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## Macleans College - POLICIES & DIRECTIVES

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TITLE: **SAFE SCHOOL POLICIES**

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### General Workplace Hazards

#### **OCCUPATIONAL OVERUSE SYNDROME (OOS):**

##### **Objectives**

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Identify and solve problems in the work place which may contribute to the causes of OOS.
- Provide support for staff who have OOS symptoms.
- Facilitate the full return to work of affected staff members at a pace consistent with the needs of the individual, balanced with the needs of the college.

##### **Employee Responsibilities**

Everyone is required to take responsibility for their own health and safety in the work place. This includes following ergonomic work practices. It may require changes to personal habits and work practices to prevent the occurrence of OOS or to aid recovery.

During treatment and recovery from OOS symptoms, the employee has these responsibilities:

- Follow the OOS *"Guidelines for Prevention and Management."* A copy is held on file with the Health and Safety Co-ordinator.
- Complying with ergonomic work practices.
- Monitoring and keeping their manager informed of their progress/regress.
- Jointly and voluntarily participating in the development of their recovery and rehabilitation plan.

In addition, they need to be aware how any decisions they make could affect their rehabilitation.

##### **Reporting**

Symptoms of OOS are to be reported using the *"Injury and Incident Report"*. This form is to be completed with the assistance of the School Nurse, with a copy to the Health and Safety Co-ordinator to be held on file.

##### **MANAGER'S RESPONSIBILITIES:**

If a staff member advises their manager of symptoms that may potentially be diagnosed as Occupational Overuse Syndrome (OOS), the manager is to advise the Health and Safety Co-ordinator. The form –*"Injury and Incident Report"* - is to be completed, with a copy forwarded to the Associate Principal is to retain a copy on staff personnel files.

##### **Investigation of Causes**

The manager is to advise the Health and Safety Co-ordinator who should then investigate, focusing on the symptoms being experienced and the possible cause. If further assistance is required, the matter will be referred to the Health and Safety Committee.

## **Maintaining Proper Records**

The Health and Safety Co-ordinator, in liaison with the School Nurse, is to ensure that a record is kept of all medical treatment undertaken by the employee, in accordance with accident insurance requirements and the Privacy Act. Information should also be documented on staff personnel files held with the Business Manager.

It is strongly advised that the staff member who complains of OOS should:

- Be seen as soon as possible by either the employee's own doctor or a college nominated Doctor or Specialist in the treatment of OOS.
- Attend physiotherapy if necessary.
- Be seen by other professionals as appropriate.
- If a doctor prescribes time away from work (either full or part-time) or restricted duties, an ACC medical certificate is required.

The above action should be taken only if the staff member agrees. If there is disagreement over the course of action to be taken, then the senior manager must be referred to.

## **REHABILITATION PROCESS:**

The college will support rehabilitation for an agreed period of time. This period will be determined by taking into account the factors for each individual, their recovery and rehabilitation plan, the severity of their condition, and relevant conditions in the employee's employment contract. A staff member's condition will be reviewed at least once every four weeks during the rehabilitation period to assess progress. A record of these meetings is to be taken.

The college is aware that lengthy periods away from work are physically and psychologically difficult. When this occurs or the employee fails to make a recovery within the expected time frame, other options may be examined with the employee and the ACC Case Manager.

## **Consultants and OOS Specialists**

Where necessary, the college will engage the services of specialists in work place practices and the treatment of OOS, to provide advice and help and ensure a safe environment in any work place.

## **VISUAL DISPLAY UNITS:**

Employees who work continuously at computer screens should be given relief by variations in work or by regular spells of 10 minutes in every hour.

The Support Staff in Schools' Collective Agreement 2014-2016 (the clause referring to Eye Tests – Visual Display Units) states *"Any permanent employee whose weekly hours of work set under clause 2.4.2 are not less than 20 per week and who works on a VDU for at least 50% of their normal working time shall be entitled to an eye test biennially or as required at the employer's expense. If the test discloses that prescription lenses are required for the normal viewing distance of a VDU, or that an eyesight problem has been created or worsened by a VDU, then the actual and reasonable cost of single vision spectacle lenses will be met by the employer. The employer will also meet the actual and reasonable cost of spectacle frames where the employee requires lenses for the first time"*.

Macleans College accepts the spirit of this clause for occupational safety and health reasons.