

Working Alone
A Stay Safe Policy
Revised January 27, 2020



Teamsters Local Union No. 155
Security Division



Working Alone **A Stay Safe Policy**

INTRODUCTION

Security personnel in the film industry may be dispatched to isolated urban and rural locations. They may be sent to spots where contact in the event of criminal activity or a personal emergency can be difficult. They may be directed to an overnight shift guarding film vehicles or equipment in a high-crime area. For people working alone, the risk of injury or harm under these potentially perilous conditions is increased.

The law recognizes working alone as a circumstance of heightened occupational risk. To reduce the risk, special procedures must be followed.

In B.C.'s Occupational Health and Safety Regulation, it defines the working condition as follows:

To work alone or in isolation means to work in circumstances where assistance would not be readily available to the worker

- (a) in case of an emergency; or
- (b) in case the worker is injured or in ill health.

Emergency situations may arise because of the sudden onset of a medical condition, accidental work-related injury or disease, attack by an animal, exposure to the elements, or crime. The consequences may be very serious.

This Stay Safe Policy examines the occupational safety and health laws that cover people who work alone, WorkSafeBC's rules as applied by Actsafe to the B.C. film industry, and Local 155's support and policies to assist our security division members.



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RESPONSIBILITIES

Employers

Employers or Employer Representatives (producers, production companies, and subcontractors) are responsible for providing a safe and healthy work environment. This includes identifying potential hazards, finding ways to eliminate or minimize risks, and ensuring that supervisors and workers are trained to recognize hazards and work safely. As an employer, you must develop a written health and safety program that is specific to your workplace. It's also important to respond promptly when a worker or supervisor informs you about a potential hazard. If an accident or injury occurs, make sure it is investigated so you can prevent similar incidents from occurring.

Supervisors

Supervisors (directors, assistant directors, technical directors, managers, crew chiefs, stunt coordinators, department heads, and anyone else who has the authority to direct workers) are responsible for the health and safety of workers under their direction. Supervisors need to recognize hazards and how to control risks, and they need to make sure their workers have this information. Supervision is an ongoing task, which means supervisors need to check with workers periodically to ensure that they are working according to their training and following safe work procedures.

Workers

Workers (performers, crew, technicians, and other production support positions) are responsible for following health and safety requirements and working according to their training. They must participate in training, as necessary, and use any required personal protective equipment. If you don't know how to do something safely, ask your supervisor for instruction or training before carrying out the task. If you see an unsafe condition, correct it immediately or report it to your supervisor. Workers should consider when they will be in the positions that may require them to work alone or in isolation and bring those situations to the attention of their supervisor or employer.



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Is Assistance Readily Available?

An answer ... in four questions

1. **Presence of Others:** Are there other people in the vicinity?
 2. **Awareness:** Would the people present be aware of the need for assistance?
Can they see or hear this need?
 3. **Willingness:** Are the people present willing and able to assist if need be?
 4. **Timeliness:** Are the people present able to assist in a timely manner?
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THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

British Columbia's Occupational Health and Safety Regulation specifies that **Employers** are responsible for developing and implementing procedures to help protect workers who are working alone or in isolation.

The Legal Requirements:

- Sections 4.20.2 to 4.21 and 4.23 of the Regulation describe **Employer** and **Supervisor** responsibilities for workers who are working alone or in isolation.
- Sections 4.28 to 4.31 cover workplace violence — these may also be applicable, depending on the situation.

The following must be done before a worker is assigned to work alone or in isolation:

- Identify hazards and assess the risks associated with them.
- Control risks by eliminating hazards entirely or, if that is not possible, minimizing the risks.
- Educate workers about hazards and how to control the risks associated with them.
- Develop and implement a written person-check procedure for checking on lone workers.
- Review procedures.



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Hazard Identification and Control

"Before a worker is assigned to work alone or in isolation, the employer must identify any hazards to that worker.

