



**Adopted: March 13, 2019**

## **Institutional Roles and Responsibilities for Safety Culture**

### **Policy**

Responsibility for safety, including the laboratory safety program, resides at all levels within the University. Within this framework, administrators, faculty, staff, students, and visitors have responsibilities for complying, implementing, communicating and/or ensuring adherence to health, safety, and environmental regulations, principles, and practices. Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) and the Office of Research Safety (ORS) provide training, technical expertise, consulting assistance, tools and services to ensure compliance with all legal requirements.

### **Senior Leadership**

Senior campus leadership includes the President, Provost, Vice President and General Counsel and Vice Provost for Research who shall:

- Demonstrate that all elements of safety (e.g., occupational health and safety, environmental health, fire and life safety, research safety) are a core value of the institution through public discussion of the importance of safety, by providing adequate resources, and by establishing effective policies to help raise awareness of and ensure adherence to all federal, state, and local regulations and university and sponsoring agency policies;
- Recognize that hazards exist in multiple settings including campus buildings, research laboratories, teaching environments, studios, machine shops, field research sites, and campus grounds;
- Appoint an institutional lead and leadership team responsible for facilitating the building of a culture of safety;
- Be transparent on roles, responsibilities, and accountability in all realms associated with safe work practices including the responsible conduct of research;
- Align the reward and recognition system with efforts to promote safety, linking to hiring, promotion, tenure, and salary decisions for faculty and staff; and
- Assume ultimate responsibility for safety.

## **Appointed Institutional Lead and Leadership Team Responsible for Strengthening a Culture of Safety**

Appointed Institutional Lead and Leadership Team includes the Senior Associate Vice President for Strategic Initiatives, Associate Vice President for ORS, Executive Director of EHS, and additional members of the Research Safety Policy Council who shall:

- Provide guidance, direction, and oversight to ensure adherence to federal, state, and local regulations as well as university and sponsoring agency policies and procedures instituted to protect the health and safety of personnel including researchers, and the environment;
- Engage all stakeholders to build, implement, and promote an inclusive, collaborative safety culture improvement plan for the institution;
- Develop and support effective working relationships with all stakeholders involved in improving the culture of safety;
- Participate in ongoing assessment, reporting, continuous improvement, and communication with the university community;
- Develop and collect qualitative and quantitative safety metrics;
- Report to senior leadership about challenges, progress and maturation of the culture;
- Publish annual progress reports to the university community; and
- Elevate concerns to senior leadership;
- Implement periodic assessments on incidents, operations and the culture of safety.

## **Deans and Unit Heads**

Deans and Unit Heads include both academic and non-academic roles of Deans, Chairs, Associate/Assistant Vice Presidents, and Directors who shall:

- Provide direction, resources, and oversight to raise awareness, train and ensure adherence to federal, state, and local regulations as well as university and sponsoring agency policies and procedures instituted to protect the health and safety of personnel including researchers and the environment;
- Effectively communicate the importance of a strong culture of safety to all members of academic departments/administrative units and that everyone shares in the obligation to perform work in a safe, healthy, and environmentally protective manner;
- Work collaboratively with faculty, staff, and researchers toward the common goal of supporting a culture of safety;

- Work collaboratively with ORS and EHS personnel;
- Lead by example, by modeling good safety behavior;
- Incorporate efforts to foster a strong, positive culture of safety as an element in the criteria for faculty and staff promotion, tenure, and salary decisions;
- Elevate concerns to senior leadership
- Ensure that all safety accidents and incidents are properly reported; and
- Assume ultimate responsibility for safety in the division (deans) and department (chairs) and unit (associate/assistant vice presidents, and directors).

### **Faculty/PIs and Managers**

Managers include both academic and non-academic managers, including Principal Investigators, faculty, and other managers with direct oversight of operations who shall:

- Adhere to all federal, state, and local regulations as well as university and sponsoring agency policies and procedures instituted to protect the health and safety of personnel including researchers and the environment;
- Facilitate open dialogue about safety in campus buildings, research laboratories, teaching environments, studios, machine shops, field research sites, and on campus grounds;
- Conduct a hazard analysis prior to conducting any experimental procedure, teaching activity, or work activity involving tools;
- Ensure everyone is familiar with their emergency response plans and receives proper safety training that provides the knowledge necessary to perform a job safely by establishing expectations on how to perform tasks;
- Lead by example, by modeling good safety behavior;
- Incorporate considerations of responsible safety into science, including research safety, scholarly work, presentations, lab meetings,
- Ensure that all safety accidents and incidents are properly reported; immediately report all emergencies to University Police and ensure all accidents and incidents are reported to your supervisor and entered into the University of Chicago Accident/Incident Reporting (UCAIR) system;
- Ensure all inspection deficiencies are corrected;
- Elevate concerns to senior leadership;

- Discuss lessons learned from accidents, incidents, and near misses with your operations (e.g., research group, trade shop); and
- Assume ultimate responsibility for safety within your operation and stop any unsafe behavior immediately.

