

**Policy: Health and Safety and Safe Return to Work**

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**Policy # 4**                      **Number of Pages:** 8                      **Date of Approval:** April 1997

**Approved By:** Board of Directors, Management                      **Review Date:** January 9, 2024

**References:**                      General Personnel Policy # 2  
   Workplace Violence and Harassment Policy # 20  
   Special Works: Emergency Protocols

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**Statement:**

The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul Greater Toronto Central Council (hereafter referred to as the Society) is committed to providing the means to achieve a safe and healthy workplace for its employees, residents and the general public.

To fulfill this commitment, the Society shall:

- provide and maintain a safe and healthy working environment
- provide adequate safety training related to the specific requirements of each division and facility
- comply with legal requirements and follow acceptable industrial practices
- strive to alleviate all foreseeable hazards that could cause injury, damage to property, security losses, fire, personal harm or illness
- establish a Health and Safety Committee of the Board to coordinate the activities of the Health and Safety Representatives

**Responsibilities:**

All employees, members of the committees and Board are responsible for the Society's Health and Safety Policy. The responsibility follows through every level of the organization.

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| Level 1. | Employees   |
| Level 2. | Health and Safety Representatives                                   |
| Level 3. | Program Managers and Supervisors                                    |
| Level 4. | Executive Director  |
| Level 5. | Board of Directors and the Health and Safety Committee of the Board |

## **Level 1: Employees**

### **Responsibilities:**

Employees are responsible for achieving a reasonable working knowledge of the requirements of the Occupational Health and Safety Act. They are also responsible for maintaining a reasonable working knowledge of health hazards in the workplace and preventive measures to be taken for their own protection. It is the obligation of all employees to work as safely as possible. Anyone not observing safety rules will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

### **Duties:**

1. Comply with all procedures and requirements of the Occupational Health and Safety Act, Highway Traffic Acts and all other applicable safety legislation.
2. Report any hazardous conditions which you cannot immediately correct to your supervisor, and failing a satisfactory resolve in your opinion, to your Health and Safety Representative.
3. Report all accidents or injuries to your immediate supervisor no matter how minor they may first appear, as they occur.
4. Do not work or operate any equipment that may endanger the safety of yourself or others.
5. Ensure appropriate safety equipment is used during the operation of equipment, training is secured and managers authorize the use of the equipment.
6. Do not engage in pranks that may endanger yourself or others.
7. Wear appropriate protective clothing to perform your work as stipulated by your supervisor.
8. Motor vehicles belonging to the Society shall be operated only by employees holding a valid drivers license, who have submitted a drivers abstract and who have been duly authorized to operate a vehicle on behalf of the Society.
9. Material Handling equipment including; but not limited to, tow motors, hand trucks and baling machines shall only be used by authorized personnel.

## **Level 2: Health and Safety Representative**

A Health and Safety Representative is required at any workplace that has more than six but less than 19 employees. The Representative must be chosen by the workers.

### **Responsibilities:**

1. Participate in information and training workshops offered by the Society.
2. Engage coworkers in a supportive and informative Health and Safety program.
3. If a worker is seriously injured or killed on the job, the Representative has the right to inspect the scene of the accident together with the Ministry of Labour Investigator and report any findings in writing to the Director of the Ministry of Labour.

### **Duties: (Health and Safety Representative)**

1. Obtain a working knowledge of the Health and Safety Act and understand the role of the Representative as detailed in the Act.

2. Identify workplace hazards by performing a monthly inspection of the work site. Submit these findings to Management.
3. Obtain information from Management regarding health and safety including existing or potential hazards, history and experience.
4. Make recommendations to Management on ways to improve workplace health and safety. Managers must respond in writing to any written recommendation within 21 days.
5. Be present in the event of an investigation of a work refusal.
6. Request information as required from the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board and post it as detailed in the Act.
7. Observe rules of confidentiality as detailed in the Act.
8. Foster a positive and cooperative attitude towards Occupational Health and Safety among co-workers.
9. Identify and ensure that chemicals and hazardous materials are stored in original containers as outlined in the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

### **Level 3: Program Directors, Managers and Supervisors**

#### **Responsibilities:**

Program Directors, Managers and Supervisors; herein referred to as “Managers or Management” are responsible for implementing the Occupational Health and Safety Program in the facilities they manage.

Safety actions and attitudes are important in setting the safety climate of the divisions and therefore management performance reviews will include a measure of their effort in implementing the Society’s Health and Safety goals.

