University Health and Safety

Fact Sheet

Laboratory-Specific Training

Each lab at the University has unique procedures, processes, and hazards. Because of this, all employees must receive training specific to the hazards in their individual laboratories, provided by experts in their areas.

Before anyone starts work in a laboratory at the University (including employees, students, visiting researchers, etc.), they must complete four online basic safety modules, provided by University Health and Safety (UHS), and receive laboratory-specific training provided by the principal investigator (PI) or their designee. Lab-specific training is separate from the trainings that UHS provides online or in person. Visiting researchers and post-doctoral students are also required to complete this training, even if they have done similar work in the past.

Training Responsibilities

The principal investigator (PI) of each space has the responsibility to ensure that all of their personnel, including students, staff, graduate students, and visiting researchers receive training on the hazards in their laboratory. The PI may designate others to provide the training, as long as that person is knowledgeable about the topic, how the procedure is performed at that location, and has been trained on the hazards themselves.

Training must be provided to new staff members when they start, to all members as an annual refresher training, when new procedures are created, or when a new hazard comes into the lab, such as when you introduce a new chemical or process. The lab-specific training is the first introduction for new members to how your group approaches safe practices and various protocols. Be sure the individuals providing training are good representatives for your group and the safety culture you want to promote.

Recordkeeping Requirements

Laboratories are required to maintain annually updated records showing lab-specific training has been provided to all their lab members. These records should be kept for a minimum of five years. Labs are not required to keep records of the online courses required by UHS, but must verify that they have been completed.

Training records must include:

- The name of the person trained
- Who provided the training
- Date of the training
- Training topics covered.

Table 1: Example of Online Training Log

Lab Staff	Trained By	Initial Date of Training	Topic
Grad Student A	PI	01/03/2018	Cleaning glassware
Grad Student B	Post-doc	01/05/2018	Handling liquid nitrogen
Visiting Researcher	Grad Student A	01/18/2018	Laser alignment

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In the event of an incident, one of the first questions will be "Where are your training records?" Have them available in a format any group member can easily provide. For many labs, this is a binder kept in the lab with these handwritten records. Electronic records (i.e., an Excel sheet, Google document, etc.) are also acceptable, as long as they can be easily accessed when needed (see Table 1 for an example). Another simple method is to make an entry in the lab notebook of the person who was trained, and have it signed by the person who provided the training. Our website has a printable template for logging training.

Required Topics

Each lab must address the hazards specific to their work. All hazards that are applicable to your research should be addressed, including chemical, physical, radiation, or biological hazards. A non-inclusive list of potential topics is below. By definition, lab-specific training should be provided in person at the location where the procedure will be performed.

You should document lab-specific training for every Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) that a person is trained on. An easy way to do this is to add a training section at the end of the SOP, and all individuals who are trained must add their name, the date, and who trained them.

General	Chemicals	Biological	Radiation	Other
•Lab Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) •Emergency response equipment, procedures, etc. •Documentation - training records, lab safety plan, etc.	•Storage location and requirements •Chemical labeling •Proper waste disposal - labeling, storage, etc. •PPE requirements •Handling of gas cylinders and cryogenics •Location of SDS's	•Bloodborne Pathogen trainings •Proper waste disposal •Spill clean-up plans •PPE requirements	•General requirements •Food and beverage prohibition •Personnel monitoring •Record keeping •Requirement for radiation training from UHS	•Procedures unique to your lab •Field safety •Animal handling •Ergonomics •Working alone or after hours

UHS provides a more comprehensive listing of potential topics that may need to be included in your training, available at https://z.umn.edu/lstraining

Questions

If you have any questions about training or documentation requirements, contact your Department Safety Officer, your UHS Research Safety Professional, or call the UHS main office at (612) 626-6002.