



Policy Number:	20.105.70
Name:	Travel & Fieldwork Safety Policy
Origin:	Health & Safety, Human Resources
Approved:	November 1, 2008
Approval Process:	Vice-President (Administration)
Revision Date(s):	Every 3 three years and whenever there is a change of circumstances that may affect the health and safety of employees or students.

Introduction

The University of Regina values the research and work activities of faculty, staff, and students. Work may take place beyond the geographic boundaries of the University both in Canada and internationally. The University encourages this work but also recognizes it may involve more and/or different types of risk. Faculty, staff and students must be aware of the risks associated with travel and working off campus. The Travel and Fieldwork Safety Policy is designed to provide a framework for assessing and mitigating travel and fieldwork related risks.

“Fieldwork” includes a broad range of activities and encompasses everything from observing wildlife to educating people in other countries. Examples of fieldwork risks include: dangers to physical health, emotional wellbeing, and personal safety. Risks can arise because of the nature of the work, the physical climate, or the political, social, economic, and cultural environment of the location. Conducting fieldwork alone is not recommended, especially if the work is considered to be high risk. Consult the *Working Alone Policy* and/or the Health and Safety Unit for more details.

Strict adherence to this Policy will assist participants to ensure that legal requirements for health and safety are met and due diligence is demonstrated. This Policy is designed to ensure that participants engaged in travel and fieldwork on behalf of the University incorporate preventative measures that reduce risk, aid in incident prevention and maintain emergency plans to respond to unexpected incidents.

Policy Statement

The University of Regina is committed to providing a safe and healthy work and learning environment for all members of the University community. This commitment for safety extends to travel and fieldwork activities while on University business such as sanctioned learning experience, research activities, or operational activities.

1. Fieldwork consists of work, study, research or teaching activities undertaken at a location outside the geographical boundaries of the University of Regina campus. Fieldwork activities can expose participants to significant risks to their health, safety, or well-being, and therefore the **Travel and Fieldwork Safety Policy** has been developed to ensure that prior to undertaking field research:
 - 1.1 all concerned parties are aware of their responsibilities for fieldwork safety;
 - 1.2 a risk assessment is carried out to identify potential hazards associated with the fieldwork;
 - 1.3 written fieldwork safety procedures are implemented to establish appropriate controls to eliminate or minimize hazards identified in the risk assessment; and
 - 1.4 all participants have an informed understanding of the identified hazards and provide their consent to the means for minimizing the associated risks.
2. The use of 15 passenger vans for University sponsored events is prohibited unless, under exceptional circumstances, authorization is granted by the Dean/AVP and the VP of Administration. Authorization will be provided when the faculty or staff involved provide reasons for the necessity of using the 15 passenger van and evidence, based on a set of requirements, that the risks associated with 15 passenger van use have been identified and minimized.
3. Travel and off campus fieldwork are often outside the sphere of influence of the University and because the conditions of travel and fieldwork can be highly variable, the University requires students to sign the Assumption of Risks, Release of Liability, Waiver of Claims and Indemnity Agreement. The waiver indicates that the student has completed the appropriate due diligence, understands and accepts the risks they are entering into as a result of the travel and fieldwork and will not hold the University liable in the event of an incident while away from the University.

Scope and Application

This policy and the related procedures apply to anyone who is an employee or student of the University engaged in duties or activities connected to the University.

Definitions

15 Passenger Van means a vehicle that has the capability of seating positions for a driver plus fourteen passengers. Removal of seats does not change classification of the vehicle.

Activities

High Risk Activities are research and work activities that pose higher risk and require the completion of a Fieldwork Safety Planning Record. Examples include research at facilities that engage in higher risk operations such as laboratory activities, other activities which include additional training requirements and the use of personal protective equipment, research at remote field locations, diving operations, collecting data in politically unstable countries and travel to areas where additional immunization and vaccines are required.

