



**Saint Mary's  
University**

Occupational Health and Safety  
Office  
McNally South 130  
923 Robie Street  
Halifax, NS B3H 3C3

# **OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY ORIENTATION BOOKLET**

---

## **Objectives of this Resource Booklet**

1. To help you understand the rights, responsibilities and duties of everyone who works at Saint Mary's University under the Occupational Health and Safety Act (Nova Scotia).
2. To help you understand the role of a Joint Occupations Health and Safety Committee (JOHSC).
3. To help you understand the Internal Responsibility System.
4. To introduce you to the University's Health and Safety Policies.

## **Table of Contents – August, 2025**

Occupational Health and Safety Program .....	1
The Internal Responsibility System (IRS): .....	1
Your Rights: .....	1
Reporting Hazards, Concerns and Incidents: .....	2
Step 1 - Report to their manager or Chair .....	3
Step 2 - Formal referral to the JOHS Committee .....	3
Step 3 - Formal referral to the OHS Division, Department of Labour, Skills and Immigration.....	3
Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee: .....	4
SAINT MARY’S UNIVERSITY JOINT OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES 2025-2026 .....	4
COVID-19 Response.....	5
Drinking Water.....	5
Use of Scented Products .....	5
Safety concerns related to the physical environment.....	5
Health and Safety Policies.....	6
Safety Policy:.....	6
Smoke-Free Campus and Tobacco Use Policy:.....	7
Violence in the Workplace: Prevention and Response: Policy and Plan .....	7
Respectful and Inclusive Workplace Policy and Code of Conduct .....	8
Emergency Preparedness .....	9
Fire:.....	9
First Aid/CPR:.....	9
Mass Notification: .....	10
Emergency Contact.....	10
SMU Emergency Response Guide .....	11
Training.....	12
Workplace Hazardous Material Information System (WHMIS): .....	12
Other Occupational Health and Safety Training: .....	12
OH&S Legislation.....	12
More Information .....	12
Useful Websites: .....	13

## Occupational Health and Safety Program

Saint Mary's University has established and maintains a written Occupational Health and Safety Program. Saint Mary's University is committed to providing and maintaining a safe and healthy work environment for all the University Community; to fostering an awareness of the importance of safety on our Campus; and to provide the education necessary to perform activities or duties safely. A copy of the OHS Program can be found on the OHS website at <https://smu.ca/about/ohs-programs.html>, and also in the Patrick Power Library, the Staff/Faculty Lounge, (MS 001) and the OHS Office (MS 130).

### **The Internal Responsibility System (IRS):**

Everyone is responsible for health and safety. All members of the Saint Mary's Community share responsibility to the extent of their authority and ability to do so. Any individual with concerns about health and/or safety should speak to their Manager or Chair. If a satisfactory resolution is not found, the concern should be reported to a member of the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOHSC).

There are a number of other groups and individuals besides the employers and employees that contribute to a successful IRS. Contractors are to ensure that their own employees respect and obey safety initiatives set forth by the University while working on Campus. Some suppliers may provide training in the proper use and storage of their products.

### **What is expected of you as an employee in regards to health and safety?**

1. Take every reasonable precaution to ensure the health and safety of yourself and any other person in the workplace.
2. Follow instructions and safety procedures of your employer. Participate in training.
3. Ensure personal protective equipment is worn when required.
4. Cooperate with the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee.
5. Report health and safety concerns and/or hazards.

### **Your Rights:**

The NS OHS Act provides employees with three basic rights:

#### **The Right to Participate:**

You have the right to be represented on a health and safety committee. You also have the right to report unsafe conditions and voice your concerns or opinions on any issue that affects your health and safety, or the health and safety of anyone at the workplace.

#### **The Right to Know:**

You have a right to information on issues that affect your health and safety or the

health and safety of another employee or any person at the workplace. You will be advised about safety procedures or protective equipment required for a task that you may need to perform. You have the right to know about any hazards you may be exposed to at the workplace.

