

Never Working Alone Policy	Policy Number: PA-409
Last Reviewed: 2019/10/18	Next Review: 2020/09/01

Purpose: To ensure the safety of employees in the workplace in and out of the ordinary circumstances.

Policy Statement: Employees of Pinnguaq Association will not work alone during any public-facing program delivery involving children, youth and adults. At all times during such program delivery a minimum of two employees must be present (an employee could be other Pinnguaq staff and/or staff working at a delivery location like a school or library). Client/public-facing programming will be canceled, even in circumstances when programming has already begun, when fewer than two staff members are present.

Pinnguaq Association employees will never be placed in a situation where they are at risk. Association employees are to communicate with their supervisor if there is ever a point where they feel at risk or that they need additional support. Emergency Response and Preparedness Policy PA-004, outlines the protocol for when employees encounter immediate situations of violence and harassment that threatens their own safety, or the safety of others.

For employees who work in the office outside of regular business hours, special safety procedures will apply.

Potential violent hazards that exist for employees who work alone are addressed in the *Workplace Violence policy* and are therefore not intended to be addressed by this policy.

In the event of an emergency where safety is at risk, employees and volunteers will follow the Emergency Response and Preparedness Policy (PA 004), in most circumstances this means contacting appropriate emergency services immediately.

Application: This policy applies to all Pinnguaq employees.

Definitions:

Working alone or in isolation: means to work where assistance would not be readily available to workers in case of emergency, illness, or injury - specifically when there are no other employees on site and/or

when workers have little or no contact with their co-workers or supervisors over the course of their shift. Employees in this context may be other Pinnguaq staff and/or staff working at the site programming is being delivered (i.e. a school, a recreation facility, library etc.).

Workplace: for the purpose of this policy, means any location where Pinnguaq Association programming is taking place

Non-regular business hours: are times when the workplace is not ordinarily open such as evenings, weekends, holidays and other closures.

Employee contact: is another employee, usually a supervisor, designated as the contact for an employee working alone.

Procedures:

Client/Public facing program delivery:

- Employees will not work alone during client/public facing programming.
- If a minimum of two employees are not available prior to program delivery the program will be canceled.
- If, during program delivery, a minimum of two employees cannot be maintained, the program will be canceled.
- When program delivery is cancelled due to a minimum number of employees not being present, all doors will remain locked or will be locked immediately.

Workplaces during regular business hours:

- At any time during regular business hours at any Pinnguaq Association workplace when a minimum of two employees are not present, all doors will be locked.

Workplaces during non-regular business hours:

- During non-regular business hours, such as evenings and weekends, all workplace doors must be locked at all times.
- If any employee is working alone in the workplace during non-regular business hours, they must notify an employee contact when they arrive at work, check in regularly and notify the contact when they have left the workplace.

- Any employee designated as a contact for someone working alone during non-regular business hours is responsible for maintaining contact with the employee working alone until the employee working alone leaves the workplace.
- If an employee working alone is unable to be reached, the employee contact will arrange for the workplace to be checked (either by an employee nearby or emergency services).

Management Staff of Divisions will:

- Communicate this policy and its procedures to all employees.
- Conduct a hazard assessment to identify existing or potential hazards related to the nature of the work or the work environment given the circumstances of the work when working alone
- Take all reasonable and practical steps to minimize or eliminate identified injury or incident risks
- In cases where hazards are identified, establish an effective means of communication between the employee and persons capable of responding to the employee's needs
- Consult with the joint health and safety committees/health and safety representatives in conducting hazard assessments, investigating incidents and developing practical steps to minimize or eliminate identified risks
- Conduct further hazard assessments at intervals of time appropriate to the changing conditions and circumstances of the worker's job (e.g., changes in work organization, physical environment or equipment and tools)
- Annually review the effectiveness of the hazard controls and procedures and make improvements as required

Human Resources will:

- Assist management staff to implement this policy and develop divisional procedures
- Regularly review this policy and recommend revisions, if needed

Joint Health and Safety Committees/Health and Safety Representatives will:

- Review hazard assessment results and provide recommendations to management to reduce and minimize the injury or incident risks
- Participate in critical injury investigations, review injury/accident and incident reports, and recommend corrective measures
- Respond to employee concerns related to working alone and communicate these to management

All employees will:

- Maintain a safe work environment and take every reasonable precaution when working alone.

Authorities:

Canadian Criminal Code, Bill C-45

Occupational Health and Safety Act of Ontario (R.S.O. 1990, c. 0.1)

Occupational Health and Safety Act of The Northwest Territories and Nunavut directly address working alone in Part 3 General Duties

Canadian Labour Code, General Duty Clause