



POLICY NO. 17

ON HEALTH AND SAFETY

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POLICY NO. 17 ON HEALTH AND SAFETY

SECTION 1 – PREAMBLE

John Abbott College values the health, safety, and well-being of all members of the College community. The College is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy environment through a collaborative approach with all community members, minimizing the risk of accidents and injuries, promoting safe practices across all campus activities, and continuously improving health and safety performance.

This Policy sets forth the College's commitment to programs, procedures, and guidelines that meet the requirements of legislative and regulatory provisions pertaining to health and safety, and outlines the rights, obligations, and responsibilities of all members of the College community in supporting a safe and healthy working and learning environment on campus.

SECTION 2 – SCOPE

This Policy applies to all individuals present on the College's campus, including but not limited to employees, students, volunteers, visitors, suppliers, vendors, and contractors. The Policy also applies to all activities conducted under the authority of the College, whether occurring on- or off-campus.

SECTION 3 – DEFINITIONS

As used herein, the following words and expressions shall mean:

"Accident" means an Incident which results in injury, damage to property, environmental harm, or combination. Accidents typically occur suddenly and unexpectedly.

"College" means John Abbott College.

"CNESST" means *Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail*.

"FMS" means the Facilities Management Services department.

"H&S" means Health & Safety

"HRS" means the Human Resources Services department.

"Incident" means an unplanned event or series of events that disrupts normal operations. Unlike Accidents, Incidents may or may not result in injury or damage.

"IRS" means Internal Responsibility System; The IRS is the framework through which all members of the College community share responsibility for health and safety. It ensures that hazards are identified, reported, and controlled at the source whenever possible. Employees, students, and all other campus users are expected to follow safe work practices, communicate safety concerns, and participate in maintaining a safe and healthy environment.

"JHSC" means the Joint Health & Safety Committee.

“Mutuelle de prévention” means a group of employers who choose to engage in an initiative aimed at promoting the prevention of workplace injuries, the rehabilitation, and the return to work of injured employees.

“Near-Miss” an unplanned event where no injury or damage occurs, but there was potential for harm.

“Occupational Illness” means a health condition resulting from exposure to a workplace hazard.

“Policy” means Policy 17 on Health & Safety.

“PPE” means Personal Protective Equipment.

“RSS” means *Représentante ou Représentant en santé et en sécurité*. The Health and Safety representative is an employee appointed by the accredited employee associations on campus.

“WHMIS” means Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System.

SECTION 4 – OBJECTIVES

This Policy outlines the health and safety objectives of the College as follows:

- Promote a safe and healthy environment to improve the quality of the workplace.
- Ensure compliance with relevant health and safety laws, regulations, and internal safety policies.
- Facilitate a culture of cooperation, openness, and respect regarding occupational health and safety.
- Implement a strong Internal Responsibility System (IRS) in the workplace by enhancing health and safety awareness and fostering a culture of safety.
- Proactively identify and mitigate hazards through regular risk assessments, safety inspections, audits, and the implementation of effective safety controls.
- Coordinate efforts from the various administrative, departmental, service, and academic units to minimize the risk of workplace incidents, accidents, near-misses, and occupational illnesses.
- Support the mental health and well-being of employees and students by offering resources, training, and a supportive environment for addressing stress and mental health challenges.

SECTION 5 – RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS

Every member of the College community has the right to a safe and healthy working and learning environment.

The College is committed to taking the necessary measures to protect the health, safety, and physical and psychological integrity of all community members, ensuring the well-being of everyone in the College community, and minimizing the risk of occupational illnesses and accidents.

All members of the College community, as well as any individual on campus or under the College’s authority, are responsible not only for their own safety but also for the safety of those around them. Therefore, each individual must, as applicable:

- Practice safe work habits.

- Follow all safety rules and procedures set by regulatory authorities, the College, or an individual with supervisory authority. Non-compliance with this Policy or internal safety policies, procedures, or legislative requirements may result in disciplinary action as appropriate.
- Promptly inform a supervisor or a person in authority about hazardous or unsafe conditions, equipment, or practices, offering suggestions for correction or taking corrective actions where authorized.
- Report incidents, accidents, or near-misses immediately to a supervisor or person in authority and seek treatment or assistance without delay.
- Complete a report promptly following any accident, incident or near-miss.

SECTION 6 – INTERNAL RESPONSABILITIES SYSTEM (ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES)

The following section outlines the roles and responsibilities of relevant parties in fulfilling the rights and obligations described above.