### **The Right to Refuse:**

You have the right to refuse to do work which you have reasonable grounds for believing that the work is likely to endanger your health or safety or the health and safety of any other person at the workplace. Any employee who wishes to exercise the right to refuse unsafe work shall immediately report it to their supervisor. Where the matter is not remedied to the employee's satisfaction, he or she should report it to the JOHSC. If the matter is still not remedied to the employee's satisfaction, he or she may report to the OHS Division at the Department of Labour, Skills & Immigration (DLSI). When an employee exercises the right to refuse unsafe work, that employee has the right to participate in the investigation with the JOHSC or with a DLSI OHS Officer. The Act also prohibits the employer from taking discriminatory action against an employee who exercises the Right to Refuse Unsafe Work.

### **Reporting Hazards, Concerns and Incidents:**

Saint Mary's University has developed a procedure for employee reporting and management response to employee health and safety concerns which conforms to the three-step process required by the OHS Act. Employees shall exercise their right to identify occupational health and safety concerns without fear of reprisal or discriminatory action. The University requires anyone who is involved in an incident, including near misses which could have resulted in an injury or property damage, to report the occurrence. Reporting of these incidents and/or injuries assist the University in taking corrective action to prevent further incidents and /or injuries.

Saint Mary's University encourages all faculty, staff and students to report any **immediate** unsafe situation. Reports of **dangerous** situations should be made to the employee's Manager or Chair and to:

- Facilities Management 902-420-5572
- OHS Office McNally South 130 902-420-5658
- Security (after regular business hours) 902-420-5577

A Health and Safety Concern Report form has been developed to assist in documenting the concern and ensuring that the proper steps are followed in identifying and resolving the concern. This form is available from the Occupational Health & Safety (OHS) Consultant, Facilities Management or Security, and can be found on the OHS Website at:

<https://smu.ca/about/ohs-reporting-incidents-and-injuries.html> The Incident/Injury Report form should be completed, reviewed by the appropriate persons, and forwarded to the OHS Office, McNally South Room 130.

## **Step 1 - Report to their manager or Chair**

Any employee who believes that a health or safety risk exists in the workplace must report the problem to their manager or Chair. Depending on the situation and location of the hazard or concern, the report may also be made directly to the person in charge of the area or work being undertaken.

The employee may report verbally or may complete the Health and Safety Concern Report Form. The incident report will be entered into the Banner system and shared with the University safety committees.

The manager or Chair to whom the matter is reported is responsible to investigate the issue or to have it investigated, initiate a process to take any necessary corrective action, and notify the employee of the outcome of the investigation and any action taken or planned. A response to the employee shall be made within 10 working days. If the matter has not been completely resolved, the response may be an explanation of progress made, further action planned and expected completion date(s).

If the employee is satisfied that the matter has been adequately resolved, the issue is closed. The manager or Chair must document the resolution of the concern.

## **Step 2 - Formal referral to the JOHSC Committee**

When a hazard or concern has not been remedied to the employee's satisfaction, the employee must forward the issue to the JOHSC. The employee can contact any member of the JOHSC. The JOHSC Co-Chairs shall determine whether the matter is urgent, and if so, initiate an immediate investigation. If not, the matter will be taken to the next meeting of the Committee for determination of a course of action to investigate and resolve the issue.

Within 10 working days, the JOHSC shall respond to the employee who reported the issue and to the manager or Chair who initially investigated. If the matter has not been completely investigated, the response may be an explanation of progress which has been made, further action planned and expected completion date(s).

Following the investigation of the matter, the JOHSC shall document their conclusions. The investigator(s) shall discuss the conclusions reached with the employee who reported the issue and the manager or Chair who initially investigated. Both will be given copies of the report.

## **Step 3 - Formal referral to the OHS Division, Department of Labour, Skills and Immigration**

If the issue is still not resolved or remedied to the employee's satisfaction, or if the JOHSC is unable to reach a decision, the employee shall report the matter to the Occupational Health and Safety Division of the Department of Labour, Skills & Immigration, (1-902-952-2687). An Officer will then investigate the matter, render a decision as required by the OHS Act, and confirm his/her findings in writing to the employee and the University.

