

Health and Safety Program

Health and safety committee

As part of the Health and Safety Program, the FFPLTC establishes a Health and Safety Committee (HSC) comprised of one worker representative and the FFPLTC's CEO (a management representative).

The HSC shall meet quarterly. These meetings will include, but are not limited to, discussions of the following topics:

- Review of past inspection reports
- Any health and safety concerns
- Review of aggregate trends in incident reports

Responsibilities

Staff

All Staff have a responsibility toward health and safety. Staff should always follow correct work procedures, including the use of personal protective equipment when required. Staff should be aware of the regulations which cover their duties. Any workplace injury or illnesses should be reported immediately, as well as any unsafe acts or conditions.

CEO

The CEO has several responsibilities in addition to those they hold as a staff member and member of the HSC. They must instruct staff to follow safe work practices and enforce health and safety regulations in order to provide a safe and healthful workplace. They must correct any unsafe acts or conditions. They will ensure that only adequately trained workers operate any equipment.

They will report on and investigate all incidents or accidents. They will inspect the Library and take remedial action to minimize or eliminate hazards. They will ensure all equipment in the Library is properly maintained. They will promote safety awareness amongst staff and provide them with health and safety information and training.

The CEO must establish and maintain annually a health and safety program and ensure that staff members are properly trained and certified as required. They must report any accidents/incidents and cases of occupational disease to the appropriate authority. They must ensure that there are proper medical and first aid facilities onsite and that the proper personal protective equipment is available.

FFPL Board

The FFPL Board is responsible for ensuring that the FFPLTC meets its requirements under the Occupational Health and Safety Act, and for ensuring that the Library's Health and Safety Policy is reviewed annually.

Training and orientation

New staff members

New staff members shall receive health and safety orientation training before they begin work.

Health and safety orientation training includes:

- Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS)
- Health and Safety Awareness
- Touring the Library
- First Aid (when applicable)

Training will take place at the expense of the Library.

WHMIS

Each staff member will be trained in all applicable versions of WHMIS. The applicable versions shall be determined by the presence of Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) or Safety Data Sheets (SDS). Staff shall review this training annually.

Health and safety awareness

Each staff member shall complete:

- Occupational Health and Safety Awareness Training for Workers
- A review of the Health and Safety Program
- A review of the Emergency Plan
- A review of the Fire Safety Plan
- An introduction to the use of fire extinguishers

Touring the Library

Each staff member shall tour the Library with a supervisor. The tour will identify workplace hazards and prevention methods. It will include the location of:

- Emergency exits
- Fire pulls
- Fire extinguishers
- First aid stations

First aid

Each staff member, excluding students, will be trained in Standard First Aid and the use of the AED as soon as it is practicable. Staff shall recertify their training every three years, as required.

New CEOs

New CEOs should receive training in the following areas:

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| • Roles and responsibilities | • Conducting planned inspections |
| • Internal Responsibility System | • Training |
| • Hazard identification | • Communication skills |
| • Hazard control | • Motivation and discipline |
| • Hazard risk assessment | • Problem solving skills |
| • Emergency procedures | • Duty to accommodate |
| • Incident investigation | |

This training can take a number of different forms, including:

- Demonstrations from staff members who already have the skills (for instance, the worker representative could demonstrate a workplace inspection)
- Online trainings from LearnHQ or HRDownloads
- Joint Health and Safety Committee Certification

Training records

Records of health and safety certification and training shall be kept by the CEO or Designate. Active certification records shall be posted on the Health and Safety Board.

Review

Training and orientation shall be reviewed annually to ensure that all applicable trainings are up to date and in compliance.

Workplace hazards

A number of areas that have the potential to become workplace hazards have been identified in the following sections.

Indoor air quality

The CEO shall endeavor to ensure that the quality of air inside the Library is suitable to meet the needs related to the comfort and well being of staff and patrons, preservation of collections and technology.

Staff should speak to an HSC member if they experience any of the following symptoms at the Library on a recurring basis:

- Headache
- Fatigue
- Dry throat
- Shortness of breath
- Skin irritation
- Dizziness
- Itchy eyes
- Bleeding nose
- Generally feeling unwell

Dust

There are many possible sources of dusts within a library setting. Dust can have adverse health effects on staff. Measures will be taken to control the amount of dust staff are exposed to. These measures will include maintaining an adequate air filtering system, monitoring the filters as a part of the regular health and safety checks, and cleaning the library regularly including areas where dust settles frequently.

