

MS 520 Peace Corps Staff Occupational Safety and Health

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Responsible Office: Office of Management/Office of Administrative Services; Office of Global Operations

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MS 520 Peace Corps Staff Occupational Safety and Health Procedures

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1.0 Authority

The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, as amended 29 USC Chapter 15; 5 USC 7901 Health Service Programs and 7902 Safety Programs; Executive Order 12196, as amended, “Occupational Safety and Health Programs for Federal Employees;” Occupational Safety and Health Administration Standards for Federal Agencies, 29 CFR 1960 and 29 CFR 1904; National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 101, the “Life Safety Code;” and 15 FAM 900 series, Foreign Affairs Manual of the US Department of State dealing with Overseas Building Operations, as applicable.

2.0 Definitions

Agency: For purposes of this Manual Section, “Agency” refers to the Peace Corps.

Agency-Mandated Occupational Safety and Health Training (Agency-Mandated OSH Training): For purposes of this Manual Section, Agency-Mandated OSH Training is training required for Staff as set forth in MS 664 *Staff Learning and Development* and applicable Executive Orders, government-wide directives, and federal statute or regulation.

Establishment: A Post’s primary office location and any long-term (1 year or greater) leased office and training facilities, USDH residences overseas, U.S. regional recruiting offices, and the Headquarters. Excluded from this definition are home offices used by Peace Corps Staff who are teleworking.

Hazard: A potential source of damage or harm including injury or adverse health effects to persons or property.

Mishap: Any unplanned, unexpected, or undesirable event causing injury, disease or illness, death, material loss or property damage, including accidents, occupational illnesses, and motor vehicle collisions.

Occupational Safety and Health Information Management System of Record (OSHIMS): The authoritative software application for the administration, documentation, tracking, and reporting of Occupational Safety and Health-related training, occupational exposures, injuries, inspections, observations, investigations, and corrective actions.

Peace Corps Staff (Staff): US Direct Hires (USDHs), Personal Services Contractors (PSCs), Foreign Service Nationals (FSNs), and Experts/Consultants. Employees of private entities from which Peace Corps contracts for goods or services are not considered as Peace Corps Staff for purposes of this Manual Section.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): Equipment and/or devices worn or used to minimize exposure to Hazards that can cause serious workplace injuries and illnesses resulting from contact with chemical, radiological, physical, electrical, mechanical, biological or other Hazards. PPE includes gloves, safety glasses, shoes, hearing protection, hard hats, N95 respirators and other respirators, coveralls, vests and full body suits.

Qualified Occupational Safety and Health Professional: Individuals who conduct required inspections and meet Office of Personnel Management (OPM) qualifications as a Safety and Occupational Health Manager or Specialist (GS-018), Industrial Hygienist (GS-690), or Safety Engineer (GS-803), or a person who has successfully completed training requirements and is approved by the Office of Administrative Services (M/AS) to conduct inspections. At Posts, this role may be undertaken by an individual designated by the Country Director (CD) for this function, upon receipt of training and a certification by M/AS.

Responsible Manager: In the United States, the most senior manager at each Regional Recruiting Office (RRO); at Headquarters, the A Delegates for each office; and at each overseas Post, the CD. Responsible Managers will ensure that the requirements described in this policy are met.

Safety Committee: Each Post, RRO, and Headquarters will form a committee to provide an opportunity for Staff to advise local management on aspects of the Occupational Safety and Health program.

3.0 Policy

The Agency is committed to providing Establishments and employment that are free from recognized Hazards that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm. Through its Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) program the Agency identifies and mitigates Hazards, promotes Staff participation and communication, and seeks to ensure the protection of Staff safety and health during the performance of their work in support of the mission of the Peace Corps.

It is the policy of the Peace Corps to:

- (a) Maintain Establishments that are safe and healthful for Staff by focusing on prevention and learning;
- (b) Inspect periodically all Establishments to ensure they are in compliance with this OSH program;
- (c) Encourage Staff participation in the development and maintenance of a safety culture, including by responding to Staff reports of unsafe or unhealthful working conditions at any Establishment;
- (d) Take measures to correct or mitigate recognized unsafe or unhealthful working conditions at any Establishment;
- (e) Establish and maintain a management information system, including records of Mishaps, injuries, illnesses, and near-misses, their causes, the corrective actions taken by the Agency, and to report this information in accordance with implementing procedures;
- (f) Provide Agency-Mandated OSH Training for supervisors, personnel responsible for conducting occupational safety and health inspections, and other Staff as appropriate;
- (g) Acquire, maintain, and mandate the use of safety equipment including PPE where required to protect Staff;
- (h) Submit an annual program report to the Secretary of Labor; and
- (i) Cooperate with the Department of Labor as it coordinates the Federal OSH program.