## **Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee:**

The Saint Mary's University Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee is composed of representatives of employee unions and, and University appointed management representatives, and the OHS Consultant, who acts as an advisor. The Committee meets on a monthly basis from September through June. The function of the JOHSC is to involve representatives of employees and the employer in the identification and resolution of health and safety issues in the workplace. The JOHSC has established two health and safety sub-committees, the Administrative Units Safety sub-committee and the Science Safety sub-committee, to ensure the involvement of faculty, staff and others in the development, implementation and maintenance of an effective occupational health and safety system.

### **SAINT MARY'S UNIVERSITY JOINT OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES 2025-2026**

<b>MEMBERS/ALTERNATES</b>	<b>DEPARTMENT</b>	<b>PHONE</b>
<b>Adam Sarty, Member, Co-Chair</b> Suzanne van den Hoogen, Alternate	Graduate Studies Library	<b>902-496-8169</b> 902-420-5532
Dennis Gillis, Member Patrick Farmer, Alternate	Facilities Management Facilities Management	902-420-5570 902-420-5571
Deborah Brothers-Scott, Member Vacant, Alternate	People and Culture	902-496-8265
Luke MacDonald, Member Eden-Ray Lukacik	Engineering(SMUFU) Psychology (SMUFU)	902-420-5694 902-420-5858
Shellie Petrossie, Member  Brenda Johnson, Alternate	Facilities Management (NSGEU) Facilities Managaement (NSGEU)	902-420-5573  902-420-5573
<b>Howard Donahoe, Member, Co-Chair</b> Jason Butler, Alternate	Geology, (CUPE 3912) Facilities Management (CUPE 4491)	<b>902-420-5725</b> 902-420-8155
Valerie Wadman, Advisory Member	People & Culture	902-420-5658

Names of the members and meeting minutes are displayed on the OHS Bulletin Board in the McNally Main basement and on the OHS website at <https://smu.ca/about/joint-occupational-ohs-committee.htm>.

## COVID-19 Response

COVID-19 Response - Masks are no longer mandatory at Saint Mary's University, except when visiting the Student Health Centre. Though they are no longer required, mask use is recommended and encouraged in common indoor areas to keep our community healthy. Please continue to follow through on good health hygiene practices and stay at home if you are unwell.

## Drinking Water

Please use water fountains for drinking water, as other water sources have not been tested.

## Use of Scented Products

Saint Mary's University promotes a scent free environment. Please help us maintain a healthy environment for everyone by not wearing scented products. For additional information, please visit the Occupational Health and Safety website at: <https://smu.ca/about/ohs-scent-awareness.html>.

## Safety Concerns Related to the Physical Environment

Any safety concerns related to the physical environment, e.g. indoor air quality, leaks, slippery conditions (anything that could cause harm to someone on Campus) should be reported **immediately** to Facilities Management at 902-420-5658 or [facilities.management@smu.ca](mailto:facilities.management@smu.ca).

## Health and Safety Policies

### **Safety Policy:**

A safety policy is a commitment to Occupational Health and Safety, and a willingness on the part of the employer to co-operate with employees in striving to meet the goal of a safer and healthier workplace. It shows that safety is a shared responsibility of management, faculty, staff and students.

### **Saint Mary's University Safety Policy**

Saint Mary's University complies with the Occupational Health and Safety Act and accompanying Regulations of the Province of Nova Scotia, together with all applicable legal and other regulatory requirements to support this Policy.

Saint Mary's University will support and cooperate with employees in pursuing occupational health and safety.

Chairpersons of Departments, Senior Directors of Divisions, and Administrative Department Heads are responsible for health and safety within their respective areas. They also have responsibility for implementing this Policy and for ensuring that their areas comply with the Nova Scotia Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations, and other laws of application within their respective areas.