Staff should speak to a HSC member if they experience any of the following symptoms at the Library on a recurring basis:

- Irritation of the eyes, nose, throat, and/or skin
- Coughing
- Sneezing
- Respiratory problems

Mould

Efforts will be made to ensure the overall humidity within the building is kept to acceptable levels. Measures to ensure this will include, maintaining the HVAC system and cleaning of spills quickly.

Additionally, wet books shall not be shelved. In the event that a book becomes mouldy, it shall be discarded promptly.

Books which are returned with water damage will be inspected. If they are mouldy, the book will not be kept for the patron and will be disposed of immediately and the patron still charged the replacement fee.

Musculoskeletal disorders

There are four main causes of work-related musculoskeletal disorder (MSD):

- Repetition
- Force
- Posture
- Duration

One of the first signs that a staff member may be suffering from MSD is pain. Symptoms of common MSDs are:

- Back disorder: pain in the back, difficulty in turning, bending, and moving the back.
- Carpal tunnel syndrome: pain and numbness in index and middle fingers and weakness of the abductor muscles of the thumb
- Tendonitis: pain in the hands and wrist due to inflammation of the tendon as a result of overuse
- Tenosynovitis: pain due to inflammation of the tendon sheath, producing pain and swelling.
- Thoracic Outlet Syndrome: pain, arm weakness, and numbness in the arms and fingers as a result of the squeezing of the nerves and blood vessels between the neck and shoulders
- Bursitis: restriction and pain in the joint movement as a result of deficient lubrication at a bone joint.

It is important that MSDs are recognized as early as possible in order to try and reverse the effects. Staff members who feel aches and tiredness in limbs during work should report the symptoms to an HSC member.

Correct work procedures have been developed for work-related activities that pose a risk of MSD.

Dust mites

Dust mites can cause allergic reactions in people. Should staff experience recurring symptoms of an allergic reaction they should inform an HSC member. Exposure to dust mites shall be controlled through regular vacuuming, regularly changing the air filters as necessary, and cleaning spills quickly.

Sanitation & housekeeping

Staff will largely not be requested to perform many sanitation/housekeeping duties beyond tidying. On the occasion that staff must perform these duties they should follow the correct work procedures.

Pests

The library may experience problems due to rats and mice, especially over the winter months. Pests can cause allergic reactions, respiratory problems, and asthma. Efforts will be made to control pests in the Library by not leaving food out. If staff notice evidence of pests, including droppings and shredded pages, they should inform an HSC member immediately.

Noise

Efforts will be made to control the level of noise in the Library in order to prevent the disruption of conversations, discomfort, stress, and interference in concentration. Background noise will be kept to between 50-55 dB(A). Preventative measures like the use of carpets, and noise enclosures will be used as much as possible. It is understood that there will be occasional circumstances, like large programs, where background noise levels will exceed 50-55 dB(A).

Temperature and humidity

Controlling both the temperature and humidity is an important part of ensuring staff comfort. Efforts will be made using the Library HVAC system to keep the temperature and relative humidity of the Library with AHRAE Standard 55-1992, which recommends a relative humidity of 50%, an air speed of less than 0.15 m/sec and temperatures in the winter ranging from 20-23.5°C and in the summer from 23-26°C.

If it is found that the HVAC system is inadequate to maintain these temperatures secondary measures in the form of portable heaters will be used after an employee has gained approval from the CEO.

In Ontario, there is no legislated upper limit for high temperatures in the workplace. In the event of a lack of air conditioning, employees will be encouraged to stay hydrated and dress for the conditions. If staff members find that it is too hot to remain in the library, they may use their vacation or sick time.

