Safety Committee meeting, to designated individuals to conduct inspections.

Additional inspections may also be conducted based on any previous hazards or risks being identified or at the request of the OHS Office or Health and Safety Committee.

4.4 RESULTS OF WORKPLACE INSPECTIONS

The results of inspections are recorded and discussed at Health and Safety Committee meetings. The HSC will review inspections and corrective actions required, identify trends and monitor progress of recommendations. Analysis of inspections may show:

- A need to improve safe work practices
- Insight on why incidents are occurring in a particular area or time
- More education and training
- Areas and equipment that require a more in-depth hazard analysis

4.5 RESPONSIBILITIES

Area representatives will normally conduct workplace inspections, however, this is a shared responsibility and **managers**, **supervisors** and **workers** should regularly inspect their respective work and teaching areas.

Employees conducting workplace inspections should feel free to ask workers or supervisors from those areas for assistance in conducting the inspection. In turn, **supervisors** and **workers** have a responsibility under the OHS Act to participate in ensuring a healthy and safe work environment and should provide assistance in this process.

Any unsafe or harmful condition found should immediately be reported to the area supervisor or OHS Office so we can correct or eliminate the hazard immediately.

5.0 HAZARD IDENTIFICATION AND CONTROL

5.1 HAZARD ASSESSMENT

Under Part 2 of the Alberta OHS Code, employers are required to conduct hazard assessments at all worksites to identify existing and potential hazards to workers and the measures that will be taken to eliminate, reduce or control those hazards. The hazard assessment is a written document prepared by the employer and supervisor and must involve consultation from workers. Hazard assessment and control is an important part of the College's Health and Safety Program.

The hazard assessment process involves identifying hazards by listing job tasks, ranking the risk and identifying controls.

5.3 HAZARD IDENTIFICATION

A hazard is a situation, function, condition, substance or process that may be dangerous to the safety or health of workers.

When we think about workplace hazards, there are hundreds of situations, objects, places, tasks and more that could have a known or unknown hazard associated with it. Hazards can be divided into several types of hazard categories.

EXAMPLES OF WORKPLACE HAZARDS	
Chemical	Cleaners, battery acids, solvents, poisons, fumes, gases, vapours.
Biological	Viruses, bodily fluids, fungi, moulds, animal/pest waste, sewage, bacteria, influenza/pandemic.
Physical	Excessive noise, slippery surfaces, tripping hazards, protruding objects, extreme temperatures, working alone, vibrations, working at heights, working around moving equipment, violence, lifting heavy loads.
Psychological	Stress, fatigue, workplace harassment, shift work.
Ergonomic	Improper work station design, excessive manual handling requirements, overexertion, overreaching, repetitive movement.

5.4 HAZARD RANKING

Hazards are evaluated based on severity and likelihood using a scale of low, medium and high (LMH). The College ranks hazards based on existing controls in place to assist with ranking the risk of a hazard and to help with planning future controls.

Use the matrix below to assess the likelihood and severity to determine the level of risk.

		SEVERITY		
		High (H) Could kill you or cause permanent disability.	Medium (M) Could send you to hospital, medical treatment required	Low (L) Could make you feel uncomfortable, minor injury, first aid
LIKELIHOOD	High (H) Highly likely to occur	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM
	Medium (M) Might happen	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
	Low (L) Unlikely to happen	MEDIUM	LOW	LOW

5.5 HAZARD CONTROL

After a hazard has been identified, the preference is to always eliminate the hazard. If elimination is not an option, the hazard must be controlled. The best control measures are engineering followed by administrative. Using Personal Protective Equipment is also a control, however, PPE should always be considered as a last resort to protecting the worker.

HIERACHY OF CONTROLS	
ENGINEERING	Engineering controls are designed eliminate or control the hazard at the source to create the highest level of worker protection. Engineering controls physically guard the worker from the hazard by removing, substituting or enclosing the hazard. Examples include using equipment guards, insulate for sound to reduce excessive noise, introducing a ventilation system for exhaust, substituting toxic chemicals for something that is non-toxic or less toxic, using hoists or trolleys to lift and move heavy loads.
ADMINISTRATIVE	Administrative controls manage the way work is done, to reduce the potential for an incident. It includes developing and using safe work and operating procedures, training, supervising workers, job rotation to limit exposure, rest breaks and regular inspection and maintenance.
PPE	PPE controls attempt to minimize the possibility of injury or illness if all other controls fail. Examples of PPE include hard hats, gloves, respirator, etc. This is the least preferred group of control and should only be used when the others are not reasonable, or to supplement the other controls (as a backup).