All University faculty, staff, and students have a responsibility for their own health and safety, and for the health and safety of others. Everyone has a duty to report, as soon as possible, all hazardous conditions, workplace violence or threatening behaviour, injuries, illness, and near misses related to the workplace. Everyone is encouraged to offer suggestions or ideas to improve health and safety.

Safety is a shared responsibility of management, faculty, staff, and students.

The University Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee and its sub-committees are key components in the collaborative and cooperative initiation, maintenance and support of health and safety programs.

The Occupational Health & Safety Consultant liaises with all university departments, the Joint University Occupational Health and Safety Committee, and its sub-committees to advise on compliance with legislation and guidelines related to safety in the workplace and to assist individuals and departments on issues of health and safety. The Faculty of Science is further supported by the Safety Advisor, Science Activities.



## **Smoke-Free Campus and Tobacco Use Policy:**

At Saint Mary's University, we believe that a healthy and safe environment is an important part of campus life. Due to the health hazards, fire risks, and environmental concerns associated with the use of tobacco products, the University will take all reasonable precautions to protect health, safety and well-being by prohibiting the use of tobacco products anywhere on campus, with the exception of tobacco products used for Indigenous ceremonial purposes.

Anyone using or consuming tobacco products is expected to leave University property to do so. Those using tobacco products in areas surrounding the University are expected to respect provincial legislation (<http://www.gov.ns.ca/hpp/cdip/smoke-free-places-act.asp>). The University asks members of the Saint Mary's Community to help maintain a positive relationship with our neighbours and to respect neighbouring properties near or adjacent to the University

## **Drug and Alcohol Policy:**

Saint Mary's University is committed to providing and maintaining a safe and healthy Campus for faculty, staff, students and visitors. The use of illicit drugs and other mood altering substances, as well as the inappropriate use of alcohol and medications, can adversely affect job performance, productivity, the work environment, and the well-being of the members of the Saint Mary's Community. To protect against the risks related to the use of alcohol, cannabis, and or other drugs, all employees are expected to report for and remain fit for duty throughout their workday.

## **Violence in the Workplace: Prevention and Response: Policy and Plan**

The purpose of this policy is to outline the University's commitment to the prevention of violence in the workplace. While violent acts are not pervasive at Saint Mary's, no university is immune from such behaviour. Saint Mary's University acknowledges that physical violence/threatening behaviour in the workplace is an occupational health and safety hazard that can cause physical and emotional harm. The University views any acts of violence or threats of violence in the workplace as unacceptable. As such, it is committed to working to prevent workplace violence/threatening behaviour and to responding in an appropriate manner if it occurs. All members of the University community, including faculty, staff, students and visitors, are responsible for the creation and maintenance of a safe environment. For more information, see: <https://smu.ca/about/ohs-resources.html>.

To help ensure safety and prevent incidents, including violence related incidents, the Security Department has implemented a Lone Worker/Student and a Safe Walk Program.

**Lone Worker/Student:** Anyone who is working alone on campus, or after normal working hours, should advise Security. University Security Officers will then check your location on their regular patrols.

**Safe Walk:** Saint Mary's University Security offers a safe walk program to all members of the University community and visitors. A University Security Officer will provide an escort anywhere on University property.

Both programs are available 24 hours, seven days a week by contacting University Security at 420-5577.

## **Respectful and Inclusive Workplace Policy and Code of Conduct**

Saint Mary's University's respectful workplace policies reflect our commitment to creating a safe, inclusive, and welcoming environment. The **Respectful and Inclusive Workplace Policy** and **Code of Conduct** set clear expectations for behaviour, highlight leadership's role, and prioritize psychological safety, mutual respect, and empowerment, while ensuring fair processes for reporting and addressing misconduct.

### **Respectful and Inclusive Workplace Policy:**

- Commits to fostering respectful and inclusive practices and preventing harassment, discrimination, bullying and other disrespectful conduct.
- Challenges attitudes and behaviors that perpetuate discrimination, harassment, bullying, and other forms of disrespect.
- Provides support for individuals experiencing discrimination, harassment, bullying or disrespectful behaviour.
- Promotes accountability through fair, transparent processes.

