1. Preamble

Working alone or in isolation by its very nature creates additional risk to the safety and health of workers. Red River College wishes to address this activity in order to further minimize the risk of injury to employees.

2. Policy

Red River College is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all members of the College community. This policy extends to all College related business where an employee or student may work alone or in isolation or seeks to work alone or in isolation. These situations shall be handled in accordance with the procedures and responsibilities outlined below. Adherence to this policy ensures compliance with Manitoba Regulation 217/2006 - Part 09 - Working Alone or in Isolation of the Workplace Safety & Health Act W210.

3. Definitions

3.1 “normal working hours” - means the hours where a particular workplace is considered “open” and where assistance is typically readily available in the event of injury, ill health or other emergency.

3.2 “student” – means any person undergoing College sanctioned training or serving an apprenticeship or field placement at a facility that is occupied or approved by the College.

3.3 “supervisor” - means a person who has charge of a workplace or direct authority over a worker. A Supervisor will normally be the Chair of the Program, the Manager of the Department, or a designate.

3.4 “worker” includes

(a) any person who is in an employment relationship with the College;
(b) any person who is employed by any other employer to perform a service whether for gain or reward, or hope of gain or reward or not,
(c) any person engaged by another person to perform services, whether
under a contract of employment or not

(i) who performs work or services for another person on College premises for compensation or reward on such terms and conditions that he is, in relation to that person, in a position of economic dependence upon that person more closely resembling the relationship of any employee than that of an independent contractor, and

(ii) who works or performs services in a workplace,

(d) a Student.

3.5 “working alone” - means the performance of any work function by a worker that is typically associated with dangerous equipment, materials or activities, where the worker:
(a) is the only worker at that workplace while performing the function; and
(b) is not directly supervised by a supervisor while performing the function.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, work situations that are not typically associated with access to dangerous equipment, materials or activities will not be subject to this policy. For example, a worker who works alone in performing paperwork duties will not be subject to this policy unless there is a particular risk associated with the duties performed such as climbing a ladder or the potential for personal injury, health emergency or violence exists.

3.6 “working in isolation” - means working in circumstances where assistance is not readily available in the event of injury, ill health or other emergency.

3.7 “workplace” - means any College-occupied building, site, workshop, structure, mobile vehicle, or any other premises or location whether indoors or outdoors in which one or more workers, or self-employed persons, are engaged in work or have worked.

4. Procedures

4.1 This policy imposes responsibility upon supervisors to define the tasks which may or may not be conducted by workers while working alone or in isolation. In addition, this policy mandates that supervisors establish the specific conditions that must be followed by workers in performing specific tasks while working alone or in isolation. Supervisors are reminded that the establishment of the aforementioned working alone / isolation procedures is especially important in situations where workers are performing tasks after normal working hours.

4.2 Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, supervisors are required to ensure that they fulfill and document the following responsibilities:
(a) Review all workplaces under their jurisdiction and identify situations where workers may be required to work alone or in isolation, as well as those situations where workers may request to work alone or in isolation.
(b) Describe conditions under which working alone or in isolation is permitted, indicating which tasks may be performed and which are prohibited
(c) Identify risks to the employee in terms of the nature of their work, isolation, and conditions at the workplace by completing a copy of Appendix A
E12 – Working Alone or in Isolation  
Effective – March 10, 2009  

(d) Identify and take any necessary steps to eliminate or reduce identified risks by completing Appendix B (attached to this policy). The steps taken must include:

(i) The establishment of an effective communication system that consists of:
   • Radio communication;
   • A phone or cellular phone; or
   • Any other means that provides effective communication commensurate with the risk involved such as personal alarm devices;

(ii) Providing sufficient training and instruction for safe work practices and ensuring minimum standards of competence appropriate to the situation and to repeat such training and instruction to each worker at prudent intervals;

(iii) Requiring that all legally mandated personal protective equipment (PPE) be worn by the worker;

(iv) Where applicable:
   • Maintaining regular contact with the person working alone; and
   • Providing emergency and survival supplies for working under extreme conditions.

Documentation of the above must be maintained and filed within each department or School with a copy delivered to the Manager of Environmental Health, & Safety Services. The policy and procedures must be communicated to all workers who may perform the tasks while working alone in isolation or while conducting fieldwork. Supervisors may consult the Manager of Environmental Health, & Safety Services for guidance and to ensure the appropriate policy and procedures are in place.

5. Responsibilities

5.1 Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that all required working alone risk identification / limitation assessment forms (Appendix A) are adequately completed and that all required working alone procedures (Appendix B) are adequately developed as required. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that working alone procedures are implemented, communicated, and enforced, in the situations contemplated by this Policy.

5.2 Supervisors are required to review each workplace under his/her control to identify circumstances where individuals work alone or in isolation in circumstances where there is a reasonable apprehension of increased risk of injury or where assistance will not readily be available. Supervisors must ensure all reasonably practical steps are taken to protect the safety and health of those workers.

