



Working Alone Risk Assessment Template

Office of Safety and Emergency Management
OSEM 18.24.4B
June 2023



Purpose:

To support the safety of employees working alone or in isolation on campus or at remote worksites. Thompson Rivers University (TRU) is committed to providing the necessary resources, training, and practices to ensure effective management of our Working Alone Program. The Working Alone Risk Assessment Template is a key tool to identify, eliminate and or control hazards associated to with working alone at TRU.

This program is applicable to all employees, including co-op and work study students, and visiting researchers. Embedded contractors (i.e., housing, security, food services staff) are to have a Working Alone Program for their employees as required if they work alone or in isolation and are to provide a copy of their program and training records to Office of Safety and Emergency Management (OSEM) upon request.

For those working from home up to 3 days per week, refer to the Hybrid Work Program (HWP) OneTRU site for details on how to implement working alone procedures with applicable Hybrid Work Arrangements (HWA).

Definitions

1. **Check-in Designate:** the person responsible for checking on a worker working alone or in isolation. In most cases this will be Security or the supervisor.
2. **Hierarchy of Controls:** a system used to minimize or eliminate exposure to a hazard. Controls need to be addressed starting at the top of the pyramid, working downward. Layering controls is important as you move down the pyramid.
Controls are:
 - a. Elimination: do not work alone, work during regular hours, have another person with you etc.
 - b. Substitution: similar to elimination, do not work during times you would be alone or in isolation.
 - c. Engineering controls: for working alone, this is typically a “man down alarm” system, GPS monitoring (vehicles), alert software etc.
 - d. Administrative: safe work procedures, such as this one. Check in schedules, policies, log in sheets etc.
 - e. Personal Protective Equipment or PPE: safety glasses, gloves, goggles, respirators protective clothing etc. Not applicable for working alone.
3. **Risk Assessment:** a documented systematic process that identifies hazards, evaluates the risks and identifies controls to mitigate or eliminate the risks.
4. **TRUSAFE:** a web-based system (App) for employees to log their location and estimated time of departure to allow security to know where people are located on campus. This will allow security to check on the well-being of staff working alone.
5. **Worker:** as described in the *Workers Compensation Act*, a person who has entered into or works under a contract of service or apprenticeship, whether the contract is written, oral, express, or implied and whether by way of manual labour



or otherwise; or otherwise defined in the *Act*. This means, anyone who is employed by TRU (paid directly by TRU).

6. **Working alone or in isolation:** to work by yourself (i.e., no one else in the building/department space); in circumstances where assistance would not be readily available to the worker in the event of an emergency; or if the worker is injured or in ill health.

Working Alone Risk Assessment

What to consider before using the Risk Assessment template

- Risk assessments are best done with a small group of employees who represent the workers – both management and non-management are represented. Typically, 3-4 people is more than adequate. The Supervisor (or Manager) will lead the risk assessment with the support and feedback from the workers.
- Once completed all employees are to be able to access and review the completed document. Those directly impacted (in this case those working alone or in isolation) must be provided with the risk assessment and the chance to ask questions.
- Once the risk assessment is complete a written procedure/protocol must be completed for worker check-ins to ensure the workers well being. The procedure must include the intervals between checks and a procedure to follow if the workers cannot be contacted.
- Appendix A: Risk Assessment Template
- Appendix B: A guide to completing the Risk Assessment Template

Annual Review

On an annual basis, OSEM will complete a formal review of the Working Alone program to ensure it is up to date and working effectively. The JOHSC may be consulted as a part of this review process. This review may also take place at any time if:

- A change in regulatory requirements could affect this program or procedures.
- Aspects of this program or its procedures are reported to be working ineffectively.
- Or an incident occurred that involved aspects of this program.



Revision Control

Date of Revision: August 20, 2022		Position of Approver: Manager, Health, Safety & Environment		Signature: <i>Henry Chan</i>	
Version:	Author:	Date:	Description of Version:		
1	Manager, Health, Safety & Environment	August 20, 2022	OSEM 18.24.3B - First Draft		
2	Safety Tech.	June 9, 2023	Review		



Working Alone Risk Assessment

A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Hazards Table 1 (Appendix B)	Probable Injury	Likelihood of accident happening Table 2 (Appendix B)	Likelihood of disabling injury Table 3 (Appendix B)	Likelihood of help available Table 4 (Appendix B)	Frequency of the hazard/event occurring (C*D*E)	Recommended Check-In interval Table 5 (Appendix B)

Check-In Interval (Column G of the Risk Assessment)	
What is the shortest time interval from column G	
What check in interval will be used? This is to be indicated in the Check-In Procedure	



Appendix B: A Guide to Completing the Working Alone Risk Assessment

Table 1: Generalized examples of workplace hazards

This is not an exhaustive list but a few examples to guide the risk assessment

Physical	Biological	Chemical	Psychosocial	Ergonomic
Temperature	Pests (insects)	Cleaning products	Workplace Violence	Repetitive movements
Noise	Allergens (dust/mould/pollen)	Flammable materials (gas, propane, etc.)	Stress	Extended postures – sitting/standing/bending/twisting/ reaching for long periods of time
Indoor Air Quality (IAQ)	Viruses/bacteria	Corrosive materials (acids, bleach, etc.)	Bullying and Harassment	Pushing and pulling
Working at heights	Animals	Toxic materials (pesticides, labs chemicals, etc.)	Working alone	Lifting heavy loads or repeat lifting of smaller loads
Vibrations	Plants	Asbestos, Silica, Wood dust	Cognitive load	Inadequate lighting – too bright or too dim
Slips/trips/falls	Blood and bodily fluids	Oxidizers (create their own oxygen in a fire situation)	Unbalanced workload - too much work for one person/team	Hand tool use – poor tool design, right tool for the task, extended tool use
Electrical shock	Biohazardous materials	Lead	Job demand design	Shift work
Working with moving equipment		WHMIS/TDG regulated materials/products	Unclear direction or expectations	Office design – desk/computer set up appropriate for the user?

Table 2: Likelihood of an incident occurring (from WorkSafe BC)

What is the likelihood of an incident occurring in this situation or location? (consider past incidents, or incidents in similar units)	Score
Most likely	10
Very high likelihood	8
Quite possible, not unusual	6
Unusual, not likely	4
Remote possibility	2
Extremely remote possibility, but not unconceivable	0.5
Practically impossible (one in a million chance)	0.1

Table 3: Likelihood of disabling injury (from WorkSafe BC)

What is the likelihood of a disabling injury resulting from this type of hazard or accident	Score
Expected	10
Probable	8
Unusual, but not expected	6
Remotely possible	4
Practically impossible	2



Table 4: Likelihood of help being available (from WorkSafe BC)

What is the likelihood of help being available?		Score
Almost Never	Worker is in an isolated area with no one likely to pass by or see the worker for 2 hours or more	12
Rare	Worker is working in an area where people pass by frequently, e.g. 30 to 60 minutes	8
Occasionally	Worker is in an area where some people pass by regularly, e.g. every 30 minutes or so	6
Usual	Worker is not in the constant view of others, but if the worker was unexpectedly gone for any length of time, someone would notice and act	4
Frequently	The worker is in an area where people pass by often enough that there is a high likelihood of witnesses	2
Continuous	The worker is in an area surrounded by a high volume of potential witnesses	1

Table 5: recommended Check-In interval (from WorkSafe BC). The score in this table is obtained by multiplying the selected values from Table 2, 3, and 4.

Recommended Check-In interval	Score
4-8 hours	0.2-250
2-5 hours	251-400
0.5-3 hours	401+