



OPS-SOP-15	Revision #: 01	Implementation Date: 2019-08-28	Last Reviewed/ Update Date: 2019-08-28	Page #: 1 of 3
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Standard Operating Procedure: Working Alone in the Laboratory

1. Purpose: to provide step by step guidance about precautions to take if you are working alone in the laboratory.

2. Scope: applies to all students, staff and faculty working alone in the laboratory.

3. Prerequisites: You must be trained by an experienced person in your lab or by Stores personnel.

4. Responsibilities: it is everybody responsibility to follow the SOP and take required actions in order to ensure safety.

6. Procedure:

- Avoid working alone after business hours or during statutory holidays whenever possible
- Must obtain supervisors approval prior to working alone
- Working alone/ after-hours approval MUST consider the individuals: experience level, hazards involved with the work, possibility of incident preventing an individual from being able to call for help, and accessibility to emergency assistance
- Conduct a risk assessment (refer to section 7 below) to identify hazards associated with working alone.
- Identify any hazards and take required actions to eliminate them if possible and ensure to minimize the risks
- Workers, students and other persons working alone should:
 - Follow the protocol/s put into place and adhere to safe work practices including wearing personal protection equipment (PPE)
 - Always let someone know that you will be working alone and ask that person to check on you regularly. **Refer to "working alone service" described on page 3 and use this service.**

- If an emergency occurs, immediately contact campus police (8-2000), if critical personal injury or unsure call 911. For more information refer to the [Emergency Response SOP](#)
- In case of spills; follow the chemical spills SOP [HERE](#) for detailed instructions.
- As soon as it is possible, following an incident, email the DOTS (grace.flock@utoronto.ca) indicating room # and a brief description of any issues that occurred. In addition, inform your supervisor.

7. Risk Assessment:

HIGH RISK – DO NOT WORK ALONE

Examples of High Risk activities

- Hot work where a fire watch is required
- Work with pyrogenic chemicals
- Open flame associated with flammable solvents
- Work with acutely toxic material (e.g. cyanides, fumigants, hydrofluoric acid) as described in Safety Data Sheet (SDS)
- Other tasks which based on hazard analysis is deemed to require more than one person for safety reasons

Moderate Risk – Recommended to Have an Individual Nearby

Examples of Moderate Risk activities

- Risk Group 2 Biohazard labs
- Radioactive materials (above exempt quantities)
- Large volumes of chemicals
- X-rays
- Exposed, energized electrical systems

Low Risk – Individuals Can Work Alone

Examples of low risk activities

- Routine office work or study
- Laboratory work with minimal risk (analytical equipment, monitoring equipment or process, work not involving hazardous materials)

Adapted from; University of Waterloo [Working Alone Guideline](#)

Prepared by Maya Batey. Reviewed by Grace Flock, Director of Operations and Technical Services (DOTS). Aug-2019

Walksafer Service

Hours of operation Monday to Saturday 7:30p.m.-1:30a.m. Call the Walksafer Service at 978-SAFE (7233) for an escort to your car or the subway. If the Walksafer Service is not available, call the University Police at 978-2323.

Working Alone Service

Hours of operation Monday to Friday 10:00p.m.-7:00a.m., 24 hours during the weekends and statutory holidays. Available to all members of the community who work on the campus during quiet hours of the evening, weekends and statutory holidays.

How Does It Work?

Call the University Police at 978-2323 to register for Working Alone Service and to provide them with the necessary details. Services provided to registered participants include; U of T Police will visit or telephone you during the period you request; in the event of an emergency in your area U of T Police will contact you and advise you on the appropriate procedures to follow; U of T Police will arrange for an escort to your vehicle or the subway.

Emergency Call 911 Police/Fire/Medical

Call 911 from an internal telephone line for immediate police, fire or medical response to preserve life or property. Report urgent matters (suspicious persons/trespassers) to U of T Police at 978-2222. To contact U of T Police on any other matter, please call 978-2323 or [visit the U of T Campus Police website](#).

Emergency Telephones

On campus a blue flashing light indicates the location of an emergency telephone. When the button is pressed, it dials directly into the University Police dispatcher and the caller's location is displayed to the operator. There are several emergency telephone locations on campus. The nearest location to the Lash Miller Building is Huron Street near the Sidney Smith Building. There is also an emergency telephone located in the Lash Miller underground parking garage.