Lighting

A lack of proper lighting can cause several health concerns including:

- Eye strain
- Blurred vision
- Dry eyes, or eye irritation
- Discomfort from screen glare
- Worsening acuity
- Headaches

In order to lessen this health and safety concern staff should follow proper work procedure when it comes to preventing vision problems. Lighting within the Library will be properly maintained and also visually inspected monthly. The follow lighting levels as described in the IES Lighting Handbook, ninth edition and other sources shall be used (lux=lumens/m²):

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| • Library Stacks: 300 lux | • Building Exteriors: Surrounds – 10 lux |
| • Shaw Community Hub and Study Rooms: 300 lux | • Entrances – 50 lux |
| | • Circulation Desk: 300 lux |

- Reading Areas: 300-750 lux
- Washrooms: 150 lux
- Staff Areas: 300 lux
- Hallways: 150 lux

Fragrance Sensitivity

Should a staff member be sensitive to fragrances, efforts will be made to make the Library as scent-free as possible.

Shelving Units

The shelving units will be inspected monthly as a part of the health and safety inspection. Should any staff notice damage or wear to the units they should report it to an HSC member.

Shelving books

Shelving can pose the risk of MSDs due to the weight of the books, extremes of reaching and bending, and high repetition rate of tasks. To avoid this hazard correct work procedures for shelving have been developed. Staff who have any back, shoulder, or hand problems should report those issues to an HSC member.

Psychological stress

There are many general and library-specific sources of stress associated with working in a library. Symptoms of psychological stress include feelings of:

- Anger
- Depression
- Humiliation
- Worthlessness
- Rejection
- Being out of place
- Incompetence
- Helplessness

Psychological stress can lead to many long term effects. If any staff member feels any of the above symptoms they should seek help through the Employee Assistance Program and speak to an HSC member. This discussion may be used to initiate a work plan that attempts to minimize the source of the staff member's stress.

Discarded drugs and sharps

Occasionally, drugs or sharps either used or new are discarded within the Library. Should a staff member find a sharp or drugs, they should follow the correct work procedure to dispose of it.

Correct work procedures

Workstation design

In order to reduce neck and eye strain, staff computer monitors should be positioned such that the neck is in a neutral position and that glare on the monitor can be controlled. Keyboards should be positioned such that the elbows can remain at a 90-degree angle. For writing or reading, the top of the desk should be about 5 cm above elbow height. Staff members should adjust their seat height if necessary in order to ensure the proper elbow angle. However, thighs should remain horizontal. If adjusting a chair's height would change this angle, then staff should utilize a foot rest, which can be purchased for them by the Library. Staff should adjust their chair as they feel necessary.

Frequently used items should be stored in a convenient location and staff should avoid over-reaching and twisting as a part of their regular work routine. The computer mouse should be placed either above and to the right of the keyboard or above and to the left.

When speaking on the phone staff should try and avoid cradling the headset between their shoulder and chin as this causes shoulder and neck tension. Staff should take breaks from prolonged periods of typing.

Circulation Desk

It is recognized that the Circulation Desk has ergonomic flaws, especially regarding the placement of the book return bin and the many people using the same workstation. To prevent MSD at the Circulation Desk, preventative measures should be followed. Staff should adjust their chair to suit their needs. The anti-fatigue mat should be used when working at the standing station. Staff should wear shoes which offer good support.

In order to minimize the impact of the strain of lifting books out of the return bin, staff should only remove a few items from the bin at a time and face the bin as they remove items.

Posture

Staff should try and work in a neutral posture – naturally straight and relaxed spine with arms hanging loosely, relaxed shoulders in line with the body, neutral elbow posture close to body, relaxed wrists in line with the lower body. Staff should try and alternate between sitting and standing so as to avoid using a static posture.

When working in a standing position for a long period of time staff should change their body position frequently to avoid fatigue. They should always face where they are working and keep their body close to their work as well. They should avoid reaching behind their shoulder and should instead shift their feet to face what they are reaching for. They should not overreach beyond their point of comfort and should avoid reaching above the shoulder line whenever possible.

Preventing vision problems

Staff should take frequent breaks from staring at the computer screen. These rests can include focusing on an object more than three metres away then shifting back to the screen and refocusing. Staff should avoid prolonged exposure to bright light.

Material handling practices and procedures

SDS shall be kept in a conspicuous location for all hazardous substances. These sheets shall be reviewed annually to ensure that all are no more than three years old.

Staff shall only use substances for which there is an SDS sheet that is not more than three years old. At no time shall a staff member use a substance for which they have not consulted the appropriate Data Sheet. When using substances staff shall follow all material handling instructions listed on the appropriate SDS.

