



**Approving University Official(s):** Executive Vice President  
**Responsible Offices:** Research Safety and Environmental Health and Safety

**Effective date:** June 1, 2023

**Next review date:** June 1, 2026

## **ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY**

### **Policy Statement**

Northwestern University is committed to Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) and Research Safety (RS). Northwestern's EHS and RS programs support the educational and research mission of the University - working to protect the University community from injuries and illnesses, accident prevention, fire safety, and the proper management and disposal of hazardous waste. Northwestern has a robust health and safety program developed in compliance with federal, state, and local laws.

### **Purpose**

This Policy outlines critical requirements for health and safety, reporting non-compliance, and participation in mandatory training.

### **Audience**

This policy applies to all members of the Northwestern community, including faculty, staff, students, contractors, and visitors to campus.

### **Policy Implementation**

#### *I. Adherence to Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) Regulations and Procedures*

All members of the Northwestern community are expected to follow all applicable federal, state, and local laws, and University policies and procedures governing EHS, including those referenced in this policy (see "Related Information" below).

#### *II. Reporting*

All members of the Northwestern community must report hazardous conditions, EHS-related injuries, illnesses, and hazardous activities or conditions that may pose a risk to individuals, public health, and the environment. Research Safety is responsible for health and safety in the University's science programs and research laboratories (biological, chemical, and radiological). Environmental Health and Safety is responsible for EHS in all non-laboratory spaces. Both EHS and RS work closely together in a variety of areas.

Reports may be made anonymously through EthicsPoint.

### *III. Training*

All members of the Northwestern community are expected to participate in assigned EHS-related training, with the caveat that some training is mandatory, and some are optional.

Human Resources, through its myHR Learn system, serves as a records repository of the completion of required training for Northwestern employees. Research Safety or Environmental Health and Safety may maintain other training records outside of the myHR Learn system.

### *IV. Emergencies*

- To sustain a healthy campus, the University may implement guidelines and additional policies necessary to mitigate the risks of community safety and health hazards, such as the outbreak of infectious diseases, inclement weather, a natural or man-made disaster, or any other unforeseen circumstances. It may be subject to frequent change based on guidelines from local, state, and federal authorities.
- Guidelines and policies may include but are not limited to: vaccination requirements; health testing, monitoring, and reporting; suspension of services; partial or total closure of operations; partial or total shift to virtual/remote operations; quarantine and isolation; community behavior modifications; adjustments to classes and academic coursework; changes to University-related travel, meetings, and events; and, requirements for visitors and contractors.
- When a partial or total shift to virtual/remote operations is necessary, departments, schools, or units are responsible for evaluating operational and staffing needs in alignment with the Policy on [Employees in Essential Functions and Positions](#).

## **Consequences of Violating this Policy**

Northwestern faculty, staff, students, visitors, and contractors who violate applicable federal, state, and local laws, or University policies and procedures governing EHS are potentially subject to disciplinary action by the University. The University may be subject to civil penalties, including fines for violations of applicable federal, state, and local laws. Any contractor who violates this Policy is subject to potential review and termination.

## **Statement of Protection for Reporting Concerns**

The University's [Policy on Non-Retaliation](#) prohibits retaliation against any member of its community for reporting or inquiring in good faith about what the member believes to be wrongful or unlawful activity.

## **Related Information**

*Laws, regulations, ordinances, and standards*

[US Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration 29 CFR 1910 General Industry Standards and where applicable 29 CFR 1926](#)

[US Environmental Protection Agency](#)

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

[Illinois Pollution Control Board Title 35: Environmental Protection](#)

[Cook County Environment and Sustainability](#)

[Cook County Ordinances and Codes](#)

[City of Chicago Fire Prevention Codes](#)

[City of Chicago Building Codes](#)

[City of Evanston Ordinances and Codes](#)

*University policies, procedures, guidelines, and forms:*

[Research Safety](#)

[Environmental Health and Safety](#)

[Policy on Non-Retaliation](#)

[Employees in Essential Functions and Positions](#)

[Workplace Strategies](#)

## **Contacts**

The following individuals/offices can address questions regarding this Policy:

Executive Director

Research Safety

Phone: (847) 491-5581; email: [researchsafety@northwestern.edu](mailto:researchsafety@northwestern.edu)

Director

Environmental Health and Safety

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## **History**

Policy Origination Date: June 6, 2019

Amendment Date(s): June 1, 2023

## **Policy URL:**

<http://policies.northwestern.edu/docs/university-ehs-policy-final.pdf>

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