COMBINATION

If the hazard cannot be eliminated or controlled using a single control method, a combination of engineering, administrative and PPE should be used to provide the greatest level of worker protection.

As an example, in an office setting a supervisor identifies the possible hazard of slips, trips and falls. **Engineering controls** in place include good lighting and handrails, where required. **Administrative controls** include processes for cleaning spillages immediately, replacing damaged floor and torn carpets, good housekeeping to keep areas clean and regular workplace inspections. **PPE controls** may include using non-slip footwear in some areas.

5.6 COMPLETE HAZARD ASSESSMENT AND CONTROL FORM

The Hazard Assessment and Control Form is available on the [College's Shared Network](#).

5.7 RESPONSIBILITIES

Supervisors are responsible for completing hazard assessments for the job tasks performed by their workers and involving their workers in this process. Supervisors also have the responsibility to provide, implement and enforce controls identified in the hazard assessment and to ensure regular monitoring and effectiveness of controls. The College's **OHS Office** is available to provide support to supervisors and the appropriate hazard assessment training.

Workers are responsible for reviewing hazard assessments as it relates to their job tasks and using the hazard controls identified in the hazard assessment.

6.0 INCIDENT REPORTING AND INVESTIGATIONS

6.1 REPORTING NEAR MISSES, INJURIES AND INCIDENTS

Any near misses, injuries or incidents that occur at any Portage College worksite or while performing duties for the College, must be reported to the College's OHS Office immediately after the incident or whenever it is safe to do so.

Not only does the College have strict reporting responsibility timelines with WCB, but the College may be required to conduct an investigation following near misses (potential serious incidents), injuries or incidents. Depending on the circumstances, an Alberta Government OHS Officer may also be required to investigate.

For this reason, it is important to call the College's OHS Office at 780-623-5747 immediately to allow the College's Manager, Compliance and HR to assess the situation and determine our next steps based on our requirements under the OHS Act and in regards to any College policy, guideline or procedure.

Can I touch or move anything at the scene of an incident or injury?

The short answer is 'No.' The only time you can disturb the scene of an incident or injury, whether it is reportable or not, is if: 1) you are attending to a person who has been injured or killed; 2) you are taking action to prevent further injuries; 3) you are protecting property that is endangered as a result of the incident; or 4) a provincial OHS officer or peace officer has given you permission.

When an incident, injury or near miss occurs that is not reportable under the OHS Act, only the investigator(s) assigned by the College are able to touch or move any evidence on scene.

6.2 GOVERNMENT REPORTABLE INJURIES AND INCIDENTS

As noted above, certain injuries and incidents need to be reported to the Government of Alberta and employers have an obligation to conduct a formal investigation and submit a report to the Alberta Government. Those reasons are:

- If it results in a death
- Causes a worker to be admitted to a hospital
- Involves an unplanned or uncontrolled explosion, fire or flood that causes or has the potential to cause serious injury
- Involves the collapse or upset of a crane, derrick or hoist, or
- Involves the collapse or failure of any component of a building or structure necessary for its structural integrity.

Potentially Serious Incidents (known as PSIs) also need to be reported. A PSI is any event where a reasonable and informed person would determine that under slightly different circumstances, there would be a high likelihood for a serious injury to a person.

A PSI is not limited to workers and it does not require the occurrence of an injury. When determining whether an incident is a PSI, the following factors should be taken into consideration:

- Actual circumstances of the incident (person, place, time, work practices being followed);
- Hazards present at the time of the incident;
- Slightly different circumstances (timing, distance, body position, etc.) that may have resulted in a serious injury;
- Similar incidents that have occurred within the employer or prime contractor's operations in the past 2 years that resulted in a serious injury.

The College's OHS Office is responsible for immediately notifying the Alberta OHS Director of any reportable injury or incident.

The College's OHS Office is responsible for investigating all PSIs, and once the investigation is complete, submit a report to the Alberta OHS Director and to the College's Joint Health and Safety Committee. Immediately reporting PSIs to the Alberta OHS Director is not required.