6.1 EMPLOYER

The College is obligated to take necessary measures to protect the health, safety, and physical and psychological integrity of individuals on campus or under the College's authority.

These measures include the following:

- Maintaining and operating facilities in a manner that minimizes risks and protects the health and safety of employees, students, and other users.
- Maintaining and operating facilities and equipment in accordance with applicable safety legislation and standards.
- Providing information, instruction, training, and supervision to employees and students to protect their health and safety.
- Establishing, promoting, and operating the Internal Responsibility System (IRS) effectively.
- Implementing a prevention program.
- Maintaining control measures to protect individuals from exposure to biological, chemical, physical, mechanical, ergonomic, or psychosocial hazards as prescribed under applicable health and safety legislation.
- Ensuring employees and students follow applicable health and safety legislation, policies, standards, and directives.
- Providing employees with the necessary resources and time to participate in hazard identification and suggest preventive measures.
- Ensuring first aiders are present in the workplace at all times.
- Assisting managers and teams in fulfilling their responsibilities under applicable health and safety legislation.
- Notifying the relevant accredited employee association in the event of an accident or occupational illness.

6.2 EMPLOYEES

Employee participation is a key factor in the effective management of occupational health and safety. Therefore, employees are essential to the successful implementation of health and safety practices.

Their roles and responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Complying with established health and safety policies, procedures, and safe work practices.
- Using the necessary personal protective equipment (PPE) for their tasks and ensuring it is maintained in proper working condition.
- Reporting hazards, unsafe work conditions, and incidents to their supervisors or the appropriate authority, and cooperating in follow-up or investigations.
- Monitoring their work environment to identify hazards and ensure safe conditions.
- Participating in corrective actions or safety improvements when unsafe conditions are identified.
- Cooperating during safety inspections and participating in identifying hazards and suggesting improvements for safety.
- Participating in safety training, ongoing safety activities, and preparatory briefings relevant to their work activities as requested or required.
- Keeping their work areas clean and free from hazards, ensuring the safety of themselves, colleagues, and other users.
- Familiarizing themselves with and following all emergency procedures, and responding promptly and appropriately to evacuation plans, first aid protocols, and emergency measures.
- Participating in a culture of safety by promoting safety awareness and supporting colleagues and students in maintaining a safe working environment.
- Jointly designating an employee to act as the *RSS* on behalf of all accredited associations.

6.3 STUDENTS

Students, other than interns on- or off-campus, are not governed by the health and safety legislation applicable to employees; however, the College applies its occupational health and safety principles to all students.

Their roles and responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Adhering to legislated safety regulations and College and departmental health and safety requirements.
- Conducting themselves in a manner that always promotes personal and class safety.
- Not interfering with or misusing equipment provided for safety purposes.
- Wearing the appropriate PPE as specified for their tasks or activities, and reporting to College employees or instructors if the PPE shows signs of wear or damage to ensure it is replaced.
- Responding promptly and appropriately to emergency alarms and to instructions from College employees or other emergency responders.

6.4 FACILITIES MANAGEMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

The Facilities Management Services (FMS) department is accountable for the College's occupational health and safety and for ensuring that the responsibilities of the institution are fulfilled. FMS is

responsible for operational matters related to health and safety, including developing and implementing programs and procedures, ensuring compliance with applicable legislation, and facilitating communication among individuals, groups, and organizations with health and safety responsibilities.

Their role and responsibilities include:

- Taking appropriate measures following identification of any hazardous situation.
- Developing and maintaining a policy for the management of hazardous materials within the College.
- Holding the Public Health Agency Containment Level 2 (CL2) permit.
- Establishing a recurrent preventive maintenance and inspections program for tools, machinery, and equipment, as applicable.
- Developing and maintaining an emergency plan.
- Conducting College evacuation exercises in accordance with regulatory requirements.
- Distributing first aid kits to necessary locations and reviewing the relevance of the locations as needed.
- Ensuring an adequate number of employees are trained to administer first aid in the workplace and organizing first-aid courses for College employees.
- Applying the elements of this Policy when acting as project manager for construction sites.
- Ensuring appropriate resources are available for the health and safety management system.
- Oversee the organization and the establishment of the Joint H&S Committee.

6.4.1 Health & Safety Manager

The Health & Safety Manager and their team report to the Director of FMS.

