

Footwear Policy

1. Policy Purpose

To meet the requirements of the WCB OH&S Regulation for personal protective clothing and equipment.

2. Policy Statement

Footwear worn by Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) staff, physicians, and students on duty must be of a type, style and condition, which will not expose them to any preventable hazard. (WCB OH&S Reg. 8.22(1))

Footwear will be chosen based on job tasks and the potential for injuries associated with those job tasks as determined by risk assessment. The following factors will be considered: slipping, uneven terrain, abrasion, ankle protection and foot support, crushing potential, temperature extremes, corrosive substances, puncture hazards (sharps), electrical shock, and any other recognizable hazard. (WCB OH&S Reg. 8.22(2))

Responsibilities

Managers/Supervisors

Managers and Supervisors are responsible for following, monitoring, and enforcing workplace compliance with the Footwear Policy; to ensure that the footwear risk assessment process is carried out.

Employee & Workplace Health & Safety (E&WH&S)

E&WH&S will assist departments and JHSCs with the risk assessment process if necessary and provide support as needed.

Joint Health & Safety Committees (JHSC)

To participate in the footwear risk assessment process; promote the use of safety footwear; and provide recommendations as necessary in regards to the policy.

Employees/Medical Staff/Researchers/Students

Every employee, physician, researcher and student is required to obtain appropriate footwear and wear it while on duty. This includes Certified Safety Footwear or Safety/Substantial Footwear. This footwear must not be removed while performing those duties for which the risk assessment was conducted.

Contractors

Acknowledge and comply with the VCH Footwear Policy.

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Issued By: Vice President, Employee Engagement			
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This policy is incorporated into the VCH Personal Protective Equipment Policy and Program.

3. Policy Scope

This policy applies to all facilities of Vancouver Coastal Health.

4. Policy Principles

Categories of Footwear

- Category 1** The hazards are such as to require *certified safety footwear*. Since this footwear is only certified with respect to certain types of hazards, regard must be given to whether there should be additional requirements to cover all risks of an employee's job.

- Category 2** There are some risks of injury that require footwear to meet the VCH standard of *substantial or safety footwear*, but not those of certified safety footwear. For example nursing, which does not need protective toe caps, but must wear footwear that will protect against a sharp dropping on the foot.

- Category 3** This category refers to occupations, such as many office staff, where there are no risks of foot injury for which special requirements are necessary.

5. Guidelines

Patient/Client/Resident Care Staff (includes employees, physicians, researchers, and students)

Patient care staff must ensure that their footwear is in a condition to provide the required protection. Patient care staff whose duties are primarily clerical or supervisory, and who do not leave their work areas, are not required to wear safety footwear UNLESS the circumstances or the work activity requires it. Patient care staff who leave their work area to enter areas of risk to interact or perform patient, resident, client care and public inspection duties **MUST wear *Safety Footwear, which*** covers the foot completely, heel and toe; (sandals and footwear with heel straps are not acceptable). The ***Safety Footwear must*** provide traction on potentially slippery surfaces, (typically a rubberized sole material with some kind of ribbed, dimpled or grooved surface, this surface must be in good condition and not worn smooth; leather soles are not acceptable). ***All patient care staff and physicians require Category 2 footwear.***

Material Handling Areas

Staff who operate or work around forklift trucks, use pallet jacks, or handle skids, as well as staff who move heavy equipment, must wear certified safety footwear with steel toe protection (Grade 1, Green CSA label on the inside) at all times while conducting these activities or conducting work in the areas where these activities are taking place.

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Safe Walkways

Staff using a safe walkway as a transit route are not required to wear certified safety footwear however they (a) must stay within the area defined by painted or other accepted lines, and (b) must wear substantial footwear (i.e., no open toes) or open heels. Any staff conducting work within the safe walkways must wear certified safety footwear.

Trades Areas & Construction Zones

Staff shall wear a minimum of certified safety footwear with steel toe and sole plate puncture protection (Grade 1, Green triangular CSA patch on the outside) at all times while in a construction zone or trades area.

6. Definitions

Certified Safety Footwear: is required if a determination has been made that indicates the footwear is required to have toe protection, metatarsal protection, puncture resistant soles, electrical protection or any combination of these. The footwear must then meet the requirements of the WCB OH&S Regulation 8.22(3). This regulation states that the following standards are acceptable.

- a) *CSA Standard CAN/CSA-Z195-M92, Protective Footwear,*
- b) *ANSI Standard Z41-1991 American National Standard for Personal Protective Footwear*
- c) *British Safety Institute Standard BS EN 345:1993 Specification for Safety Footwear for Professional Use*
- d) *British Safety Institute Standard BS EN 346:1993 Specification for Protective Footwear for Professional Use*

Construction Zones: identified areas where any alteration, erection, repair, dismantling, demolition, structural or routine maintenance, painting, land clearing, earth moving, grading, excavating, trenching, digging, boring, drilling, blasting, concreting, the installation of any machinery or any other work deemed to be construction by the WCB. (WCB OH&S Regulation 20.1)

Material Handling Area: areas where forklift trucks, pallet jacks, or skids are being used, or where heavy equipment is being moved.

Safety/Substantial Footwear: completely encloses the foot (heel and toe) and is constructed of leather or another appropriate solid material. This footwear must be in good condition.

Athletic shoes are acceptable for occupational use provided the style & construction provides protection from the danger to which the staff will be exposed and be in good condition. For example if the hazard is slipping, then the sole must be in good condition and not worn smooth. Another example would be if the shoe had a mesh-type covering over the toe area. The nylon mesh would not be acceptable in a laboratory, or patient care areas that handle bio-hazardous fluids and or sharps (ie needles) that may penetrate a shoe with a nylon mesh upper if dropped.

Sandals and footwear with heel straps are not acceptable under this classification.

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Safe Walkway: Access through safety footwear required areas that are defined by yellow lines painted on the floor.

Staff: As referred to in the policy and guidelines includes VCH employees and physicians, researchers and students carrying out duties for VCH or at VCH facilities.

Trade Area: Any workshop outside of defined safe walkways, interstitial floors and mechanical rooms.

Issued by:		
Name: _____	Title: _____	Date: _____

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