Laboratory Safety Corrective Action Procedure

This procedure is designed to provide a structured corrective action process that seeks to both improve and prevent a recurrence of behavior that may compromise the laboratory working environment. Such a progressive procedure usually consists of verbal warnings and counseling, followed by written warnings, followed by additional actions as the situation may warrant. Steps may be combined or skipped, depending upon the facts of the situation and the nature of the safety violation(s).

Outlined below are the progressive steps that are taken to address infractions of health and safety policies. These steps apply to faculty and staff, as well as graduate students and undergraduate researchers. Issues involving undergraduate students in teaching laboratories will be addressed with the laboratory instructor, unless there is an imminent danger to the students.

1. Verbal Warning and Counseling

Personnel from EH&S will discuss with the person involved the nature of the infraction, and will clearly outline the expectations and corrective steps that must be taken to resolve the issue. Within 1 business day, EH&S personnel will prepare a written summary of this warning and counseling and will email a copy to the person involved and the person’s immediate supervisor.

2. Written Warning

Personnel from EH&S will prepare a more formal written statement that will contain information concerning the nature of the infraction and will reference the previous verbal warning. It will outline the expectations and corrective steps that must be taken to resolve the issue, as well as outline the consequences of continued infractions. Within 1 business day, copies of this written warning will be sent to both the person involved and the person’s immediate supervisor. Copies of this warning and the initial verbal warning will also be sent to the Department Chair (for employees) or Graduate Director (for graduate students).
3. **Final Written Warning**

Personnel from EH&S will prepare a written statement outlining the repeated nature of the infraction, and will reference all previous warnings. It will outline expectations and corrective steps that must be taken to resolve the issue, as well as caution that sanctions will be recommended if the infractions continue. Within 1 business day, copies of this final warning will be sent to the person involved, the person’s immediate supervisor, and the Department Chair or Graduate Director (as appropriate). Copies of this final warning and all previous warnings will also be sent to the Dean of the appropriate School.

4. **Recommendation for Lab Privilege Sanctions**

Personnel from EH&S will prepare a written statement that recommends the suspension of lab activities for the person, due to repeated infractions of safety rules. Within 1 business day, copies of this recommendation will be sent to the person involved, the person’s immediate supervisor, the Department Chair or Graduate Director (as appropriate) and the Dean of the appropriate School. Copies of this recommendation and all previous warnings will also be sent to the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost.

**Laboratory Inspection Protocol**

Official laboratory inspections may reveal health and safety infractions dealing with such issues as chemical storage, waste handling, and improper usage of laboratory control measures. These inspections have their own unique protocol that has been developed to aid in ensuring that issues found during the inspection are addressed. The laboratory inspection protocol will be followed for any given inspection. However, if a lab develops a history of repeated infractions, this may be ground for initiating the procedure outlined above.

The general lab inspection protocol is outlined in the flowchart on the following page.
Laboratory Inspection Conducted

Deficiencies Found?

YES

Immediately dangerous to life and health?

Issue Stop Work Order; report to PI, DSO, DC, Dean, Provost

NO

Deficiencies numerous and/or repeat?

YES

Issue report to PI and DSO within 1 business day and re-inspect in 1-2 weeks

NO

Were any deficiencies critical?*

YES

Issue report to PI, DSO, and DC within 1 business day and re-inspect in 2 business days

NO

Were deficiencies corrected?

YES

Report to PI, DSO, DC, Dean and re-inspect next business day

NO

Were deficiencies corrected?

YES

Report to PI, DSO, DC, Dean, Provost, and re-inspect next business day

NO

Were deficiencies corrected?

YES

Consult with Provost. Lab closure possible, depending on severity of violation.

NO

Were deficiencies corrected?

YES

Issue report within 1 business day, send to all appropriate parties

NO

Deficiencies numer- ous and/or repeat?

YES

Issue report to PI and DSO within 1 business day and re-inspect in 1-2 weeks

NO

Were deficiencies corrected?

YES

Issue report to PI within 1 business day and re-inspect within 30 days

NO

Were deficiencies corrected?

YES

Issue report within 1 business day, send to all appropriate parties

NO

*Critical deficiencies: Serious violations that pose an elevated risk to personnel, but are not immediately dangerous to life and health.