Low Risk Activities are research and work activities that do not pose a higher risk as they are conducted at other accredited institutions. Examples include other universities, hospitals, libraries, etc. in areas that are politically stable, require no additional mandatory vaccinations and are easily accessible via public transportation. Research and work activity of this type only requires completion of the Risk Assessment Form.

Due diligence means taking every precaution that is reasonable in the circumstances to avoid harm.

Fieldwork collectively means any work, study, teaching or research activity occurring beyond the geographic boundaries of the University of Regina undertaken by employees or students of the University and includes travel to these locations.

Hazards are any activity, situation or substance that can cause harm including any agent or condition that can cause illness or injury.

Operator any person designated and approved by their respective Dean/AVP to drive a 15 passenger van. Approval will be based on operator certification and successful completion of specified defensive driving course(s).

Participants are students, employees, or volunteers working at a fieldwork location.

PPE (personal protective equipment) means any clothing, device, or other article that is intended to be worn or used by a participant to prevent injury or to facilitate rescue.

Project Director includes a University employee engaged in University business to whom students, graduate students, research assistants, research and post doctoral fellows, technicians and volunteers report. Project Directors are regarded as supervisors and are primarily responsible for ensuring travel and fieldwork safety.

Risk is the chance of a hazard causing harm and is assessed based on the probability and severity of an occurrence.

Remote is any person traveling to, or performing fieldwork in, a location where assistance is not readily available to the worker in the event of injury, ill health, or emergency. For example, work or study locations where medical aid would take 1/2 hour or more to reach the area and/or where normal modes of communication and transport are limited or unavailable.

Supervisor means a person who is authorized by the University of Regina to oversee or direct the work of employees or students.

Team Leaders may be the project director or may, in the absence of the project director, be another Participant of the team designated by the project director to take on those responsibilities.

Travel the movement of persons or equipment to locations beyond the geographic boundaries of the University of Regina.

Responsibilities

1. The President and Vice-Presidents will

- 1.1 provide the management support and leadership necessary to provide a safe and healthy working and travel environment for staff/faculty and students, in compliance with the University Safety Policy (20.105) and Travel and Fieldwork Safety Policy.
- 1.2 ensure that adequate resources are available to implement appropriate measures.
- 1.3 require compliance with the Policy and Procedures.

In addition, the Vice-President Administration will

- 1.4 upon receipt of a special exemption request, ensure that the appropriate steps have been taken to minimize the risks associated with 15 passenger van use through review and approval of the "Authorization for Use" Form (see Travel and Fieldwork Safety Procedures).

2. The Associate Vice-President or Dean will

- 2.1 ensure the Policy and Procedures are implemented.
- 2.2 ensure that every unit has specific Fieldwork Safety Procedures in place (see Travel and Fieldwork Safety Procedures).
- 2.3 upon receipt of a special exemption request, ensure that the appropriate steps have been taken to minimize the risks associated with 15 passenger van use through review and approval of the “Authorization for Use” Form (see Travel and Fieldwork Safety Procedures).
- 2.4 require compliance with the Policy and Procedures.

3. Unit Heads and/or Directors will

- 3.1 ensure a “Risk Assessment” is completed by the Project Director and records maintained (see Travel and Fieldwork Safety Procedures).
- 3.2 when applicable implement written Fieldwork Safety Procedures within the unit that adequately address the identified risks.
- 3.3 ensure a “Fieldwork Safety Planning Record” is completed for each fieldwork project where applicable, and maintain appropriate records.
- 3.4 require compliance with the Policy and Procedures.