### **Code of Conduct:**

- Defines expectations for conduct, presuming respectful behaviour in all interactions.
- Highlights the importance of respect and civility in all relationships.
- Supports psychological well-being and compliance with relevant laws, regulations, and policies.
- Clarifies employees' responsibility to uphold integrity in their conduct and support the university's mission.

Creating a safe and respectful environment is a shared responsibility at Saint Mary's. The Code of Conduct and Respectful and Inclusive Workplace Policy promote mutual accountability, encouraging employees to hold themselves and each other responsible for maintaining a respectful, inclusive, and psychologically safe workplace. This collective commitment reduces toxic behaviour, strengthens accountability, and fosters open communication, empowering individuals to feel safe, valued, and supported in a thriving environment.

## Emergency Preparedness

### Fire:

IF YOU DETECT FIRE OR SMOKE

#### **Remain Calm**

- Leave the fire area immediately and close the door.
- If safe to do so, and you are trained to use a fire extinguisher, use a fire extinguisher to assist your evacuation, if required.
- Pull the nearest fire alarm.
- Exit the building calmly using the Fire Safety Plan.
- Do not use elevators.
- If you encounter smoke, use an alternative exit.
- Inform the authorities of the location and nature of the fire, the unsafe exits, persons requiring assistance and their location, and other pertinent details.
- Wait for authorization from emergency personnel before re-entering the building.

#### **FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS OF THE FIRE WARDEN**

### First Aid/CPR:

The University provides designated First Aid Attendants in all buildings. Names are listed on the OHS Bulletin Board in the McNally Main basement and on the OHS website at: <https://smu.ca/about/ohs-resources.html>. Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) are located at various site throughout the University. The Student Health Center has been designated as the First Aid room on Campus. It is located on the fourth floor of the Student Centre.

### In the Event of a Medical or other Emergency:

- Call either 911 and 902-420-5000 University Security Emergency. University Security will ensure the ambulance is dispatched, send University Security staff that are trained in First Aid, CPR and the use of AEDs, and escort Emergency Health Services staff to the scene of the incident.
- Give as much information as you can, including your name, telephone number, exact location, type of emergency and any other factors that could affect the safety of you or others.
- If it is safe to do so, stay with the injured person, to await assistance from University Security or Emergency Health Services.
- If you call 911 and have given all the foregoing particulars, please also call University Security at 902-420-5000 to alert them of an emergency.
- Download the SMUSafe App [Alert Information | Saint Mary's University \(smu.ca\)](#) for emergency contact information and information related to emergencies on Campus.

## **Mass Notification:**

The University has an emergency mass notification speaker system. In the event of an emergency, the notification will instruct you to evacuate the building or seek shelter in place (your current location). Once advised to evacuate, leave the building immediately.

If **Evacuation** (e.g. in case of fire or bomb threat):

Move to the nearest exit (in case of fire, check doors for heat before opening)

Do not use the elevators

Walk out of the building

Assist others

Move away from the building

Watch for falling items or other hazards

Alert emergency personnel about people that could not be evacuated

Do not re-enter the building until notified by emergency personnel

If **Lockdown or Shelter in Place:**

Lock doors

Turn off the lights

Turn off radios and televisions

Turn phones to silent

Stay quiet and out of sight

For more information on Emergency Preparedness, see:

<http://www.smu.ca/webfiles/SMUEmergencyGuideMay2016V7.pdf>

## **Emergency Contact**

The collection of emergency contact information is part of the emergency planning process developed by Saint Mary's University Emergency Management Group. Please log into Self-Service Banner, go to the Personal Information section and review/update your emergency contact information. Emergency contact information will be kept confidential and only accessed by Human Resources in the event of an emergency.

# SMU Emergency Response Guide

## Saint Mary's University Emergency Response Guide



**SAINT MARY'S**  
UNIVERSITY SINCE 1802

One University. One World. Yours.