"Before a worker starts a work assignment with a hazard identified [above], the employer must take measures

- (a) to eliminate the hazard, and*
- (b) if it is not practicable to eliminate the hazard, to minimize the risk from the hazard"*

(From sec. 4.20.2 of the OHS Regulation)

IDENTIFY THE RISKS

Employers can't protect workers if they don't know what potential dangers are present. That's why hazard identification and risk assessment are so important. Examples of potential hazards when working alone include:

- Working in a high-crime area*
- Working at heights (for example, on ladders or scaffolds)*
- Working with electricity or equipment*
- Working in extreme conditions (for example, cold weather)*
- Distance from or access to medical attention*

When identifying hazards, consider the location and the types of tasks workers will be doing. Employers or supervisors should consult with the workers who will be working alone. Include the health and safety committee or worker representative in the process, where appropriate.

Hazards may vary from place to place (and time to time), so a hazard identification must be done for each individual location and each new shoot or performance. Write down the results, and distribute copies to the cast and crew.



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CONTROL THE RISKS

It's best to eliminate hazards entirely, whenever possible. If you can't eliminate a hazard, implement risk controls to minimize the risks associated with it. Risk controls may include engineering controls, administrative controls, and/or personal protective equipment. It may take a combination of controls to minimize the risks effectively.

Engineering controls are changes to the physical environment. For example, install guardrails on scaffolding or ensure adequate ventilation in the paint department.

*Administrative controls are changes to work practices or activities. For example, rearrange the work schedule so two or more workers are present. **A person-check procedure is an important type of administrative control for working alone.***

Personal protective equipment should only be used as a control if other controls are not practical, or in addition to other controls. For example, a worker on a scaffold with guardrails is likely safer if a personal fall arrest system is also used.

Some other approaches:

- buddy system: when possible and available
- security rover when multiple guards working



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EDUCATE WORKERS

*Workers can't protect themselves if they don't know a hazard exists. **Inform your cast and crew about any hazards that have been identified, and inform them about what they need to do to control the risks.** There are various ways to communicate health and safety information, including:*

- *During worker orientation or training*
- *During crew meetings or safety talks*
- *On call sheets or in memos*

WHO TO EDUCATE:

- Location Managers
- PMs
- Transportation Coordinators
- Education of all members thru handouts and divisional meetings
- Make it a priority of the production's Health and Safety Committee

HOW TO EDUCATE

- Share information about past experiences in areas being guarded



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CHECK-IN PROCEDURES

If your production has workers who are working alone or in isolation, you must have a written procedure for checking on their well-being at regular intervals. Consult with your health and safety committee or worker representative when developing the procedure. Keep the specifics of the situation in mind to ensure that the procedure is effective.

Basic requirements for a person-check procedure

Set time intervals between checks. For example, contact the lone worker every half hour or hour, depending on the level of risk. Check on the worker at the start and end of each work shift, as well. Consult with the worker being assigned to work alone when setting time intervals.

Designate a person (or contract a third-party service provider) who is responsible for establishing contact at regular intervals. The designated person or service provider must record each person-check contact.

Establish a way to contact lone workers — for example, via cell phone, texting, two-way radio (walkie-talkie), trunked radio, satellite phone, or email.

Describe steps to be taken if the lone worker cannot be contacted

Train the person assigned to check on the lone worker in the person-check procedure and make sure they know what to do if he or she is unable to make contact.

Further notes:

- **Procedures and checklists at start of shift: Review WorkSafeBC OHS Regulation**
- **hourly check-in procedures and sheets**
- **face to face contact when no response**
- **length of time from no contact – what's reasonable?**



SAMPLE PERSON-CHECK PROCEDURE

Designated contact person/company:

Contact interval: every 30 minutes every hour every 2 hours other interval: _____

Method of contact: in person telephone radio other method _____

FAILURE TO MAKE CONTACT

SAMPLE PROCESS: Develop specific options for each situation

Worker: If you are unavailable at the predetermined person-check time, you will try to respond to the designated contact within five minutes.

