NSW GOVERNMENT | Education

FACTSHEET

Working Alone – responsibilities for supervisors and staff

Health and Safety Directorate

Working together to ensure safety when working alone

WHS is an important consideration for anyone working alone or in isolation. All employees have a responsibility to take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others. Reasonable supervision necessary to ensure the health and safety of employees must be provided by a competent person and have regard to the competence, experience and age of each employee.

Supervisors' responsibilities

- Ensure risk assessments are conducted and documented for site specific concerns in relation to working alone or in isolation
- Ensure the employee has adequate knowledge and competency to undertake the work alone and has received appropriate instruction and training to operate any equipment required to complete the task without direct supervision
- Be aware of scheduled and unscheduled work hours for all employees under their supervision
- Provide prior approval for employees working alone
- Ensure all employees are aware of working alone procedures
- Ensure employees are aware of the potential for increased risk when working alone
- Ensure employees are familiar with geographic location, security systems, after hours building services issues and any lock up and restrictive access issues
- Maintain accurate records of employees' movements and the need for any contact or assistance while working alone
- Ensure any incidents are documented and investigated, and that corrective action is implemented and communicated to all concerned.

Employees' responsibilities

- Notify their supervisor prior to undertaking any task which requires working in isolation
- Cooperate with procedures put in place in the interests of health and safety
- Report any incidents which occur whilst working alone or in isolation
- Familiarise themselves with communication mechanisms and ensure that the method of communication is operating prior to commencing work alone or in isolation
- Communicate with the supervisor regarding any abnormal situations, for example a health condition that may have the potential to create a risk.