5.3 Workers must identify to their Supervisor of any potential situations where they will work alone or in isolation and comply with this policy and with all applicable working alone procedures that have been developed pursuant to this policy.

6. Enforcement

6.1 Workers who violate this or other safety related policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
6.2 Students who violate this or other safety related policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

Related Policy and Legislation

*Manitoba Workplace Safety and Health Act* C.C.S.M. c. W210 and Regulations
Manitoba Labour and Immigration Workplace Safety and Health Code of Practice for Workers Working Alone or in Isolation
Manitoba Government and General Employees’ Union Collective Agreement

2.0 Global Executive Limitation – Executive Limitation Board of Governors Policy Manual

E1 Safety
E6 Hazardous Waste Management
E7 Personal Protective Equipment
E8 Hearing Conservation and Noise Control
E10 Use of Equipment for Personal Use
E11 Reporting of Accidents and Serious Incidents
U1 Use of College Facilities
Appendix A
WORKING ALONE
RISK IDENTIFICATION/LIMITATION FORM

FACULTY/DEPARTMENT: ______________________________________________________

SUPERVISOR: __________________________________________ PHONE: ____________

It is the responsibility of the supervisor to identify any hazardous agents or activities that arise from the conditions and circumstances of the employee’s work. IT IS STRONGLY RECOMMENDED THAT THE HANDLING OF HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES OR PERFORMING HAZARDOUS ACTIVITIES BE PROHIBITED WHEN AN EMPLOYEE IS WORKING ALONE OR IN ISOLATION.

Identify hazardous substances the worker may handle while working alone:

LAB CHEMICALS
HERBI/PESTI-CIDES
PRESSURIZED GASES
PATHOGENS
HAZARDOUS WASTE
INDUSTRIAL CHEMICALS
INFECTIOUS AGENTS
LIQUID GASES
NUCLEAR/RADIOACTIVE SUBSTANCES
LASERS
NONE
OTHER SUBSTANCES NOT LISTED ABOVE:

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

Note: Employee must be trained in WHMIS and competent in safely handling the above mentioned substances. Current Material Safety Data Sheets for each hazardous material must be attached to this form.

(Form Continues on next page)
Identify hazardous activities the employee may perform while working alone:

HEAVY PHYSICAL LABOUR
WORK WITH POWER TOOLS
USE LADDERS, SCAFFOLDING OR WORKING AT HEIGHTS
WORK WITH ANIMALS
WORK WITH HEAVY MACHINERY
WEATHER CONDITIONS
WORK WITH HIGH ELECTRIC CURRENTS
JOB DUTIES OCCUR IN ISOLATED LOCATIONS
WORK WITH EQUIPMENT UNDER PRESSURE OR VACUUM
JOB DUTIES POSE INCREASED RISK
ENTER CONFINED WORKSPACE
JOB DUTIES OUTSIDE OF NORMAL WORK HOURS
NONE

OTHER ACTIVITIES NOT LISTED ABOVE:
Appendix B

WORKING ALONE PROCEDURES

Document all steps taken to eliminate or reduce the identified risks:
FACULTY/DEPARTMENT ______________________________

WORKING HOURS ________________________________________________

The steps taken must include the establishment of an effective communication system that consists of:
A. Effective communication:
   - Radio communication;
   - A phone or cellular phone;
   - Any other means that provides effective communication commensurate with the risk involved;
or
   - Maintaining regular contact with the person working alone.

If applicable include any of the following:

B. Providing
   - written instructions stating limitations

   and/or
   - prohibitions of specific activities while working alone

C. Providing sufficient training and instruction for safe work practices and ensuring minimum standards of competence applicable to the situation
   - WHMIS
   - TDG
   - Respiratory Protection
   - Infection Control
   - Lab Safety
   - First aid & CPR
   - Confined Space Entry
   - Field Safety
   - Fire extinguisher training
   - Safety and health Orientation
   - Radiation Safety
   - Emergency Procedures
   - Supervision and Safety
   - Ladder safety
   - Other _______________________

(continued on next page)
D. Providing applicable personal protective equipment (PPE)
   - Eye protection
   - Hard protection
   - Respiratory protection
   - Lead protection
   - Skin protection
   - Footwear
   - Hearing protection
   - Fall protection
   - Other ___________________

E. Providing emergency and survival supplies for working under extreme conditions

F. Specify emergency response procedures to be employed if required for the situation and duration of the time for which this form applies:

It is mandatory that the supervisor provides site-specific orientation. (Employees must also attend generic safety training courses offered through Learning and Development.) If, in the opinion of the supervisor, additional site-specific safety training is required, please indicate the type of training and the person responsible for providing additional safety training. Contact Environmental Health & Safety Services for assistance.

SITE SPECIFIC ORIENTATION DATE:____________________________________________

SITE SPECIFIC SAFETY TRAINING DATE:_________________________________________

SIGNATURE OF THE SUPERVISOR:_____________________________________________

SIGNATURE OF THE DESIGNATED EMPLOYEE: ___________________________________