SDS shall be kept for any products that were not purchased in consumer packaging and quantities. Staff may request an SDS be kept for any substance, even if it was purchased in consumer packaging or quantities.

All substances for which there is an SDS shall be stored in keeping with the best practices described in the SDS. No containers should be left open for extended periods of time and staff should use cleaning products appropriate to the situation.

Housekeeping

Staff shall practice safe housekeeping by not storing items on the floor, tidying up any loose cords, etc. to ensure that the Library is free from tripping hazards. All drawers and cupboards should be closed when not in immediate use.

Protective equipment

Staff should consult the appropriate SDS for the product prior to use, and adhere to any suggestions regarding the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

Gloves

The use of gloves as PPE is suggested when staff are:

- Administering first aid
- Using substances where the SDS requires their use
- When cleaning bodily fluids

Shelving books

Staff should ensure shelved books are not overly tight. Tight shelving should be reported to a senior staff member so that books can be weeded.

Staff should avoid carrying large stacks of books. Staff should make use of a book truck to transfer books around the library. When using a book truck, staff should place the truck in line with shelves in order to minimize stretching and lifting.

Staff should maintain good body posture while shelving, and avoid:

- Extreme wrist bending
- Extended reaches
- Awkward postures
- Prolonged static positions
- Use of the pinch grip (between thumb and tips of fingers) by instead cradling a book's spine in the palm

Below is the recommended maximum weight for shelving tasks, as taken from "*Ergonomic design for libraries*" by the Vancouver Public Library:

- Lifting from waist level to top shelf – 8kg
- Lifting from floor to top shelf – 4.9 kg
- Stand from squat with armload of books – 7.7 kg
- Lifting from floor to top stack on table (1.3m) – 4.7kg
- Lifting from bottom row on cart to top row – 7.7 kg

Shelving equipment

Book trucks pose the risk of slips, trips, falls, crushed hands, and collisions. If a cart is damaged or faulty in any way, staff should not use the cart and report the need for maintenance to an HSC member.

Materials should be evenly distributed on book trucks. Book trucks must not be overloaded. Unstable or top heavy loads should be anchored.

Book trucks should be pushed from the end. When moving a book truck, staff should not cut corners, or pass close to obstacles or walls.

Ladders

No staff will use any ladder measuring more than 6 feet in length, or in an area of traffic without a second staff member holding the ladder. Prior to the use of a ladder, staff shall:

- Inspect it for any broken or loose rungs or other faults
- Ensure that it has non-slip feet
- Place it on a firm footing and ensure it is fully open and stable before climbing

When using a ladder, staff shall not:

- Stand on the top step
- Over reach from the ladder
- Wear high heels

Manual materials handling

When lifting a box, store and work with the materials at waist height. Do not bend over to try and lift an item from the floor all at once. When lifting a box from the ground, use your legs to lift the item, and do not lift using the back muscles.

Electrical safety

Staff should inspect power cords and electrical fitting prior to use, and should not use any damaged equipment. They should never disconnect a power cord by tugging on it. Extension cords should not be used as permanent wiring. Staff should not allow book trucks to be pushed over extension cords.

Staff shall refrain from entering the electrical room, with the exception of needing to perform health and safety inspections. No staff member shall at any time touch the electrical panels found there.

Sharps and Drug Safety

Staff should use the sharps pick-up kit supplied to dispose of discarded sharps. The kit is kept in the server room next to the extra first aid supplies. The kit contains tongs to pick the sharp up. Extra containers can be found in the CEOs office. Staff should never touch any sharp with their hands, even if it is capped. Once the sharp is safely in one of the supplied containers, it should be closed and left in the CEOs office. The CEO will bring used sharps containers to the Health Unit.

Staff should never pick-up any drugs, either legal or illegal; they locate with their bare hands. If staff find drugs within the Library they should alert other staff members. One staff member should stand near where the drugs were located and re-direct patrons while the other phones the police on their non-emergency line to come and pick them up. If staff feel that leaving the drugs where they are poses a

safety hazard for them or other patrons, they may use the sharps pick up kit to pick up the drugs. They should give the entire container to the police when they arrive. This procedure should be followed for both legal and illegal drugs, even if the drugs found appear to be prescription.