### **Students, Staff, Visitors, and Guests**

Students, staff, visitors, and guests include every employee, undergraduate and graduate student, postdoctoral scholar, and research staff member who shall:

- Be mindful of the potential risks to your safety and those of your neighbors in campus buildings, research laboratories, teaching environments, studios, machine shops, field research sites, and on campus grounds;
- Learn about potential hazards associated with your work and work area; know where information on these hazards is kept for their review, and use this information when needed and use Safety Data Sheets (SDS) for guidance if the work involves hazardous materials;
- Stop any work activity including laboratory experiments that is potentially unsafe and notify your supervisor;
- Immediately report all emergencies to University Police and ensure all accidents and incidents are reported to your supervisor and entered into the University of Chicago Accident/Incident Reporting (UCAIR) system;
- Follow all safety rules, including the appropriate use of personal protective equipment (PPE), engineering controls (e.g., fume hoods), regulations, and standard operating procedures required for the tasks assigned and observe environmental, health, and safety related signs, posters, and warning signals;
- Be familiar with the emergency plan, emergency assembly area, and participate in emergency drills;
- Conduct a hazard analysis prior to conducting any experimental procedure, teaching activity, or work activity involving tools;
- As a best practice, include a hazard analysis in thesis, dissertation, and funding proposals;
- Report all unsafe conditions to your supervisor;
- Warn co-workers about defective equipment and other hazards;
- Participate in required inspection and monitoring programs;
- Elevate concerns to senior leadership;

- Incorporate considerations of responsible safety into science, including research safety, scholarly work, presentations lab meetings, shop tool box talks, and construction kick-off meetings; and
- Discuss lessons learned from accidents, incidents, and near misses with your supervisor and fellow researchers and coworkers.

### **Environmental Health and Safety and the Office of Research Safety**

Environmental Health and Safety and the Office of Research Safety includes all staff in both offices who shall:

- Provide guidance, direction, and oversight to raise awareness, train and ensure adherence to federal, state, and local regulations as well as university and sponsoring agency policies and procedures instituted to protect the health and safety of personnel including researchers, and the environment.
- Work collaboratively with students, faculty, and staff;
- Encourage open and ongoing dialogue about safety to promote a questioning attitude, a healthy respect for what can go wrong, and continuous learning from operational experiences;
- Assist the university community in the evaluation of hazards and the development of procedures and other resources.
- In coordination with the university community, committees, and leadership, develop best practices and documentation to convey institutional standards;
- Provide a central repository of safety resources to the university community;
- Monitor and communicate regulatory and advisory changes to the community;
- Elevate concerns to senior leadership;
- Collect and report safety metrics to the non-research community, research community, committees, and leadership; and
- Deliver training and education to the research community.

### **Laboratory Safety Specialists (LSS)**

LSSs include all divisional safety staff who shall:

- Serve as a resource for research participants and provide guidance to raise awareness, train and ensure adherence to federal, state, and local regulations as well as university and sponsoring agency policies and procedures instituted to protect the health and safety of research participants and the environment;

- Work collaboratively with research personnel, ORS, and EHS;
- Encourage open and ongoing dialogue about safety to promote a questioning attitude, a healthy respect for what can go wrong, and continuous learning from operational experiences;
- Discuss lessons learned from accidents, incidents, and near misses with your supervisor and fellow researchers and coworkers;
- Elevate concerns to senior leadership;
- Assist the university community in the evaluation of hazards and the development of procedures and other resources; and
- Monitor and communicate regulatory and advisory changes to the research community.

### **Designated Laboratory Safety Contacts (LSC)**

Designated Laboratory Safety Contacts are laboratory staff and students who are designated by their Principal Investigator to serve in this capacity. The LSC shall:

- Serve as a liaison between the Principal Investigator, laboratory personnel, and the Office of Research Safety/Environmental Health and Safety;
- Work with the Principal Investigator/Laboratory Director and laboratory personnel in ensuring the knowledge and compliance with the requirements in the *Chemical Hygiene Plan*, standard operating procedures, and other laboratory safety and compliance matters;
- Discuss lessons learned from accidents, incidents, and near misses with your supervisor and fellow researchers and coworkers;
- Assist the Principal Investigator/Laboratory Director in providing and documenting laboratory-specific training;
- Collaborate with the Office of Research Safety for the annual research safety inspection;
- Coordinate the laboratory response to any deficiencies noted in the Research Safety Inspection Report.
- Elevate concerns to senior leadership.