6.3 CONDUCTING AN INVESTIGATION

The purpose of an OHS investigation is to:

1. Determine the cause and circumstances of a near miss, injury or incident; and
2. Prevent a similar injury or incident from happening, and prevent future property damage and production losses.

A typical, formal workplace health and safety investigation has four steps:

1. Immediate action and interim measures
2. Investigating the incident
3. Identifying causes
4. Reporting on findings and recommendations.

These four steps are detailed below. It should be noted that a formal investigation is not always necessary or required.

As a note, the College's Human Resources department will lead investigations into incidents or complaints of harassment or workplace violence as laid out in the College's policy, guideline and procedures on harassment and discrimination in the workplace. However, the investigator will consider health and safety legislation in conducting those investigations.

6.4 IMMEDIATE ACTION AND INTERIM MEASURES

Depending on the incident, it may be necessary to take some immediate action and implement interim measures prior to investigating. If an incident has just occurred, the College's OHS Office and the area supervisor should immediately attend to the scene. Call 780-623-5747 to notify the OHS Office.

If medical attention is required, 911 should be contacted and a trained first aider should be notified. Any hazards that pose a danger to any person should be identified and removed, if possible. The College and supervisor must also take steps to secure the scene (use barricades, shut off power, request assistance from Fire Marshals to block access, etc.).

If possible, and it is safe to do so, anyone involved or who witnessed the incident, should take photographs of the scene and make notes and provide that information to the investigator. This will be important later on in the investigation as it allows the employer and supervisor to observe conditions as they were at the time of the incident and identify possible witnesses. Any College-owned or leased equipment should be immediately tagged as 'Out of Order' until the completion of an investigation.

The College may also be required to immediately report the incident to the Government of Alberta prior to initiating an investigation if it is a reportable injury or incident as described in the OHS Act. The College's OHS Office is responsible for calling the OHS Contact Centre.

Overall, absolute caution needs to be exercised to not disturb the scene, particularly if it is a reportable incident or injury.

6.5 INVESTIGATING THE INCIDENT

The College's OHS Office will be responsible for leading the investigation or assigning it to an appropriate individual or group. A member of the College's Health and Safety Committee or a Health and Safety Representative will be assigned to participate in the investigation.

As part of the investigation plan, the investigator(s) will be collecting facts and information, including:

- Basic information such as type, time and location of incident
- Circumstance/description of incident – a chronology of what happened before, during and after the incident from all persons involved and witnesses.
- Photographs and sketches/drawings.

Depending on the situation, information from:

- Environment: weather, noise and dust pollution, conditions, lighting, scene incident, work tasks.
- Processes: College policies and guidelines, applicable law, written procedures and reports
- Management systems: training and other records, risk assessments, maintenance schedules
- Equipment: College vehicles, equipment, machinery, tools, lawnmowers, quads, PPE.

6.6 IDENTIFYING CAUSES

Incidents are generally caused by five factors: 1) people; 2) environment; 3) processes; 4) management systems; and 5) equipment. The investigation will normally look at three possible types of causes (direct, indirect and root) based on the five factors.

As an example, an employee is injured after falling from a ladder. The employee is taken to the hospital and is quickly released after the doctor finds no injury requiring hospitalization. The investigation reveals that at the time of the fall, the employee was using the ladder to reach boxes at the top of a shelf – both feet were on the ladder, both hands were on a box. The employee lost their balance and fell three feet to the floor.

The direct cause of the incident is the employee's at-risk behaviour – the employee didn't properly use the equipment (ladder) or use proper lifting procedures.

The indirect cause of the incident was a lack of knowledge – the employee was provided with the ladder to reach items on a higher shelf, but wasn't provided with any instructions on how to lift or use a ladder safely.

The root cause of the incident was revealed to be a lack of employee orientation. When a new task is assigned to employee, the employer and supervisor are responsible for ensuring employees know proper procedures and conduct a hazard assessment.

6.7 REPORTING ON FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A report will be created on the background and any circumstances surrounding an incident. The investigator will also report on their findings and may make recommendations. Sometimes, recommendations will be separate to the investigator's report to allow participation from the Health and Safety Committee in making any recommendations. The College will then develop a plan for corrective action. This plan will be implemented and then evaluated, with improvements being made as needed.