3.1 Training

The Agency will maintain an OSH training program to provide Staff with information relating to the maintenance of Establishments that are safe and healthful. In implementing this training program, the Peace Corps will:

- (a) Periodically inform Staff about the OSH training program;
- (b) Train Staff at Posts to be technically able to recognize unsafe or unhealthful conditions at any Establishment;
- (c) Use films, posters, and other instructional materials available on the subject of OSH as appropriate;
- (d) Participate in meetings, lectures, seminars, and conferences that promote the safety and health of agency Staff and maintain the agency's safety culture; and
- (e) Use, as appropriate, training programs offered by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), National Safety Council, and other organizations offering OSH training.

3.2 Inspection and Mitigation of Hazards

3.2.1 Inspections

Prior to occupying a new Establishment, the Responsible Manager will determine whether the facility meets those OSH requirements developed and disseminated by the Office of Management, Office of Administrative Services (M/AS), and, if not, will notify M/AS of reasonable measures to be taken to mitigate Hazards.

Annual inspections of Establishments will include a comprehensive Hazard assessment addressing the potential for losses from and exposures to fire, safety, health, and environmental Hazards, and compliance with procedures for the implementation of respiratory protection and Hazard communication at the Peace Corps. Inspections of Post health units should include compliance with the Office of Health Services' (OHS)' technical guidelines on infection control that align with Bloodborne Pathogen Standard of the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSH Act). Safety Committee members should be encouraged to participate in inspections.

If an inspection concludes that there is a reasonable expectation that a Hazard that could cause serious physical harm or illness, the Responsible Manager must take immediate action in so far as technically feasible to mitigate the Hazard, including:

- (a) Posting a notice of the existence of the Hazard, with planned corrective actions and a timeline for completing such actions at the site of the Hazard;
- (b) Implementing well-designed engineering controls; and/or
- (c) Putting into place administrative controls (e.g. rest work cycle for hot environments) and requiring appropriate use of PPE.

4.0 Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Designated Agency Safety and Health Official (DASHO)

M/AS has overall responsibility for the Peace Corps OSH program. The Associate Director for Management (AD/M) shall be the Designated Agency Safety and Health Official (DASHO) for Peace Corps, including overseas Posts. This official is responsible for:

- (a) Developing and issuing Agency-wide OSH policy and technical guidance, developing and issuing standards and procedures to implement approved policies, and reviewing and evaluating activities for conformance with safety standards and policies in accordance with Subsection 5.0 Procedures below;
- (b) Providing support and assistance required by managers and supervisors in discharging their responsibilities for the maintenance of safe and healthful working conditions;
- (c) Coordinating all Peace Corps' occupational safety activities and acting as the primary point of contact, internal and external, with respect to OSH policies and programs;
- (d) Providing additional guidance to Posts (e.g., a Headquarters OSH expert) when local expertise is insufficient to carry out this policy;
- (e) Advising Posts, in consultation with the Office of the General Counsel (OGC), the Office of Global Operations (OGO), and the Office of Health Services (OHS), on solutions to maintain compliance with applicable laws, regulations and standards;
- (f) Evaluating OSH Training;
- (g) Managing OSHIMS;
- (h) Filing the official annual report of injury and illness with the OSHA Federal Agency Program Office and the Bureau of Labor Statistics;
- (i) Conducting, or delegating authority to conduct, investigations of Serious Mishaps, as defined in the procedures implementing this policy;
- (j) Maintaining a list and providing oversight of all Agency-Mandated OSH Training requirements; and
- (k) Consulting with office directors, supervisors, managers, and other members of Staff to continually improve the Peace Corps OSH program.

4.2 Responsible Managers

A Delegates, CDs, and the most senior manager at each regional recruiting office, in consultation with M/AS and OGC, are responsible for managing and implementing within their areas of responsibility an OSH program.

