

Chapter 4 Human Resources Management

4.5 Occupational Health and Safety

Policy Statement

The Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority (APSEA) values, and will work towards protecting the health, safety and well-being of employees, volunteers, students and all visitors. Visitors may include board members, parents/guardians, community groups, contractors and others. APSEA recognizes that hazards exist and that everyone must share the responsibility for maintaining a healthy and safe workplace. Reasonable precautions will be taken to eliminate all the health and safety risks at APSEA and all individuals should work in partnership to eliminate and minimize potential risks

The Nova Scotia Occupational Health and Safety Act, and Regulations, along with appropriate occupational health and safety practices, provide the minimum standard expected for health and safety in the workplace. While the Nova Scotia Act and Regulations are used as the standard for developing this policy, APSEA recognizes that each province will have their own provincial Act and Regulations that must also be followed. APSEA employees that work in one of the other three Atlantic provinces are subject to this policy, but because they are working at another employer's office/property they must be cognizant of that employer's policies and work to eliminate and minimize potential health and safety risks.

Policy Objectives

This policy is established

- To ensure APSEA staff are in compliance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations of the province they work in.
- To take every precaution, reasonable in the circumstances, to provide for a healthy and safe work environment.
- To ensure that all staff understand their role and responsibilities in promoting health and safety and preventing workplace injuries and illnesses.

Application

This policy applies to all APSEA employees. This policy must be part of new employee orientation and communicated to all current employees at the time of coming into effect. Any

changes made to this policy are also to be communicated to all employees as soon as the changes come into effect.

This is an operational policy designed to supplement other APSEA operational policies and is not intended to replace or preclude them. If a situation occurs where there is a conflict between application of this operational policy and any other APSEA operational policy, the policy most specific to the situation will apply.

Policy Directives

- This policy is made pursuant to the Nova Scotia Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations. APSEA will meet or exceed the regulatory requirements of the Act.
- This policy is to be readily accessible to all employees and will be posted on the APSEA website and on Occupational Health and Safety bulletin boards found in both buildings at the Centre.
- The APSEA Occupational Health and Safety Program includes this OHS policy and related detailed procedures, a Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOHSC), regular Occupational Health and Safety inspections, an accident/incident/near miss procedure/forms, and appropriate training for staff.
- In addition to this Policy, APSEA will prepare various Procedure documents on specific Occupational Health and Safety subjects that are deemed to require more comprehensive discussion/explanation and will support the objectives of this policy.

Accountability

All APSEA Employees

All APSEA employees will comply with this policy, and related procedures. Staff will ensure that work activity and behavior do not place their own health and safety, or the health and safety of others, at risk. They will report any and all health and safety concerns to the immediate supervisor or the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee; as well as reporting injuries, property or equipment damage and near-miss incidents following APSEA's procedures. They will follow established safe work procedures; wear personal protective equipment as required and instructed; and use machinery, equipment, and materials, only as authorized and as trained.

Superintendent

The Superintendent will ensure that APSEA adheres to this policy, that all employees have access to this policy, and any related detailed procedures. This policy and any

related detailed procedures will communicate information concerning workplace hazards to employees and enact the necessary control procedures.

Directors/Supervisors

Those staff members with supervisory responsibilities will ensure that employees are aware of and comply with this policy and any related procedures. They will communicate information concerning workplace hazards to employees and make them aware of the necessary control procedures to be practiced. They will take action immediately to mitigate and report any unsafe or hazardous conditions or situations. These individuals will supervise employees to ensure that they are following applicable safety procedures, including using protective devices, measures and procedures. The degree of this responsibility will vary depending on the work being performed.

APSEA's Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOHSC)

This committee is a collaborative employer-employee body established to address health and safety issues in the workplace. JOHSC members will perform the functions of a joint occupational health and safety committee as defined in the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* and regulations. Holding regular meetings in accordance with written terms of reference and operating procedures and maintain minutes and records of committee activities. JOHSC members will work co-operatively with employees and management to identify hazards to health and safety and to develop, implement and evaluate health and safety programs designed to respond to the hazards. JOHSC members will receive, investigate and make recommendations for the prompt disposition of health and safety complaints or concerns and unresolved work refusals. They will participate in inspections, inquiries, investigations and audits concerning health and safety and follow up when needed and will advise on the development, implementation and evaluation of an occupational health and safety policy and programs designed to improve workplace health and safety or to meet health and safety objectives.

Monitoring

- The Superintendent of APSEA or their designate will review this policy annually.

References

- *Nova Scotia Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations*
- *Prince Edward Island Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations*
- *New Brunswick Occupational Health and Safety Act Regulations*
- *Newfoundland and Labrador Occupational Health and Safety Act Regulations*

Approval Dates

Approved: February 2021