Completed investigation reports will be sent to the provincial OHS office when required. A redacted copy will be made available for the Health and Safety Committee.

6.8 RESPONSIBILITIES

The College's **OHS Office** (Director, HR and Compliance) will normally lead all investigations or assign an individual to lead the investigation. The OHS Office will further be responsible for assigning an employee member of the health and safety committee to participate in the investigation. The level of participation will be based on the extent of the investigation and is usually limited to being informed of the incident and steps in the investigation. The College's OHS Office is further responsible for notifying the Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Office of any reportable incident or near miss that occurs.

Supervisors and **workers** are responsible for following the direction and any orders from investigators or provincial OHS officers.

7.0 EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN AND PROCEDURES

7.1 PURPOSE OF EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

The overall purpose of the Portage College Emergency Response Plan (ERP) is to provide an effective framework and guideline for prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery from emergencies affecting Portage College.

The overarching goal is to reduce the impact of an emergency and protect the health, safety and welfare of the Portage College community, which includes students, employees and visitors to the College. This plan is designed to accomplish this goal by:

1. Defining roles and responsibilities and how College leadership will work together during an emergency; and
2. Providing education and awareness on what procedures to follow in an emergency so the College can appropriately respond.

As part of the Emergency Response Plan, the College has established a group called the President's Emergency Management Team (PEMT) responsible for leading the response and recovery of emergencies and ensuring regular communication with the College community.

7.2 EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Portage College has written procedures to provide employees, students and visitors to the College with a practical guide for responding to emergencies that may occur on campus. The procedures are available in our Policies, Guidelines and Procedures manual, in Portage Alert – the College's safety and emergency notification app, and on the CanoeNet.

7.3 RESPONSIBILITIES

Employees and **students** are responsible for taking immediate action in an emergency and following direction from authorities (Campus Security, President's Emergency Management Team, Fire Marshals, and external agencies such as police, fire and EMS). **Employees** are further encouraged to be familiar with emergency procedures to best respond and help students and visitors in an emergency. Everyone should always ensure their own safety is a top priority and notify Campus Security and 911 of an emergency or possible emergency.

The College's **OHS Office**, the **President's Emergency Management Team (PEMT)**, **managers** and **supervisors** will be responsible for communicating and enforcing emergency procedures. The College's OHS Office and PEMT members are further responsible for regularly assessing the effectiveness of the ERP, emergency procedures and leading the recovery of any emergency.

7.4 RELATED GUIDELINES

See Guideline [G.1.2 Emergency Preparedness, Response and Recovery](#).

8.0 CONTRACTOR SAFETY ON CAMPUS

8.1 DEFINITION OF CONTRACTOR

A contractor is defined as a person, business or corporation who, through a contract, agreement or ownership, conducts work or provides contracted services to Portage College. For the purpose of this section, contracted services includes all activities and professional services that are not directly supervised by Portage College employees.

The College's Infrastructure and IT department is largely responsible for most contracted services at the College as defined in this document. It includes services such garbage disposal, pest control, fire extinguisher inspection/servicing, vending, mechanical, electrical, caretaking, maintenance, repairs, renovations, and building operations.

Health and safety is an important criteria in selecting contractors to perform work at Portage College campuses.

*****IMPORTANT NOTE:** This section does not apply to individuals who sign contracts at the College and who are directly supervised by a Portage College employee. This includes individuals who provide work as instructors, course/program developers, consultants, coaches, etc. These individuals are considered workers as defined in Obligation of Worksite Parties.*

8.2 RESPONSIBILITIES

The **Infrastructure and IT department**, and any **supervisor** who provides a contract as defined above (also referred to here as the **contract contact**), is responsible for providing the contractor with a copy of this Health and Safety Program and providing a general safety orientation to ensure the contractor is in compliance with OHS legislation and any other relevant Act, Code, Legislation or Standard as well as College policies, guidelines and procedures.