Responsible Managers will:

- (a) Seek to assure that adequate resources are provided to implement and maintain the OSH program within their areas of responsibility, including through available funding and providing time to Staff to participate in OSH-related activities;
- (b) Assure, in consultation with and guidance from M/AS OSH Program Manager, federally- and Agency-required injury and illness reporting is timely and accurate, and provide the summary form OSHA 300A to M/AS by December 31 of each year;
- (c) Designate Safety Committee representatives for their offices to fulfill the duties listed in this MS 520 *Peace Corps Staff Occupational Safety and Health Procedures*;
- (d) Communicate OSH information, procedures and requirements that may be issued by M/AS, including posting of the most current OSH program policy;
- (e) Review the effectiveness of the OSH program activities provided by their office;
- (f) Ensure Federal and Agency-required training is completed by their Staff to comply with standards set forth by each mandate or requirement; and
- (g) By December 31 of each year, each CD will provide, through their Regional Director, an annual written assessment of the status of their Post's efforts to meet the Peace Corps OSH program requirements to M/AS, together with their Post's OSH program goals and objectives for the coming year.

4.3 Supervisors

Supervisors must be cognizant of the recognized safety and health Hazards of their respective work areas and activities and are responsible for effectively managing the health and safety of their Staff.

Supervisors will:

- (a) Conduct regular Hazard inspections of their work areas to identify and mitigate unsafe conditions;
- (b) Reinforce safe work practices and address unsafe behaviors by Staff;
- (c) Ensure Staff receive appropriate health and safety training;
- (d) Ensure Staff are provided the appropriate tools and equipment to conduct work in a safe and healthful manner;
- (e) Report all Mishaps immediately to their Responsible Manager; and
- (f) Assist with Mishap investigations to identify root causes and to implement comprehensive corrective actions to prevent the recurrence of Mishaps.

4.4 Peace Corps Staff Rights

Staff shall have the right to:

- (a) Access copies of the Peace Corps' OSH policy, program standards, and injury or illness statistics;
- (b) Comment on OSH standards and injury and illness statistics;
- (c) Report working conditions they reasonably believe to be unsafe or unhealthful to their supervisor and to request an inspection of the Establishment;
- (d) Submit directly to the Peace Corps OSH Expert, askosh@peacecorps.gov, a report of a hazardous condition and request anonymity;
- (e) Protection from restraint, interference, coercion, discrimination, or reprisal for exercising any of these rights; and
- (f) Authorized official time to participate in the activities related to the Program.

4.5 Peace Corps Staff Responsibilities

Staff are responsible for:

- (a) Knowing and following all applicable Agency OSH rules such as safe work practices and standard operating procedures;
- (b) Being familiar with the OSH safety requirements that apply to their work assignment;
- (c) Knowing the emergency and evacuation procedures and the location of emergency equipment;
- (d) Not operating equipment without proper training;
- (e) Reading and understanding the safety data sheet and knowing the Hazards and safe work practices for all of the chemicals with which they work;
- (f) The safety of their actions while on the job;
- (g) Serving as a good role model to co-workers for safe work practices and behavior;
- (h) Maintaining their personal work area and common areas in which Staff gather in a clean and orderly manner;
- (i) Always wearing the appropriate PPE required for their job tasks;
- (j) Talking with their supervisor about safety and if they have a suggestion to make a process or equipment safer, speak up;

- (k) Warning co-workers and notifying their supervisor as soon as possible of any malfunctioning equipment, hazardous conditions, and unsafe behavior in the workplace;
- (l) Reporting all motor vehicle collisions, workplace Mishaps and near-misses to their supervisor, regardless of severity;
- (m) Promptly reporting a job-related injury or illness to their supervisor and seeking appropriate treatment; and
- (n) Completing all applicable Federally-mandated and Agency-Mandated OSH Training, and notifying their supervisor if they are unable to complete such training within the specified timeframe.

5.0 Procedures

Procedures for the implementation of this Manual Section will be developed and approved by the Occupational Safety and Health Working Group (OSHWG) comprised of AD/M (Chair), OCFO, OGC, OGO, OSS, OHR, OHS, and each of the Regions. Each member of the OSHWG and such other members as may be added from time to time shall have an equal vote as set forth in the OSHWG Charter. These procedures will provide guidance to Posts on implementation of the policies contained in this Manual Section. These include, but are not limited to, procedures relating to the rules and responsibilities set forth in this Manual Section, respiratory protection, blood-borne pathogens, and Hazard communication. All approved procedures will be set forth in *MS 520 Peace Corps Staff Occupational Safety and Health Procedures*.

6.0 Effective Date

The effective date of this Manual Section is the date of issuance.