

UW POLICY DIRECTORY

Rescinded 11-17-25

APS 10.11 – UW Health and Safety Committees

(Approved by the Provost and Executive Vice President by authority of Executive Order No. 4 and the Senior Vice President for Finance and Facilities by authority of Administrative Order No. 9)

1. Policy

To encourage respect, excellence, collaboration, integrity, and innovation, the University has established the UW Health and Safety Committee structure as part of its culture of safety. The University Health and Safety Committees are structured along organizational lines. In addition, there is a University-Wide (U-Wide) Health and Safety Committee composed of members from the organizational safety committees. Employees are encouraged to run for committee membership, vote for representatives, and communicate health and safety concerns to the committees.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all University locations including the Seattle, Bothell, and Tacoma campuses, all other University-owned property, University-leased space, temporary field locations, and field sites that are under the control of University operations and staff.

3. UW Compliance Responsibility

The University President has the ultimate responsibility for health and safety programs for the University. Under the authority delegated by the President, the Provost, the vice presidents and vice provosts, chancellors, deans, directors, chairs and unit supervisors, including faculty supervising academic activities, are responsible for the oversight of the health and safety performance of the faculty, staff, students, visitors, and volunteers in their respective units.

The Provost, chancellor, vice president, vice provost, executive director, or dean appointed as executive sponsor for the Health and Safety Committee is responsible for its proper functioning including elections, agenda items, and regular meetings.

Health and Safety Committee members are responsible for participating on the committees through regular attendance, attending training sessions, actively communicating to and for groups they represent, and voting on issues covered at the meetings.

4. Committee Structure

A. Organizational Health and Safety Committees

The Director of Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) in consultation with the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) and organizational committee executive sponsors, shall determine the number of organizational Health and Safety Committees and which groups of employees are represented by each of the committees. The

committee reports to the executive sponsor. The University authorizes its organizational Health and Safety Committees to perform specific duties as described below. Variations from or additions to these activities must receive prior written approval from the Director of EH&S.

- Elect a chair.
- Determine meeting day, hour, and location.
- Produce and post minutes of each meeting, including attendance and topics covered.
- Review and evaluate accident investigation reports.
- Review and evaluate health and safety inspection reports.
- Review and evaluate accident/illness prevention programs.
- Review and evaluate health and safety suggestions from employees.
- Review safety-related material provided by EH&S and various regulatory government agencies.
- Recommend action and work with the executive sponsor of the organizational committee to resolve health and safety concerns presented.

B. University-Wide Health and Safety Committee

The University-Wide (U-Wide) Health and Safety Committee is comprised of the chair and one additional representative from each of the organizational Health and Safety Committees, and at least one must be an elected member. The number of appointed members may not exceed the number of elected members. University labor unions are entitled to seats on the U-Wide committee as described in [Section 5](#) below.

Ex-officio, non-voting members, can include representatives from the Office of Risk Management, the Attorney General's Office, Human Resources, UW Emergency Management, Facilities Services, and EH&S staff for support.

The University authorizes the U-Wide committee to perform specific duties as described below; additional activities must be approved by the EH&S Director.

- Coordinate information from the organizational committees to provide consistent campus-wide strategies for health and safety activities and target concerns for organizational committee actions.
- Review the number, type, severity, extent, and magnitude of occupational injuries, illnesses, and incidents experienced by University employees based on information presented annually by EH&S and the Office of Risk Management.
- Review the status of the occupational health and safety environment for University employees based on information and risk factors provided by the organizational committees, EH&S, and the Office of Risk Management.
- Recommend health and safety strategies, policies, and programs to the EH&S Director.
- Serve as a contact person to help respond to and address employee health and safety concerns.
- Help EH&S in motivating the campus community to create and maintain a safe and healthful environment.
- Communicate back to the individual organizational Health and Safety Committees on University health and safety issues.

C. Departmental Health and Safety Teams

Departments are encouraged to appoint safety coordinators and to establish a departmental health and safety team to deal with day-to-day and specific operational health and safety issues. These teams and safety coordinators should notify their organizational Health and Safety Committee regarding any concern that has organizational or campus-wide significance.

5. Memberships and Elections

Each organizational Health and Safety Committee and the U-Wide Health and Safety Committee is made up of employee-elected and employer-appointed members. The number of employer-appointed members may not exceed the number of employee-elected members on organizational Health and Safety Committees.

The permanent variance granted to the University allows elections to be held every two years (Autumn Quarter of each odd year). EH&S coordinates with the executive sponsors (Provost, vice presidents, vice provosts, chancellors, executive directors, and deans) to whom the organizational unit committees report to ensure the required elections take place. EH&S provides compliance guidance for both the election and the operation of organizational and the U-Wide Health and Safety Committees.

A union is entitled to representation on the U-Wide committee and on any specific organizational committee, when the union's bargaining agreement with the University specifically provides for representation on that committee. The appropriate U-Wide committee designee must also serve as a member of an organizational committee. Union representatives are considered employee-elected representatives.

Faculty and student senates and organizations such as the Associated Students of the University of Washington (ASUW), Graduate and Professional Student Senate (GPSS), and Professional Staff Organization (PSO) can select one member to serve on the U-Wide Health and Safety Committee as an elected representative.

6. Meetings and Release Time

The U-Wide and the organizational committees shall meet monthly at times and on days agreed upon by the members. The meetings shall last no longer than one hour unless an extension is approved by a majority of the members present. Minutes shall be written and a copy sent to EH&S. Copies of the minutes shall also be posted and distributed within the organizational unit.

Members of the committees shall be allowed reasonable time during working hours to conduct the business of the committee. Such release time should be arranged by members with their individual supervisor in advance.

7. Additional Information

For more details about Health and Safety Committees please refer to the Washington State Department of Safety and Health (DOSH) regulation found in [WAC 296-800-130](#), Safety Committees/Safety Meetings — Summary, and the Permanent Variance (FN 10200, related to membership term lengths) granted by L&I dated January 9, 2008 for [WAC 296-800-13020\(1\)](#).

Additional information about the University Health and Safety Committees can be found on the [EH&S website](#) where specific web pages provide more information on organizational and U-Wide committee members. Questions can be directed to EH&S.

May 1998; February 18, 2003; December 4, 2009; December 19, 2014.

[Edit](#)