Contractors, and **subcontractors** must work within Portage College policies, guidelines and procedures, as well as any contractual or regulatory requirements. They are further responsible for ensuring their employees are informed of the College's Health and Safety Program and also adhere to any requirement listed above. Contractors working with the Infrastructure and IT department will be required to sign a document called Standard Operation Procedures for Safe Work – Contractors and provide all documents required. Other key responsibilities include:

- Regularly inspect work area for hazards and non-compliance and ensure the necessary level of controls are in place and regularly monitored
- Report any incidents, near misses and injuries to their **contract contact** at the College who will forward that information to the College's OHS Office. They are further responsible for cooperating with any investigation conducted.
- Report all inspections from any external agency/regulatory body, such as an OHS Officer, while working at Portage College to their **contract contact** at the College, who will forward that information to the College's OHS Office.

- Ensure all employees under their supervision have the proper PPE and are trained and oriented to their work environment and tasks so they are able to perform work in a manner that ensures the health and safety of not only themselves, but of everyone at or in the vicinity of the College.
- Notify Infrastructure and IT department (or the department overseeing the contract) or the main office at community campuses when arriving and leaving Portage College between 8:15 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Work after hours must be pre-arranged with the contract contact and follow the College's working alone procedures by notify Campus Security.

9.0 HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE

9.1 WHAT OHS LEGISLATION SAYS

Occupational Health and Safety legislation includes requirements to help prevent workplace harassment and violence and to address incidents when they occur. The College has a workplace harassment and discrimination policy and a sexual violence policy, both of which are standalone policies, guidelines and procedures.

9.2 DEFINING HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

Under the OHS Act, harassment is defined as behaviour that is intended to intimidate, offend, degrade, embarrass or humiliate a particular person or group (note that under the College's definition, the behaviour does not need to be intended in order for it to be considered harassment – in other words, it doesn't matter if the harasser didn't 'mean' to harass). Harassing behaviours include:

- Unwelcome comments, conduct, gestures or contact, which causes offenses or humiliation. Examples include: name calling, harassing phone calls, spreading rumours.
- Deliberate misgendering (referring to a person using terms or pronouns that do not align with the person's affirmed gender).
- Physical or psychological bullying, which creates fear, mistrust, ridicule or devalues an individual.
- Exclusion or isolation of individuals
- Intimidation (standing too close or making inappropriate gestures or comments)
- Cyber bullying
- Deliberately setting up an individual to fail (interfering with work, requesting unreasonable demands or deadlines)
- Intentionally withholding information or giving wrong information
- Taking away work or responsibility without cause
- Displaying or circulating offensive pictures, photos or materials in print or electronic form

It could be a single incident or repeated incidents that are objectionable and unwelcome that a reasonable person ought to know will, or would have, caused offence, humiliation or negatively impact a person's health and wellbeing.

9.3 DEFINING VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

Meanwhile, workplace violence is defined as behaviours and actions that could put a person at risk of physical or psychological harm. It includes:

- Physical attack or aggression, such as hitting, shoving, pushing, kicking, throwing an object at worker or kicking an object a worker is sitting or standing on

- Threatening behaviour (shaking a fist in a worker's face, brandishing a weapon at work, trying to hit a worker or run down a worker with a vehicle or equipment, destroying property or throwing objects.)
- Verbal or written threats
- Domestic violence
- Sexual violence

9.4 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Domestic violence can become a workplace hazard and employers must take reasonable precautions to protect a worker who is, or likely is, to be exposed to domestic violence in the workplace. The College also has an obligation to protect other persons who may be affected.

The OHS Act defines domestic violence as a pattern of behaviour used to gain control or power over another person with whom they currently have, or have had, a personal relationship. It can occur between current or former intimate partners, family members, people of all ages, racial, economic, religious or educational backgrounds, people in heterosexual or same sex relationships, living together or separately, married or unmarried, or in short-term or long term relationships.

Domestic violence can range from subtle, coercive forms of violence to violent acts that cause physical harm or death.

While domestic violence may appear like a personal matter, the OHS Act clearly states that domestic violence becomes a workplace hazard when it occurs or spills into the workplace. The domestic violence may be targeted towards the worker, but others in the workplace could also be affected.

9.5 WHAT IS NOT HARASSMENT

It's also important to note here what harassment isn't. Employers and supervisors must be able to manage and direct workers. If done reasonably and fairly, the employer and supervisors, can:

- Manage performance (creating performance plans and conducting appraisals on employees) – this also includes day-to-day performance management
- Change work assignments
- Schedule
- Take disciplinary action such as dismissing, suspending, demoting or reprimanding with just cause
- Inspect workplaces and implement health and safety measures

Having a difference in opinions or minor disagreement is not necessarily considered workplace harassment, but it is recognized that it can turn into harassment if appropriate steps are not taken to resolve the conflict. Further, difficult work conditions, such as professional practice limitations, organizational changes, and financial restrictions are not harassment. On its own, work-related stress is not considered harassment, however, it is recognized that the harassing behaviours noted above can cause stress.