Police



Fire



Ambulance



**SMU Security Emergency 420.5000**  
Non-Emergency 420.5577

**911**

### GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Remain **CALM**, protect yourself & alert emergency services

#### WHEN CALLING 420.5000 or 911

- Tell dispatcher your exact location – include building and room number.
- Answer all the dispatcher's questions & **DO NOT** hang up until told to do so.
- Follow all directions given by emergency personnel.

### CRIMINAL ACTS / VIOLENCE

#### Acts **IN PROGRESS**

Intrusions, thefts, violence/  
threats, suspicious activity.

CALL SMU Security  
**420.5000** or **911** and  
seek secure shelter.

Acts **NOT IN PROGRESS**  
Vandalism, lost property,  
Nuisance behaviour.

CALL SMU Security  
**420.5577**

### MEDICAL EMERGENCY

CALL **420.5000** or **911**.

If *trained* provide  
**FIRST AID**.

Have someone meet the  
ambulance crew and direct  
them to the victim.

### FIRE ALARM

Upon discovery of a **FIRE**,  
**EVACUATE THE AREA** and  
pull the nearest Fire Alarm.

Upon hearing a **FIRE**  
**ALARM, EVACUATE**  
**IMMEDIATELY**.

Know and follow your area's  
**EVACUATION PLAN**. Exit in an orderly  
fashion. **Do NOT use the elevators**.  
Take direction from the fire wardens,  
security staff, and emergency crews.

Stay 20 meters away  
from the building and  
do not return until the  
**ALL CLEAR** has been  
given.

### INCLEMENT WEATHER, POWER OUTAGES AND OTHER INCIDENTS

**Inclement Weather, Power**  
**Interruptions and Other Incidents**  
Hurricanes, Thunderstorms,  
Blizzards, Power Outages

**Watch and Listen**  
Monitor weather reports and campus closure  
bulletins. **CLOSURE HOTLINES:** Students  
**491.6263** and Faculty/ Staff **491.6264**

**Follow instructions given**  
**by University Security**

## Training

### **Workplace Hazardous Material Information System (WHMIS):**

WHMIS is a Canadian hazard communication program. The purpose of WHMIS is to make sure that you, your supervisor and the University have the information you need to work safely with the hazardous materials at your workplace. The materials that are included in WHMIS are called controlled products. A controlled product is any product that meets the criteria for WHMIS hazard classes. WHMIS specific training will be provided by your department when required.

### **Other Occupational Health and Safety Training:**

Any other Occupational Health and Safety training specific to your position will be provided by your Department when required.

## OH&S Legislation

The Nova Scotia Occupational Health and Safety Act and regulations are the main laws governing occupational health and safety (OHS) in the province.

A copy of the OHS Act can be found on the OHS Bulletin Board. It is also available on the Nova Scotia Government website at:

[Occupational Health and Safety Act](#)

The Act places emphasis on proactive approaches to prevent accidents, injury and disease through an internal responsibility system based on the cooperation and involvement of the workplace parties in occupational health and safety matters. In addition, the broad duties identified by the Act are further defined by regulations and non-statutory codes of practice and guidelines. Copies of all regulations are available at: <https://novascotia.ca/lae/healthandsafety/pubs.asp>

## More Information

For more information about safety, contact the OHS Consultant at 902-420-5658 or any member of the Saint Mary's University Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee. You will also find additional information on the OHS Bulletin Board in the McNally Main basement or on the OHS website at <http://www.smu.ca/about/occupational-health-and-safety.html>.

***Disclaimer: Although every effort has been made to ensure that the information presented in this document and on the web-site is accurate, the Occupational Health and Safety Act, Regulations and any other applicable legislation will govern all program administration.***

## **Useful Websites:**

CCOHS (Canadian Centre for  
OHS)

<http://www.ccohs.ca/>

Department of Labour, Skills and  
Immigration

<https://beta.novascotia.ca/government/labour-skills-and-immigration>

University Security

<https://smu.ca/campus-life/university-security.html>

University OHS

<https://smu.ca/about/occupational-health-and-safety.html>