

# Safety Committees

Policy 303.3

## 1 Introduction

1.1 Safety and Health Committees are valuable tools that are required by state law to be utilized in all state agencies and institutions to promote safety and healthy work environments for all state employees. Each state agency in North Carolina is required to establish a safety and health committee comprised of a mix of management and non-management personnel in order to address safety and health issues with the most efficient use of resource and expertise. Therefore, to comply with these requirements, Appalachian State University has established the Occupational Safety and Health Committee (the "Committee").

## 2 Scope

2.1 This policy applies to all University employees.

## 3 Definitions

### 3.1 EHS&EM

shall mean the University's Office of Environmental Health, Safety and Emergency Management.

### 3.2 University

shall mean Appalachian State University.

## 4 Policy and Procedure Statements

### 4.1 Occupational Safety and Health Committee Membership

4.1.1 The purpose of the Committee is to encourage involvement of all faculty, staff and students both at the non-management and management level in the ongoing responsibility of providing a safe work and learning environment. Members of the University are encouraged to report safety concerns to the Committee.

4.1.2 The Committee shall consist of Members selected from each department or office where the average number of employees during the preceding year was more than thirty (30) total employees. In departments not meeting this requirement, a volunteer may be appointed by their respective department or unit head at their discretion to serve on the Committee. Members shall include both management and non-management employees.

4.1.3 Committee Members shall be permitted to take time away from their typical work responsibilities to serve on the Committee without suffering any loss of pay or benefits. If necessary, the employees' supervisor may need to modify the employee's normal work assignments to allow sufficient time for the employee to serve on the Committee and attend meetings, as necessary.

4.1.4 The Chairperson of the Committee shall be selected from among current committee members to serve for a 2 year term and for a maximum of 2 terms upon reelection.

1. Nominations for the chair position shall open during the October committee meeting.
2. The election of a new chair shall take place during the November committee meeting. Active safety committee members with voting rights are eligible to participate in the election process. The chair will be selected by a majority vote of voting members present at the time of the election.
3. Transition of chairpersons shall take place at the close of the December committee meeting.

4.1.5 The EHS&EM Director or his/her designee shall serve as an ex-officio member of the Committee with voting rights.

### 4.2 Committee Responsibilities

4.2.1 Responsibilities of the committee shall include, but not be limited to the following:

1. Conduct monthly committee meetings. The Office of Environmental Health, Safety, and Emergency Management will

- provide administrative support to the committee to ensure meeting minutes are captured and appropriate records are maintained.
2. Develop a list of annual safety goals for the committee to accomplish based on current incident trends and identified hazards.
  3. Develop a system for the timely review of employee, student and visitor complaints or suggestions regarding safety and health hazards on campus.
  4. Review accident trends across campus to identify root causes and possible strategies for recommendation to EHS&EM and the University Safety Council.
  5. Assist in the development and implementation of safety and health campaigns for campus awareness in coordination with EHS&EM.

### **4.3 Safety Meeting Agendas**

4.3.1 Meeting Agendas shall be developed by EHS&EM in conjunction with the Committee Chairperson prior to all meetings. Agendas will include select safety incidents to review, relevant regulatory changes, and specific safety topics relevant to the meeting timeframe.

### **4.4 Reporting Safety and Health Concerns**

4.4.1 Members of the University are encouraged to report safety and health concerns to the University Occupational Health and Safety Committee. To the extent feasible, the personal identity of those reporting violations to members of this committee will remain confidential. NC General Statute 126-85, Article 14 provides specific protection from retaliation for any state employee who reports or is about to report any activity concerning a violation of state or federal law, rule or regulation, fraud, misappropriation of state resources, substantial and specific danger to public health and safety, or gross mismanagement, a gross waste of monies, or gross abuse of authority.

4.4.2 Employees who wish to report a safety and/or health concern may do so online via <http://safety.appstate.edu>. Anonymous complaints will be accepted and reviewed.

### **4.5 Records**

4.5.1 EHS&EM will be responsible for retaining Committee minutes, attendance sheets, and other records produced by the committee in accordance with the University and University System records retention policies.

### **4.6 Departmental Safety Committees**

4.6.1 The appointment of safety committees in each department or office is encouraged as a means of furthering the effectiveness of the University's Safety Programs. Department leaders are responsible for appointing members and establishing a governance structure.

4.6.2 EHS&EM must be made aware of all departmental safety committees, their membership, and actions.

4.6.3 EHS&EM will assign a team member to known departmental safety committees to provide guidance and serve as a resource.

4.6.4 Departmental safety committees should be utilized to identify and address departmental safety hazards, evaluate injuries specific to the department of operation, and further support the promotion of safe work practices.

4.6.5 Concerns, findings, and actions taken by departmental safety committees should be brought forward to the Occupational Safety and Health Committee by their EHS&EM representative or by the Chair of the Occupational Safety and Health Committee for review and support.

4.6.6 Departments with high incident rates compared to other campus departments may be asked to form a departmental safety committee under the general guidance of EHS&EM.

## **5 Additional References**

[Safety/Health Concern Complaint Form](#)

## **6 Authority**

[NCGS § 95.252](#)

[NCGS §126-84](#)

[NCGS §143-584](#)

## **7 Contact Information**

[EHS&EM](#)

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## **8 Original Effective Date**

## **9 Revision Dates**

April 11, 2019