

Muskoka Lakes Township Public Library
LIBRARY BOARD POLICY

Policy Type: Operational –Human Resources

Policy Number: OPHR - 07

Policy Title: Working Alone

Policy Approval Date: 05/13/25

Chairperson: Val Duke

Policy Review Date: 05/29

Intent:

The Muskoka Lakes Public Library Board (herein after referred to as the Board) is committed to taking every precaution to maximize the safety and wellbeing of its staff, students and volunteers. The Board, CEO and Library employees share the responsibility to ensure a safe and secure workplace and to minimize risks when a staff member is required to work alone.

Regulations:

Under the Ontario *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (herein after referred to as OHSA), the Board is responsible for ensuring that reasonable measures are in place to protect the health and safety of its workers. Employees are also responsible for taking reasonable steps to protect their health and safety.

Operating Principles:

1. Working alone is defined as a situation where a person is the only employee in the Library, or where the employee does not have direct contact with a co-worker.
2. Taking into consideration the strategies outlined in Appendix A, the CEO will develop a plan that identifies the occupational hazards, risks, procedures for personal safety, special training and emergency assistance in the event of an incident when working alone.
3. Under no circumstances, shall a student or volunteer work alone.
4. Staff will not work alone without the prior consent of the CEO or CEO designate.
5. Recognizing that in a branch location(s) staff regularly work alone, the staff member and CEO will develop a mutually agreeable safety plan.

Related Documents:

MLPL OP-17 Safety, Security and Emergencies in the Library

MLPL OPHR-02 Human Resource Management

MLPL OPHR-08 Prevention of Workplace Violence



Appendix A

Working Alone Strategies

1. A discussion of potential risks (which may include accidents, fire, illness and harm from other people) and procedures when working alone will be part of staff orientation and ongoing staff training. This will heighten awareness and may provide opportunities to brainstorm options for minimizing risks when a staff member is required to work alone.
2. On occasion, staff members including the CEO may work outside of regular Library hours. In those situations, the staff member will set up a “fail safe” check back plan – e.g. informing a spouse, colleague or friend about their plan and expected return.
3. The Library doors will be locked when a staff member is working alone during closed hours.
4. The CEO and staff members will determine how staff members can secure emergency assistance and how emergency assistance will be provided in the event of incidents or accidents.
5. Staff members working alone are encouraged to have the portable panic button with them and their cell phone turned on and easily accessible to enable them to call for assistance.
6. Staff members are encouraged to park in a well-lit space close to the building exit.