4. Project Directors will

- 4.1 ensure safe fieldwork practices by exercising good judgment, and taking all reasonable care in the circumstances to protect the health and safety of participants.
- 4.2 where applicable make arrangements for appropriate transportation to and from the location of the fieldwork. Prior to using a 15 passenger van complete the “Authorization for Use” form (see Travel and Fieldwork Safety Procedures) and submit it to the Faculty Dean or AVP and the Vice-President Administration for approval.
- 4.3 plan and execute **all activities** in a manner that complies with this policy and procedures. Ensure risk assessments are conducted prior to all organized off-campus activities. Develop and implement Fieldwork Safety Procedures.
- 4.4 report substandard conditions or procedures to the appropriate authority as necessary, and correct such conditions within their authority.
- 4.5 ensure that all incidents are reported and investigated, and take action to prevent a recurrence in accordance with the incident reporting procedure.
(<http://www.uregina.ca/hr/OH&S/Forms/Accident%20form%20Aug%202006.doc>)
- 4.6 approve the composition of the field team.
- 4.7 ensure that each field participant is made aware of the specific requirements that must be met for participating in the research prior to departure (see Safety Planning Record in Travel and Fieldwork Safety Procedures). Obtain the written informed consent from the participants in the fieldwork or obtain a signed waiver from student participants in the fieldwork (see Assumption of Risks, Release of Liability, Waiver of Claims and Indemnity Agreement in Travel and Fieldwork Safety Procedures).
- 4.8 maintain written documentation of the steps taken to comply with this policy. This documentation can be contained in a “Fieldwork Safety Planning Record” (see Travel and Fieldwork Safety Procedures). This record shall be kept with the Unit Head or Dean’s office prior to departure on fieldwork, and maintained for a minimum of three years.

5. Team Leaders will

- 5.1 ensure implementation of the controls and safety procedures established by the Project Director.
- 5.2 ensure that the participants use the appropriate safety equipment and follow appropriate safety procedures and medical precautions.

- 5.3 conduct on-going risk assessments during the fieldwork and report any new hazards to the Project Director and/or Dean/Unit Head.
- 5.4 address or resolve any safety concerns that arise in the field.
- 5.5 maintain regular contact with the Project Director and/or departmental contact (Dean/Unit Head) wherever/whenever possible.
- 5.6 inform the Project Director and unit contact (Dean/Unit Head) of all substantive safety incidents that occur in the field in a timely fashion.
- 5.7 ensure that all incidents are reported and investigated, and take action to prevent a recurrence in accordance with the incident reporting procedure.
(<http://www.uregina.ca/hr/OH&S/Forms/Accident%20form%20Aug%202006.doc>)
- 5.8 comply with the requirements of the Policy and Procedures.

6. All participants will

- 6.1 comply with the requirements of the Policy and Procedures.
- 6.2 use appropriate personal protective equipment.
- 6.3 provide evidence of adequate health insurance coverage.
- 6.4 immediately report all hazards to the Project Director or Team Leader.
- 6.5 ensure that all incidents are reported and investigated, and take action to prevent a recurrence in accordance with the incident reporting procedure.
(<http://www.uregina.ca/hr/OH&S/Forms/Accident%20form%20Aug%202006.doc>)
- 6.6 **Refuse Unsafe Work** – Any participant engaged in travel and fieldwork has a duty to refuse at any time to participate in any activity which he/she feels may endanger his/her health or safety or that of another person.

7. The Occupational Health Committee will

- 7.1 support and promote implementation of the policy, procedures and related education and training.
- 7.2 monitor the adequacy and effectiveness of the policy and procedures.

8. The Health and Safety Unit will

- 8.1 provide expertise and advice to all levels of management, employees and students on matters pertaining to travel and fieldwork.
- 8.2 receive, review and investigate all incidents related to travel and fieldwork and provide recommendations of corrective action.
- 8.3 ensure the policy is kept current.

Non-Compliance

All participants engaged in travel and fieldwork are subject to the requirements of this policy. Violations place the University at significant risk and are subject to appropriate corrective administrative or academic discipline.

Related Documents

- Health and Safety Policy
- Travel and Fieldwork Procedures
- Working Alone Policy
- Enterprise Risk Management Policy
- Travel Authorization Request Form