#### **Duties:**

1. Ensure Municipal, Provincial and Federal legislation is implemented and complied with, within their area of responsibility.
  - a. arrange and facilitate the election of the Health and Safety Representative
2. Ensure the latest copy of the Society’s Health and Safety Policy and Objectives are posted on the designated bulletin board in each work area.
3. Report all workplace accidents or incidents on the shift that they occur and ensure proper documentation is complete. Managers must investigate all accidents and take the necessary steps within their authority to prevent a recurrence.
4. Ensure all employees under their supervision receive adequate training in the safety practices as determined for each work site, including; but not limited to, applicable legislation, operational guidelines and proper use of equipment and vehicles.
5. Inspect the workplace to correct safety hazards within their authority and to make other hazards that they cannot correct known to the Executive Director.
6. Submit, on behalf of the Health and Safety Representative, monthly inspection checklists to the Head Office.
7. Allow free access to members of the Health and Safety Committee of the Board to inspect the premises without compromising the privacy of the residents.

8. Communicate regularly with staff all updates or changes regarding Health and Safety in their workplace.
9. In the event of a critical injury (detailed below) or fatality at the work site; be prepared to comply with the requirements set out in the act by following your practiced response to the emergency and by:
  - a. not disturbing the site of the accident unless a person is in immediate danger; and
  - b. notifying immediately by telephone:
    - i. an Inspector of the Ministry of Labour
    - ii. Executive Director
    - iii. The Health and Safety Representative
  - c. The OHSA defines a critical injury as one of a serious nature which
    - i. places a life in jeopardy
    - ii. produces unconsciousness
    - iii. results in substantial loss of blood
    - iv. involves the fracture of an arm or leg but not finger or toe
    - v. involves the amputation of the leg, arm, hand or foot but not finger or toe
    - vi. consists of burns to a major portion of the body; or
    - vii. causes the loss of sight in an eye.
10. In the event of a non-critical injury ensure that within 48 hours:
  - i. The Health and Safety Representative is notified in writing
  - ii. The Executive Director is notified in writing
11. Respond in writing, after consultation with the Executive Director, within 21 days to any written recommendations put forth by the Health and Safety Representative.
12. Injury Reporting Procedures for Managers:
  - a. Near Miss Cases:

In all cases where a near miss occurs, the Society's "Near Miss" form must be completed and submitted to the Executive Director.
  - b. First aid Cases:

All first aid cases must be recorded.  
Action: The supervisor or Director must record all first aid cases in the facility's Log Book and report the incident to the Executive Director.
  - c. Accidental Injury or Industrial Disease requiring Medical Aid:

Whenever an employee requires medical aid, a Treatment Memorandum shall be prepared and sent with the person to the emergency center or physician.  
Action: The Society must notify WSIB within 3 days from the occurrence when an employee at work is injured and requires Medical Aid or becomes disabled.

Action: The Manager must complete WSIB Form 7 and notify the Executive Director or designate as soon as possible of the accident to ensure the proper paperwork is completed and submitted.

- d. Fatality or Critical Injury:
- i. Immediate notification by telephone to:
  - ii. Inspector of the Ministry of Labour
  - iii. Executive Director
  - iv. Health and Safety Representative

To be followed within 48 hours by a written report containing the following:

- Society name and address
- nature of injury and cause
- description of machinery or equipment involved
- time and place of occurrence
- name and address of the victim
- names and addresses of witnesses
- Name and address of attending physician or surgeon

The written report must be shared with the health and safety representative and the joint health and safety committee within 48 hours of the Fatality of Critical Injury.

**Ministry of Labour**

**24 Hour Emergency Telephone Number:**

Toronto Downtown office 416-314-6060  
Toronto East 416-314-5300  
Barrie/Midland 705-722-6642

**Province Wide 1-800-268-8013  
416-325-1090**

Toronto West 905-273-7800  
Toronto North 416-314-4344  
Durham 1-800-268-8013

## **Level 4: Executive Director**

### **Responsibilities:**

The Executive Director is responsible in conjunction with Management for the administration, direction and implementation of safety policies necessary to ensure a safe working environment.

Direct involvement and a commitment to safety will ultimately reflect in the Health and Safety Program's success or failure. The Executive Director must have a working knowledge of the Occupational Health and Safety Act and must be certified under the Act.

