



Midland Public Library

Policy Type: **Operational**

Policy Number: **OP-18**

Policy Title: **Working Alone**

Initial Policy Approval Date: April 2019

Last Review/Revision Date: 2024

Year of next review: 2028

PURPOSE:

The Library will provide a safe working environment for its employees. In doing so, the Library will take all reasonable and practical measures to eliminate or minimize the injury or risks associated with working alone both onsite and offsite. The Library will try to minimize the instances of an employee working alone.

Definitions

Working Alone: A person is “alone” at work when they are on their own; when they cannot be seen or heard by another person. (*Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety Act Definition*).

Policy

Midland Public Library staff will adhere to these guidelines for working alone:

In the Library:

- a) A staff member must have the permission of their supervisor to work alone;
- b) Make sure that the outer library door is locked so no one can come in;
- c) The Library will not open for business unless a minimum of *two (2)* staff are in the Library throughout regular scheduled shifts;
- d) Have a telephone with you to call for help in an emergency;
- e) If you are working for an extended period, arrange to have someone (friend, family, co-worker) call you at regular intervals;
- f) Be aware of your surroundings and any potential hazards; ensure lights are on in all work areas;
- g) Avoid any high-risk tasks such as cash transactions, bending & lifting of heavy objects, etc.;
- h) Do not schedule meetings in the Library with non-library staff; and
- i) Report any incidents or near misses that occur to your immediate supervisor and fill out an incident report.

Outside the Library:

- a. Leave the following information with your main contact person at the library – destination, estimated time of arrival, return time, mode of travel, alternate plans in the event of bad weather, traffic, etc.;

- b. Always ensure you have identification with you and that you have a cell telephone in case of emergency;
- c. Upon arriving at an unfamiliar location, be alert and examine your surroundings for any potential hazards;
- d. If upon arrival or at any time throughout the course of your duties, you feel unsafe, defer your visit until a later time;
- e. When dealing with members of the public maintain a reactionary gap between yourself and the person (i.e. out of the average person's kicking distance);
- f. Increase the gap by sitting across from each other at a table if possible;
- g. If referring to written material bring two copies so you can sit across from each other not beside;
- h. Inform your supervisor if you have any feelings, discomfort or apprehension about any upcoming meetings;
- i. Keep records and indicate if a person is known to be aggressive, hostile or potentially violent;
- j. Should you find yourself delayed beyond the expected return time, you are required to notify the check in person as soon as possible;
- k. Should a staff member who is working off site not check in within the expected guidelines, the assigned staff member will proceed with the following steps:
 - 1. Attempt to contact the staff member on their cell phone;
 - 2. Attempt to call the location/facility where the staff member should be located (if applicable);
 - 3. If staff coverage allows, arrange for another staff member to visit the site location to look for the staff member; and
 - 4. Call the authorities for support in locating the missing staff member.