Their roles and responsibilities include:

- Identifying and implementing best practices and standards for safety related to health and safety procedures and safe work practices.
- Developing, analyzing and enforcing health and safety policies, including those related to workplace safety, injury prevention, and compliance with safety regulations.
- Investigating injuries and accidents and maintaining an accident register.
- Conducting inspections and audits to provide recommendations and correctives measures.
- Collaborating with academic or service departments involved in the College's H&S initiatives, including the health and safety of interns on- and off-campus.
- Working with the HRS department to ensure the College complies with all *CNESST* regulations and its obligations related to participation in a *Mutuelle de prévention*.
- Co-chairing the Joint Health and Safety Committee.
- Maintaining effective communication with both internal and external community members in matters relating to campus safety.
- Formulating the prevention program for health and safety objectives, establishing priorities for action, and monitoring their implementation.
- Overseeing trainings, the chemical management program, PPE, and the construction hazardous material risk management programs
- Auditing FMS recurrent preventive maintenance and inspections program, evacuation procedures and reports, interventions and reports involving health and safety matters, emergency preparedness, and providing recommendations to the College.

- Acting as:
 - The executive manager of the Public Health agency CL2 permit holder.
 - The College representative during *CNESST* inspections or visits, and with other government organizations (e.g., Public Health Agency).
- Requesting relocation of employees, students, or visitors if necessary for safety reasons.
- Initiating procedures for disciplinary actions following health and safety violations.
- Recommending amendments to this Policy as needed.

6.4.2 Security Manager

The Security Manager and their team report to the Director of FMS.

Their roles and responsibilities include:

- Identifying and implementing best practices and standards for security to ensure the safety of College personnel, facilities, and assets.
- Developing, analyzing, and enforcing all security policies and procedures, including but not limited to those related to physical security, surveillance, access control and emergency response.
- Leading and supervising security personnel, including oversight of the third-party security provider if applicable, and ensuring they trained and equipped to respond to emergencies and security threats.
- Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the College's security systems and making improvements as necessary.
- Collaborating with the H&S Manager to ensure a coordinated approach to campus safety and emergency procedures.
- Overseeing security systems, including surveillance cameras, alarm systems and access control, to ensure the protection of College personnel, facilities, and assets.
- Lead emergency preparedness and response, including developing and implementing emergency protocols, coordinating evacuation drills, and ensuring personnel are trained in emergency procedures.
- Preparing and submitting regular security reports to the Director of FMS, highlighting any incidents or trends and recommending improvements.
- Collaborating with the H&S Manager to prepare an annual report for College administration on the College's activities related to health and safety, security, and emergency preparedness.

6.5 HUMAN RESOURCES SERVICES DEPARTMENT

The Human Resources Services (HRS) department supports the College's commitment to a safe and healthy working environment. In collaboration with the Facilities Management Services department, HRS provides training, maintains records, and participates in investigations to promote workplace safety.

Their roles and responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Providing employees with general health & safety information, including information on the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).
- Managing applications for preventative withdrawal and the right to refuse work from employees as

well as handling employment-injury files.

- Monitoring and verifying employees' health and safety qualifications and certificates.
- Ensuring the College's compliance with its obligations related to participation in a Mutuelle de prévention, when required.
- Representing the College before the CNESST and other organizations concerning occupational health and safety matters.
- Administering cases of employees who are victims of workplace accidents, injuries, or occupational diseases.
- Ensure the job retention or re-entry of employees who have been injured or are suffering from an occupational disease.
- In collaboration with the FMS department:
 - Providing in-service training to support the development and implementation of preventive measures.
 - Maintaining an updated log of workplace accidents, hazardous incidents, and occupational diseases in accordance with applicable health and safety regulations.
 - Initiating and/or cooperating with the investigation and analysis of workplace accidents, incidents, or occupational diseases, and preparing a report.

6.6 HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Health and Wellness reports to the Student Services department.

Their roles and responsibilities, in accordance with applicable confidentiality and personal information requirements, include but are not limited to:

- Providing general information to students regarding health, safety, and first aid.
- Collaborating with the H&S team by completing incident, accident, and near-miss reports, as well as professional documentation, for members of the College community who have been seen in the Health and Wellness Centre due to incidents, accidents, or near-misses.
- Acting as a liaison between the H&S team and the Concussion Centre.
- Cooperating, when necessary, with relevant academic or service departments to facilitate the administration of required vaccines to students in accordance with legal requirements.
- Assisting in managing infectious diseases by applying appropriate measures in collaboration with Public Health or the Montreal West Island integrated university health and social services centers (IUHSSC/CIUSSS).
- Identifying, evaluating, and making recommendations to the College regarding risks or situations that may be detrimental to the health, safety, or physical well-being of the College community.