### **Duties:**

1. Ensure that safety standards and procedures are developed, maintained, followed and kept up to date.
2. Ensure the Society complies with all Municipal, Provincial, Federal Safety legislation.
3. Review and consult with all levels of the organization to ensure the safety program is effective and make changes as required.

4. Ensure that the Health and Safety Representatives are aware of all safety reports, audits and documented hazards to fulfill the obligations of the internal reporting systems.
5. Review training reports to ensure training is meeting the needs of the safety program.
6. Determine health and safety goals for each division, review on a yearly basis or as needed, and report these findings to the Board of Directors.
7. Act as liaison between the Health and Safety Committee of the Board and the Managers.
8. Ensure that each work site has a current copy of the Occupational Health and Safety Act available to all workers.
9. Stay informed of legislation changes.
10. Ensure Managers are aware of reporting procedures in the event of a serious injury or death at a work site.
11. Assist the Managers in responding to any written recommendations as put forth by a Health Safety Representative, within the mandated 21 days.

### **Level 5: Board of Directors**

1. The Board of Directors will establish a Health and Safety Committee of the Board and request a yearly review by way of an annual report.
2. The Board of Directors is responsible for ensuring that a review of all committee level reports compiled by the Health and Safety Representatives is undertaken on an annual basis.
3. Board of Directors shall appoint a Health and Safety committee with at least one Board representative as well as the Executive Director to coordinate the Health and Safety program. The committee chair is required to report all trends, significant developments or areas of concern in the implementation of good Health and Safety practices and make such information available to the Board of Directors of Greater Toronto Central Council.
4. The Board of Directors will request a yearly review of the Health and Safety Policy to be undertaken by the Health and Safety Committee of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul.
5. The Board of Directors shall offer a policy decision on the implementation of Health and Safety practices as and when any serious health and safety issues arise that may compromise the health and safety of an employee, resident or the general public.
6. Members of the Board of Directors should have a working knowledge of the Occupational Health and Safety Act and be aware of their liability in the event that the requirements under the Occupational Health and Safety Act are not being met.

### **Summary of Duties:**

#### **Employees:**

- Conduct business in a safe and responsible manner
- Work in compliance of the Occupational Health and Safety Act and other applicable legislation.

**Health and Safety Representatives:**

- Inspect the workplace once a month
- Submit inspection sheets to Management
- Foster a Health and Safety conscious environment with peers and employees
- Review WHMIS and other elements of the Health and Safety program at the monthly staff meetings
- Ensure Health and Safety bulletin boards are orderly and contain required postings.

**Management:**

- Submit inspection checklists to the head office on a monthly basis
- Ensure employees comply with the guidelines set forth under the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

**Executive Director:**

- Contact the Ministry of Labour as required
- Review the program on an annual basis and make recommendations to the Management and the Board
- Ensure applicable administrative duties are carried out by Management
- Foster a Health and Safety conscious environment

**Board of Directors and the Health and Safety Committee of the Board:**

- Undertake an annual review of reports and provide policy decision in the event of a serious health and safety workplace issue
- Appoint a Health and Safety Committee of the Board
- Request input from the Health and Safety Committee on formulating Policy

**Occupational Health and Safety - *continued*****Safe Return to Work - protocol**

An ad hoc Return to Work Committee (RWC) consisting of the Executive Director, Program Manager and appointed member of the Board will be responsible for considering the employee's capabilities as they relate to returning to work. The employee will supply the Society with documentation as it relates to returning to work throughout the Return to Work process.

The committee will assess the new level of capability to provide meaningful, productive work of value. It will endeavour to bring the employee back to work on a gradual basis, if possible.

The primary focus of the program is to return the employee to their regular job. This may require providing accommodation, if reasonable. In the event of a permanent injury, the Society endeavours to provide appropriate work, where possible.

This program will not exceed eight weeks in length unless determined otherwise by the Return to Work Committee, based on medical evidence and individual circumstances.

This program is for the benefit of all employees and is not intended to be interpreted as a reduction of the employee's right under any applicable legislation such as the Employment Standard's Act, WSIB or the Ontario Human Rights Code.

**Parameters of Program:**

Goals:

- The goal of the program is to return employees to their regular job with regular hours as soon as possible;
- If not possible, then return the employee to their regular job with accommodation, if practical;
- If the employee's attempt to return to work is unsuccessful, then support will be offered to access WSIB, short term disability or any other available supports.

Time Frame:

- The program will usually not exceed eight weeks in length.
- Based on medical evidence, and individual circumstances, the Return to Work Committee will determine any program extension.