

Employee Safety

Policy:

The Skagit County Coroner's Office recognizes and adheres to Local, State and Federal guidelines regarding the employee's safety and precautions to prevent potential injury on the job.

Employees must use the following universal precautions:

1. Consider blood and body fluids as potentially infectious
2. Make full use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE)
3. Always use gloves when handling any foreign matter or material
4. Use approved masks, safety goggles or face shields for procedures that may involve splashing of blood or bodily fluids, creation of aerosols or exposure to mucus membranes such as eyes, nose or mouth.
5. Use gowns, aprons, or approved protective body clothing to prevent exposure of body parts to blood products or bodily fluids.
6. The PPE must be removed and disposed of before leaving the work area.

The purpose of the PPE is to protect the employees of the Skagit County Coroner's Office from exposure to workplace hazards and risk of injury. The PPE of appropriate sizes will be provided to all employees at no cost. Training in the use of appropriate PPE for specific tasks or procedures is provided by the Skagit County Coroner.

Employees must use the following universal precautions when handling sharps:

1. Be diligent when using or disposing of needles, scalpels or other sharp items.
2. Do not bend, break or recap needles.
3. Dispose contaminated needles or sharps in a biohazard puncture proof container (i.e. sharps container) immediately after use.
4. All containers that store blood or bodily fluids must be color coded or labeled to include a bio-hazard sign.
5. Sharps containers must be accessible to all employees.
6. It is the responsibility of any employee to remove and discard of full sharps containers and replace with a new and empty sharps container.
7. Eyewash stations are readily available to all employees where potential exposure to blood, bodily fluids and potentially infectious materials and hazardous chemicals.
8. Each employee will wash their hands after handling any material related to a case including but not limited to clothing, shoes, property, jewelry and bodily fluids.
9. It is the responsibility of the investigator to request and utilize resources to lift and move heavy bodies or carry bodies long distances, through rough terrain or in various elevations.

Employee Safety Cont.

General Safety

Employees are required to comply with all agency safety rules and are encouraged to actively participate in identifying ways to make the agency a safer place to work.

1. Employees must report unsafe conditions or actions to the Coroner
2. Employees must report all injuries to the Coroner and complete the required paperwork.
3. It is important that all employees that are required to do so, always use personal protective equipment (PPE) that is in good working condition.
4. Employees should not remove or disable any safety device or safeguard provided for employee protection.
5. Supervisors are responsible for the health and safety of their employees and as a part of their daily duties must check the workplace for unsafe conditions, watch employees for unsafe actions, and take prompt action to eliminate any hazards.
 - a. It is the duty of the Coroner or assigned staff member to ensure employees have received an initial orientation and training on safe operation of equipment or tasks before beginning work.
 - b. The Coroner must also ensure that all employees receive and wear PPE.
 - c. The Coroner must ensure that all incidents are fully investigated and corrective action is taken to prevent hazardous conditions or behaviors from happening again.

Biological Hazards and Safety

Biological hazards include bacteria, viruses, fungi, and other living organisms that can cause acute and chronic infections to enter the body either directly or through breaks in the skin. Coroner Office employees can be exposed to these biological hazards whether at a scene or in the autopsy suite. Where there is potential exposure to biological hazards, employees should practice proper personal hygiene, particularly hand washing. The employee should also wear personal protective equipment such as gloves and respirators.

Employees shall review the OSHA fact sheets related to blood borne pathogens and handling of contaminated sharps (attached to this policy)

Basic Safety Rules

The following basic safety rules have been established to help make the agency a safe and efficient place to work. Failure to comply with these rules will result in disciplinary action.

1. Never do anything that is unsafe in order to get the job done. If a job is unsafe, report it to your supervisor.
2. Do not remove or disable safety devices. Keep guard at all times in operating machinery.
3. Never operate machinery or use a piece of equipment unless you have been trained and are authorized.
4. Use PPE whenever it is required
5. Obey all safety warning signs
6. Working under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs or using them at work is prohibited.
7. Do not bring firearms or explosives onto company property.
8. Smoking is not permitted.
9. Clean up spills immediately.
10. Replace all tools and supplies after use.

Employee Safety Cont.

Safety Policies During Medical Emergencies

The employee should immediately report work-related injuries to the Coroner.

The Employee must comply with the Skagit County Human Resources Accident Form at the time of the incident or as soon as possible thereafter and provide the form to the Coroner. If the employee is unable to complete the form due to the nature of the injury/medical emergency, then the Coroner or another assigned employee may complete the form on their behalf.

POLICY