6.7 JOINT HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

The Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) is a parity committee composed of employer and employee representatives as defined by the *CNESST*. JHSC meetings are co-chaired, with one chair representing the employees and the other representing the employer. The JHSC shall meet at least as frequently as required by applicable legislation.

Their duties shall include the following:

- Identifying and analyzing potential risks that could affect the health, safety, or well-being of employees, students, or any other persons using College facilities and equipment.
- Receiving and following up on health and safety-related complaints and suggestions.
- Recommending health and safety measures to management.
- Assisting with the development and implementation of an annual work plan.
- Maintaining communication between employees and the employer.
- Informing and educating members of the College community and campus visitors to promote prevention and individual accountability (through the IRS).
- Recommending designations for administrative or departmental safety committees.
- Ensuring the promotion and dissemination of this Policy.
- Participating in the review of this Policy.

6.8 ADMINISTRATIVE AND DEPARTMENTAL SAFETY COMMITTEES

Administrative and departmental safety committees shall be established in designated areas and, where possible, include representatives from each employee group. The JHSC will recommend the designations. Committees shall meet at least once per semester, and annual objectives must be submitted to the JHSC and the College's Health & Safety Manager.

When required, these committees (e.g., WHMIS committee, H&S working groups, etc.) are responsible for actively supporting health and safety initiatives within their areas, including but not limited to:

- Developing "Health and Safety Guidelines for Field Trips" for off-campus and out-of-province travel, providing guidance to faculty when organizing such trips.
- Providing travel information, including contact details and relevant travel instructions, to Security, Legal Affairs, Academic Chairpersons, the Health & Safety Manager, and, where applicable, the International Programs Office, for out-of-province or international travel.
- Monitoring the effectiveness of safety programs within their respective areas.
- Collaborating with the H&S team and the JHSC to implement health and safety procedures, corrective measures, and participate in committee activities and objectives.
- Reviewing and making recommendations on health and safety issues arising within their areas.
- Ensuring incidents, accidents, and near-misses are reported, and that the underlying issues are addressed or controlled.

6.9 HEALTH AND SAFETY REPRESENTATIVE (RSS)

The Health and Safety representative (*Représentante ou représentant en santé et en sécurité*, or RSS) is an employee appointed by the accredited employee associations on campus and released from their regular duties to conduct of health and safety hazards at the College.

Their role and responsibilities include the following:

- Conduct workplace inspections.
- Inform the JHSC of any results of investigations/inspections.

- Give recommendations to the JHSC.

As an employee representative, the *RSS* has the same rights and responsibilities as other employees on campus.

6.10 ACADEMIC SECTOR

This section outlines the responsibilities of the academic sector for ensuring compliance with this Policy in academic settings.

6.10.1 Academic Administration

Their role and responsibilities include but are not limited the following:

- Ensuring that the operation, physical setup, and safety systems for equipment in the College's teaching spaces comply with health and safety legislation and regulations.
- Collaborating with the Health & Safety Manager to establish and implement preventive maintenance mechanisms for laboratory or other equipment used for the delivery of pedagogy, including monitoring the workplace environment to identify and eliminate or reduce hazards at the source.
- Providing the College community with relevant information concerning health, safety, and prevention related to the institution's activities.
- Within the framework of the CNESST's prevention program for youth, developing a health, safety, and prevention framework for students by:
 - Promoting and facilitating the integration of practical health and safety competencies by the Ministry of Higher Education within the academic setting.
 - Providing a safe academic environment that meets existing standards.

6.10.2 Academic Departments and Programs

Their roles and responsibilities include but are not limited the following:

- Collaborating with the H&S team to implement health and safety procedures, preventive actions, and corrective measures before and after incidents.
- Assisting, as needed through departmental committees, with inquiries and analyses of accidents, incidents, or work-related illnesses in cooperation with the Program Dean.
- Providing students and faculty, through departmental committees, with safety procedures and practices that comply with applicable safety regulations.
- Issuing advisories regarding any necessary adjustments to learning activities following health and safety issues.