9.6 RESPONSIBILITIES

Human Resources will ensure Policies, Guidelines and Procedures (PGP) on harassment, violence, and sexual violence (**Student Services** is also responsible for the sexual violence PGP) are maintained and that supervisors and workers receive relevant information, instruction and training on those policies and the process for reporting incidents. HR will also provide training to employees and supervisors on how to address harassment and violence in the workplace. HR is responsible for investigating concerns or incidents of harassment or violence.

Supervisors are responsible for reporting concerns on incidents or potential incidents of harassment or violence.

Workers are responsible for not participating in, or causing harassment or violence, and for reporting concerns or incidents.

9.7 RELATED GUIDELINES

Please see [E.3.3 Discrimination and Harassment](#) and [B.6.5 Prevention of Sexual Violence](#).

10.0 FIRST AID

10.1 WHAT IS FIRST AID

First aid is emergency care given immediately to an injured person. The purpose of first aid is to minimize injury and future disability, and in serious cases, first aid may be necessary to keep the victim alive.

The first aid services required by an employer under OHS Act are based on three factors:

- How hazardous the work is;
- The time required to travel from the worksite to a health care facility; and
- The number of workers on each shift.

10.2 AUTOMATIC EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATORS

The use of the Automatic External Defibrillators (AEDs) has been integrated into the College's first aid program. AEDs are currently not legislatively required in the workplace, however, we recognize that AEDs are an important lifesaving technology and play an important role in treating sudden cardiac arrest

The Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada defines an AED as a "device containing sophisticated electronics used to identify cardiac rhythms and to deliver a shock to correct abnormal electrical activity in the heart. An AED will only advise the individual using the device to deliver a shock if the heart is in a rhythm that can be corrected by defibrillation."

The College recognizes that where a significant number of people gather for strenuous physical activity, the benefit of having an AED unit in structures and spaces owned and leased by the College will be considered.

The College currently has four AEDs. Location of AEDs:

CAMPUS LOCATION	LOCATION OF AED
Lac La Biche	In gymnasium entrance on lower level. View map. Main entrance on upper level.
Cold Lake	Across from Student Services on main floor. View map.
St. Paul	Across from Food Sciences offices on main floor. View map.

10.3 FIRST AIDERS AND TRAINING

A first aider means a basic first aider, intermediate first aider or advanced first aider designated by the employer to provide first aid to workers at a work site. First aiders must be trained by an approved training agency.

In most situations, the College will endeavour to exceed the number of first aiders required, though this is recognizably more difficult at our campus locations with fewer employees. Where an employee is approved to attend first aid training paid by the College (course fees, travel expenses and time away from work), the employee will be designated by the College to provide first aid to workers.

Only employees trained in first aid should assist a victim – never provide first aid for which you are not trained.

The College's OHS office will keep a record of first aiders by campus location.

10.4 I NEED FIRST AID

Employees can call Campus Security at 780-623-5587 if first aid is required.

First Aid stations also have a list of employees trained in first aid and their direct phone number.

10.5 TRANSPORTING PERSONS TO HEALTH CARE FACILITIES

The College will ensure employees and students receive appropriate transportation to a health care facility when required.

The method of transportation of injured or ill persons depends on the extent and seriousness of the injury or illness. Usually, the first person on scene or the person administering first aid will determine if the injury or illness is an Emergency or Non-emergency. If unsure, always err on the side of caution and call 911.