Designated contact: If you cannot reach the lone worker, you will make another attempt within five minutes. If you still cannot reach the lone worker at that time, follow these steps:

1. Call another cast or crew member who is nearby, and have him or her check on the lone worker.
2. Call the studio or building security or an identified neighbouring business or building, if there is one, and have someone check on the lone worker.
3. If necessary, call 9-1-1 and send them to the location.

Emergency information

Worker: In case of an emergency such as a fire or flood, contact the following person:

Name: _____

Phone number: _____

Record of person-checks

DATE	TIME	INITIALS	NOTES

If needed, add pages for records of worker check-ins.

**WORKING ALONE OR IN ISOLATION
HOURLY CHECK-IN LOG**

INSTRUCTIONS:

Worker: Upon arrival at the start of your shift, check in with your designated contact on an hourly basis check in while working alone.

Designated Contact: Initial every hour once you have received a check in from the worker working alone or in isolation. See below instructions. If there is failure to make contact with the worker/designated contact please submit this completed form to the Production Office the following day.

TODAY'S DATE:

WORKING LOCATION/ADDRESS:

Name of Designated Contact:

Contact Number:

Production Office Number:

How will you be checking in on the employee that will be working alone? In Person Telephone Radio Was there a site assessment done? Yes No

EMPLOYEE NAME	1:00	2:00	3:00	4:00	5:00	6:00	7:00	8:00	9:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00	19:00	20:00	21:00	22:00	23:00	24:00	COMMENTS	
EXAMPLE: JOHN SMITH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Out@ 0642	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ln@ 1900	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			

****IF THERE IS FAILURE TO MAKE CONTACT****

- Designated contact:** If you cannot reach the lone worker, you will make another attempt within five minutes. If you still cannot reach the lone worker at that time, follow these steps:
1. Call another crew member who is nearby, and have him or her check on the lone worker.
 2. Call the studio or building security or an identified neighbouring business or building. If it applies, and have someone check on the lone worker.
 3. If necessary, call 9-1-1 and send them to the location.
 4. Must contact the worker to confirm last shift check-in is completed and the worker has left the site.
- Additional Comments:** If necessary, may be left on the other side of this page.
Worker: If you are unavailable at the predetermined person-check time, you will try to respond to the designated contact within five minutes.



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EVALUATE AND REVIEW

Periodically review your person-check procedure (and other health and safety procedures) to ensure that it is working effectively. Conduct reviews annually or more frequently if there is a change in the location, the work environment, or the work hours – or if it turns out that the procedures are not effective. When reviewing procedures, look for ways to improve them.



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From WorkSafeBC

"Providing workers with electronic means of communication, such as a phone, radio or personal alarm, does not guarantee that the condition of 'assistance that is readily available' has been met. A 'personal check' system alone also is unlikely to meet the 'readily available' test.

If a worker cannot be seen or heard by persons capable of providing assistance in a timely manner, then he or she should be regarded as working alone or in isolation"

COMMUNICATIONS: MAINTAINING CONTACT

An overriding objective of these policies and procedures is to ensure that people who are working alone can maintain contact with people who can assist them in times of urgent needs.

Even in a heavily populated area like Metro Vancouver, a major challenge is the number of zones where cell phone coverage is spotty or non-existent. And those "dead zones" include sites with exactly the conditions attractive to film-making.

The challenge for Local 155's security personnel:

- Identify zones where cell phone contact is reduced or non-existent; and
- Establish processes to mitigate the risk in those zones.

Notes for discussion:

- ***Identify cell phone drop zones – by carrier***
- ***Share the knowledge of these zones***
- ***Determine when and where trunk or satellite radios are needed***

*Material sourced through Worksafe BC and Actsafes Fact Sheets #14