6.10.3 Faculty and Technicians

In addition to their responsibilities as employees, faculty and technicians are responsible for the following activities:

- Planning and executing activities in a manner that promotes compliance with this Policy.

- Ensuring compliance with occupational health and safety standards during the use, handling, and storage of specialized equipment, devices, tools, machines, and laboratory instruments.
- Ensuring the safe handling, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials.
- Maintaining the department's inventory of hazardous materials, ensuring that products are properly labeled, and that a safety data sheet is available for each product.
- Applying the appropriate procedures in the event of a hazardous material spill.
- Informing students (and student interns) of potential risks involved in a course or College-related activity they are undertaking.
- Ensuring that individuals in their areas of assignment, whether on- or off-campus, receive adequate direction, training, and instruction to perform their work safely and without undue risk.
- Regularly inspecting work areas to prevent unsafe conditions and practices.
- Initiating corrective actions for any substandard conditions or procedures.
- Ensuring that all incidents, accidents, and near-misses are reported to the Health & Safety team, collaborating during investigations, and helping to implement recommendations and corrective actions to prevent recurrence.
- Ensuring that medical treatment is provided for all exposures and/or injuries.
- Informing students of the risks associated with field activities included in their courses, communicating these risks in the course outline, and reinforcing them through a pre-field trip orientation of a length commensurate with the complexity of the trip.

6.11 VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS

Visitors and volunteers who provide services to the College are subject to the same health and safety legislation applicable to employees. They are responsible for conducting themselves in a safe and proper manner, consistent with employees, to ensure their own safety and the safety of others, and must adhere to College health and safety policies, procedures, and directives.

6.12 CONTRACTORS

Contractors must comply with all applicable health and safety legislation governing their work. All contracts between the College and contractors must include a requirement that contractors, including any subcontractors, adhere to these obligations.

SECTION 7 – JURISDICTION

7.1 BOARD OF GOVERNORS

The Board of Governors adopts this Policy and approves amendments as necessary to ensure a healthy and safe work and study environment.

7.2 DIRECTOR GENERAL

The Director General is responsible for ensuring the implementation of this Policy.

7.3 INDIVIDUALS IN SUPERVISORY ROLES

Directors, deans, managers, and other individuals in supervisory roles are responsible for the health and safety of employees in their respective areas. Supervisors are accountable for ensuring that employees comply with applicable legislation and established safe work procedures.

7.4 HEALTH & SAFETY MANAGER

The Health & Safety Manager has the authority to perform the following actions:

- Entering any workplace at any time without warrant or prior notice and questioning any person.
- Inspecting any or all areas of the workplace.
- Delaying or refusing access to the College campus for contractors, event participants, or rental users if requested documents necessary for the risk assessment are not provided in a timely manner.
- Stopping or delaying a class or activity and decommissioning equipment after a risk assessment.
- Shutting down parts of or the entire workplace if a significant risk exists or if *CNESST* zero-tolerance regulations are breached.

7.5 MEMBERS OF THE COLLEGE COMMUNITY

Every member of the College Community must perform the following actions:

- Complying with all relevant regulations and standards set by government agencies and other competent authorities regarding health and safety.
- Complying with this Policy.

SECTION 8 – HEALTH AND SAFETY VIOLATIONS

The Health & Safety Manager is the assigned College employer delegate to initiate the procedure for any disciplinary actions following health and safety violations.

8.1 EMPLOYEES

All employees have the right to refuse work that they consider to be hazardous, without risk of reprisal.

Any deviation from the College's health and safety program or any behaviour prohibited by *CNESST* regulations may result in disciplinary action in accordance with applicable laws and collective agreements.

8.2 STUDENTS AND STUDENT INTERNS

If a student contravenes health and safety requirements, the matter will be handled in accordance with Student Services procedures. Any deviation from the College's health and safety program or behaviour prohibited by *CNESST* regulations may result in disciplinary action in accordance with College policies.

8.3 CONTRACTORS

Contractor activities that violate *CNESST* zero-tolerance regulations will be immediately shut down by the Health & Safety Manager or another College-authorized person.

Written warnings, penalties, and/or fines may be applied to contractors for health and safety deviations in accordance with the terms of their contract.

SECTION 9 – PERIODICITY OF REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed every five (5) years or sooner, as circumstances may require.

SECTION 10 – EFFECTIVE DATE

This Policy will come into effect upon enactment.