Type of Injury	Type of Transportation
Emergency injuries and illnesses An acute injury or illness that requires immediate professional medical care. It can be viewed as a severe injury or episode of illness that poses an immediate risk to a person's life or long-term health.	An ambulance should be the primary method of transportation used.
Non-emergency injuries and illnesses An injury or illness that does not pose an immediate risk to a person's life or health, but requires medical evaluation and possible treatment.	For all non-emergency injuries or illnesses on campus that require medical evaluation and possible treatment beyond first aid, individuals can be transported to a medical facility by a College vehicle, personal vehicle or taxi provided

	<p>a designated College first aid provider accompanies the injured or ill person along with the vehicle driver.</p> <p>In other words, there must always be three persons in the vehicle:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A driver • The injured worker • A College employee trained in first aid
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10.6 RESPONSIBILITIES

The **OHS Office** will ensure first aid services, supplies and equipment are available at our worksites according to Schedule 2 of the OHS Code. The OHS Office will normally provide basic first aid kits. The OHS Office will also provide training to employees, keep a record of first aiders, and maintain first aid records of each injury or illness where a first aider provides assistance.

Academic areas and **departments** are required to purchase and supply area specific first aid equipment not normally required in other areas, such as burn kits and eyewash stations.

10.7 RELATED GUIDELINES

Please Guideline [E.2.5 Automatic External Defibrillator](#) and [E.2.4 Exposure to Blood and Other Body Fluids](#).

11.0 SAFE DRIVING

11.1 OPERATING COLLEGE VEHICLES

There are many hazards in the workplace, however, operating vehicles presents one of the most dangerous activities at the College. The College has a fleet of more than 30 vehicles and many others use rentals and personal vehicles each day for work.

The College takes many steps to ensure your safety by performing regular maintenance on our fleet of vehicles and using winter tires. However, employees who operate vehicles on College business must put safety in their own hands. When driving, it's important to focus on the most important task of all – the act of driving.

Safe driving expectations:

- Respect and obey all traffic laws including speed limits, stop signs, traffic signals, school zones and construction zones.
- Do not drive carelessly or distracted.
- Do not hold or operate a cell phone or other communicate device unless it is in hands-free mode.
- Always wear your seatbelt and ensure all passengers wear their seatbelt.
- Ensure all material and equipment are safely stored and secured.
- Ensure you are well-rested and alert for the trip.
- Make a travel plan by checking the intended route, alternate routes, check traffic and road condition and weather forecasts.
- Always clear snow, ice and other debris from vehicle.
- Prepare your vehicle – is seat and mirrors adjusted for you? Conduct a walk around inspection. Ensure license plate is always visible.

11.2 RESPONSIBILITIES

Employees who drive on College business, whether they operate College owned, leased or rented vehicles, or use vehicles that are owned, leased or rented personally, have the key responsibility to operate vehicles in a safe manner (note: an employee's commute to, and from, work is not considered College business). Distracted driving and driving impaired are strictly not allowed. Employees are also responsible for all costs associated with any type of fine or conviction while driving on College business. In general, all employees are responsible for following College guidelines and procedures on using a motor vehicle. In the event of a collision or other incident involving the vehicle, employees should remain on scene until directed by a peace officer and provide all reasonable assistance to others. If operating a College vehicle, instructions are provided in the Driver Handbook.

The College **OHS Office** will provide training on defensive driving to employees.

The **Infrastructure department** is responsible for maintenance and inspections of all College vehicles.

11.3 RELATED GUIDELINES

Please see Guideline [F.3.3 on Use of College Vehicles](#).

12.0 PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

12.1 PURPOSE OF PPE

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is essential clothing or equipment designed to protect workers from physical, chemical, electrical and biological hazards. It is important to note, however, that in the hierarchy of controls (elimination, substitution, engineering and PPE), PPE is considered a last line of defense between a hazard and a worker – it does not remove the hazard. When hazards cannot be removed or controlled adequately, PPE may be used. A thorough hazard and control assessment will assist in identifying the proper PPE required.

12.2 TYPES OF PPE

This is not an exhaustive list. Part 18 of the OHS Code outlines PPE requirements. Supervisors and workers should be familiar with the PPE required in their jobs and job tasks.