Failure to follow correct work procedures

The CEO will investigate all instances of correct work procedures not being followed.

Investigations will:

- Determine whether a staff member is aware of the correct work procedure
- Determine whether a staff member is being influenced to disregard the procedure
- Be kept confidential
- Be recorded

Workplace inspections and hazard analysis

Workplace inspections shall take place on or about the third Tuesday of each month. They will be conducted by the HSC worker representative. Though not required, the CEO will also participate in the inspection, if possible.

Identified hazards will be forwarded to the employer in writing to review, along with any recommendations. The employer will respond to the worker representative, in writing, within 21 days.

At each HSC meeting, any incidents of workplace accidents or illnesses shall be reviewed, and any trends identified.

Addressing workers' concerns

Workers who have any health and safety concerns are encouraged to address their concerns either verbally or in writing to an HSC member. Concerns addressed to the CEO shall be responded to, in writing, within 21 days. Concerns addressed to the HSC worker representative shall be brought forward to the CEO who shall respond, in writing, within 21 days.

Incident reporting and investigation

Should any staff member suffer from a workplace injury of any kind, or a near miss, they should report it to an HSC member either verbally or using the incident report form found on the Staff Drive. The HSC worker representative should forward received reports, either verbal or written, to the CEO for investigation.

Reports should include the following pieces of information:

- Name of person completing the report
- Name and occupation of the staff member involved
- Location and time of accident/injury
- Names of witnesses
- Description of circumstances surrounding the accident and what happened to cause it
- Name of physician or surgeon who attended to the staff member, if any

Upon receipt of report of an accident, illness, or near miss, the CEO shall investigate the circumstances surrounding the incident. This may include interviewing the staff member involved and any witnesses. Once the investigation is complete the CEO shall complete an investigation report summarizing the findings of the investigation and suggesting preventative measures to ensure a similar accident, incident, or illness does not occur again.

Notice of illness & injury

In the event of a critical injury or death occurring in the Library the CEO will immediately notify by telephone a Ministry of Labour inspector and the HSC. Within 48 hours of the same incident, the CEO shall send a written report outlining the details of the incident to a Director of the Ministry. If the CEO is incapacitated, the responsibility for notification shall fall to the worker representative.

If an accident occurs in the Library and a worker is disabled from performing his or her work or requires medical attention, but critical injury or death does not occur, the CEO shall notify the HSC in writing within four days of the incident.

If the CEO is informed that a staff member has an occupational illness, or that a claim for occupational illness has been filed with the WSIB, the CEO will notify a director of Ministry of Labour and the HSC within four days in writing.

Any written notices shall include the following information:

- Name and address of the Library
- Time and place of the incident
- Name and address of the person who was critically injured or killed
- Names and addresses of all witnesses to the incident
- Name and address of the physician or surgeon, if any, who attended to the staff member
- Steps to prevent a reoccurrence

Maintenance and repairs

All equipment and structures within the Library shall be kept in good repair. Any staff member who identifies a maintenance or repair issue that would effect health and safety should forward their concern a HSC member.

General maintenance and repair issues should be logged as tickets within the Town of Fort Frances' Asset Management System. Major repairs that require the use of outside services shall be first offered to the Town's preferred contractors. If no response is received within a timely fashion, other contractors may be sought.

Should a maintenance worker need to be working at a height, that worker shall have undertaken Working at Height training and shall adhere to all applicable regulations regarding the use of any equipment, including personal protection, or actions required to complete the work.

Emergency procedures

An Emergency Plan shall be posted on the Health and Safety Board. Staff shall review the plan annually.

A separate Fire Safety Plan shall also be posted on the Health & Safety Board. Staff shall review the plan annually. The Fire Safety Plan shall include information regarding fire safety as well as procedures for staff in the event of a fire or other evacuation situation.

First aid and rescue procedures

Basic first aid

Staff shall offer basic first aid as requested, and as they feel comfortable. At no time shall a staff member transport an injured person in a personal vehicle. Should transportation be required, staff shall call an ambulance. A First Aid kit shall be kept in the server room and shall be stocked as prescribed.

Emergency first aid procedures

If Emergency First Aid measures are required, one staff member shall administer first aid while another shall call 9-1-1.