

## GUIDANCE FOR GROUP-SPECIFIC NEW EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION ENVIRONMENT, SAFETY, HEALTH & ASSURANCE (ESH&A)

ESH&A is providing this guidance for research programs or groups that want more information about what constitutes effective group-specific orientation of new employees.

### Background

Ames Laboratory continually strives for improvement in its safety culture. Efforts to reduce injuries and illnesses to zero are on-going and require active participation from line management. Although safety improvement is evident at Ames Laboratory, some issues continue to limit performance improvements. Additional measures have been developed that should elevate the Laboratory's safety culture to a higher level of performance. This guidance information is to be used by line management as a means of evaluating and improving current procedures for training of new employees.

### Institutional and Group-specific Training

Ames Laboratory has a two-tiered training program. Institutional training courses provide general information on a variety of topics. Activity or group-specific training and orientation takes place in the workplace and addresses hazards associated with the specific activity being conducted. To provide a safe and healthy workplace, both types of training must be completed prior to conducting work.

### Key Components of Effective Group-specific Training and New Employee Orientation

The following items are an integral part of assuring that all new employees are properly trained and receive applicable safety information:

- 1) **Assure That Employee Has Checked in at Human Resources** – This is the first step for a new employee. Employees are not allowed to perform work or occupy Laboratory spaces until they are official checked in at HR.
- 2) **Review Hazard Inventory/Training Needs Questionnaire (HI/TNQ) Documents** – The HI/TNQ is completed by the supervisor. It is imperative that this information be reviewed with the new employee and that they have a thorough understanding of the hazards associated with the job and its physical requirements. After the new employee has checked in, they will need to log into the Laboratory's training system and review their training requirements.
- 3) **Assure that Emergency Awareness Training (EAT) is Completed** – Emergency Awareness Training will be included in the training requirements for all employees who will occupy Ames Laboratory owned or rented space. The training provides information on emergency notification systems, evacuation procedures, location of safety equipment such as fire extinguishers and safety showers and the location of vital safety/emergency information such as Material Safety Data Sheets.
- 4) **Introduce Employees to Key Personnel** – Each employee needs to know who they report to and where they can go to get answers to their questions. In addition to supervisory personnel and office administrative staff, employees should be introduced to their safety coordinator or safety representative. Employees should know where the ESH&A and Occupational Medicine departments are located and that all injuries and incidents should be reported to these offices.

- 5) **Review Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for Each Activity and Document “Authorization” for Each User Prior to Work** – SOPs are required for each experimental activity. These documents can be used as training tools for new employees and can be used to effectively to convey important safety information including a discussion of hazards and applicable hazard control measures. It is imperative that documentation exists for each authorized user for a given activity. Keep the following in mind when preparing or reviewing SOPs:
  - Maintain a standard format for all group procedures and include a clear title, date and sign-off.
  - Use simple language, readily understood by employees.
  - Qualified and experienced staff should prepare SOPs and conduct activity orientation.
  - Have sufficient procedural details to enable trained staff to perform a task without supervision.
  - All activity users need access to SOPs.
  - SOPs should be reviewed and updated on a regular basis.
- 6) **Review Applicable Safety Information** – There is an abundance of safety documentation describing various programs, policies and procedures. The [ESH&A Program Manual](#) describes the Laboratory’s safety program. The ISU [Laboratory Safety Manual](#) describes procedures for the safe handling of chemicals and has been adopted by Ames Laboratory. Employees must be familiar with the programmatic documentation that covers their work activities.
- 7) **Ensure Employee Has Necessary Personal Protective Equipment and Assure Appropriate Usage** – PPE should be readily available to all employees. Make sure the employee knows what types of PPE are necessary and required to safely conduct work. It’s also critical that employees be trained on when to wear PPE and how to care for it including storage. Supervisors should observe PPE usage and encourage appropriate usage.
- 8) **Encourage Employees to be “Safety Conscious”** – Employee participation in the safety program is vital to success. Employees should be encouraged to report unsafe work conditions, voice concerns about safety or any other issues and ask questions.

## DOCUMENTATION

It is imperative that activity or group-specific training be documented and kept current. A key concept to keep in mind when reviewing current procedures is that documentation supporting this process must be auditable. Records should be kept in a designated area and be readily accessible in the event of an audit. In the event of an accident, training records are usually one of the first items checked by investigators.

For more assistance with this guidance, contact ESH&A, G40 TASF, 294-2153.