TYPE OF PPE	EXAMPLE OF PPE	EXAMPLES OF WHEN TO WEAR
Footwear	Includes knee pads, safety boots and shoes, and footwear with slip-resistant soles	Worn when performing tasks that can cause foot and leg injuries from falling or rolling objects, slippery surfaces, electrical hazards, and hot substances.
Face and eye protection	There are six classes of face and eye protection that includes safety glasses, goggles and face shields.	PPE should be worn when performing tasks that can cause loss of vision and an eye, burns, splashes (biohazard materials), sprays of toxic liquids.
Head protection	Includes hard hats, hoods and hats.	Head protection should always be worn if there is a risk of head injury from a falling object or striking your head against an object. Hats should be worn for sun protection.
Respiratory	There are two main types: air-purifying, which can remove contaminants, and supply-air, which supply clean air. There are many different classes within each, from quarter-masks to full face masks that also protect eyes.	Respirators should be worn anytime there are biological contaminants in the air, dust, mists, fumes, gasses for example.
High-visibility protection	Brightly coloured vests, hats, jackets, pants or coveralls.	High-visibility clothing is usually worn to alert drivers of a worker's presence.

		It should be worn when working around vehicles and other motorized equipment and in low light situations.
Hearing protection	Includes ear plugs and ear muffs.	Its purpose is to reduce the amount of noise that reaches the ears. Hearing protection may be required when work is performed that exceeds 85 decibels.
Hand protection	Includes various types of gloves – all of which serve different purposes. Always consult compatibility charts.	Hand protection may be required when there's a risk of chemical or biological hazards, abrasions, sharp edges, cold and heat.

12.3 MANDATORY PPE AREAS AT THE COLLEGE

The College has some areas where PPE is mandatory regardless if you are performing a hazardous task or not as the area itself could pose a hazard due to the nature of the work being performed. These areas are identified by signage indicating what PPE is required. Workers should always obtain permission from the area supervisor before entering. Areas are:

- All trades shops (welding, electrical, steamfitter/pipefitter, carpentry, and HET)
- Commercial kitchens in Lac La Biche and at the St. Paul Food Sciences Centre
- Building Operation areas and penthouses
- All science labs
- Boyle campus training areas

12.4 RESPONSIBILITIES

Workers, students, volunteers and other stakeholders have the responsibility to use appropriate PPE as specified by the hazard assessment, training, instructions received and as written in the OHS Code. Always inspect PPE before using it and do not use PPE that is unable to perform the function for which it is designed.

Supervisors have the responsibility of ensuring employees have access to the proper PPE, that PPE is properly used, is in good condition and that employees are trained in correct use, care, limitations and assigned maintenance of PPE. The supervisor must also ensure that the use of PPE does not itself endanger the employee. The College's **OHS Office** may assist supervisors with this responsibility.

13.0 SCENT AND FRAGRANCE AWARENESS

13.1 BACKGROUND

We promote a scent-aware workplace at the College with the aim to ensure the health and well-being of all employees, students and others who visit campus.

Scent sensitivity or fragrance allergies may affect some of our colleagues leading to discomfort and health-related issues. As part of our scent-awareness program, we kindly ask employees to be mindful of the scented products used while in the workplace.

13.2 WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

- Choose products that do not contain scents/fragrances where possible.
- Be considerate and show support to colleagues who may have scent sensitivities or allergies and respect their need for a fragrance-free environment.
- If you have scent sensitivities or allergies, communicate with others respectively and collaborate to find a solution. You can seek support from your supervisor.
- Remember that fragrances are found in a wide range of products, including perfume, cologne, hairspray, soap, shampoo, makeup, lotion, essential oil, fabric softeners, laundry detergents, candles, etc.
- Check out this link for more information on [scents and fragrances in the workplace](#).

13.1 RESPONSIBILITIES

This is a shared responsibility of all persons who work, study and visit Portage College campuses. However, **workers** have a higher responsibility as they will be more familiar around the expectation of a scent-aware culture. **Workers** should be considerate and show support to others who have sensitivities or allergies, while **workers** who have scent sensitivities or allergies should work collaboratively with others to find a solution.

Supervisors have the responsibility of providing support to employees with scent sensitivities or allergies. The College's **OHS Office** may assist supervisors with this responsibility.

14.0 HEALTH AND SAFETY PROGRAM MAINTENANCE

14.1 RESPONSIBILITIES

The **Director, Human Resources and Compliance**, will be responsible for maintaining, updating and reviewing the Health and Safety Program at minimum every three years. A review will occur sooner if there is a change in circumstances at the work site that creates or could create a new hazard to workers that was previously not identified.

The College's Health and Safety Committee will also participate in reviews of the Health and Safety Program.

All requests for procedural changes, amendments or recommendations to this Health and Safety Program must be made in writing to the Director, HR and Compliance.