

Title:	Organizational Structure for Biosafety at St. Michael's Hospital, Unity Health Toronto		
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1.0 PURPOSE

A biosafety program, which in context of the Canadian Biosafety Standards and Guidelines (CBSG) includes a biosecurity component, is designed to prevent infections and illnesses among workers and the public and protect the environment from harm by preventing the release of potentially infectious material or toxins.

A biosafety program should work to promote, encourage and reinforce safe work practices, provide a metric to improve safety performance, and help to increase regulatory compliance through a combination of training, documentation, inspections, evaluation, review, and clear communication.

The complexity of any biosafety program will depend on the nature of the organization and the activities performed by it. Larger, more complex organizations such as those found at St. Michael's, have dedicated biosafety staff members whose role it is to ensure that the biosafety program is implemented and reviewed. Key to the success of any biosafety program is a strong commitment from senior management, supervisors and individual workers within the organization.

2.0 POLICY

Under the stipulations of the Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act, Unity Health Toronto, in its capacity as an employer, is entrusted with a duty of care toward its workforce. The institution is mandated to uphold adherence to the Act and all relevant regulations, taking every reasonable precaution in the given circumstances to safeguard the well-being of its workers.

The senior management serves as the ultimate authority, responsible for assigning suitable authority for biosafety measures. Additionally, senior management is tasked with ensuring the availability of ample resources to sustain the biosafety program and comply with legal requirements. Furthermore, it falls within their purview to prioritize and address biosafety concerns in an appropriate and timely manner.

Director Research Facilities

In alignment with the biosafety program, the Director of Research Facilities operating under the guidance of the Vice-President of Research is the Licence Holder Representative (LHR) tasked with being responsible for developing and promoting biosafety policies at St. Michael’s Hospital, Unity Health Toronto as well as the ability to delegate to appropriate individuals, responsibilities to oversee the biosafety program.

Biological Safety Officer (BSO)

An institution with a HPTA licence must appoint a BSO. Experience in the handling, use and safe disposal of biohazardous material is a primary requirement for the role of a BSO, as is knowledge of the HPTA and the HPTR, and any other federal or provincial legislation. This knowledge can be obtained through a combination of education, training and experience. A BSO is also required to have knowledge of biosafety and biosecurity standards, policies and practices applicable to the biohazards at St. Michael's Hospital.

The BSO, with the support of the Director Research Facilities, has the responsibility of, among other things, reviewing and approving all biosafety permits at St. Michael’s Hospital, issuing guidance on biosafety issues and overseeing inspections of the laboratory areas.

Version	Approval/Sub-approval body	Approval date
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02	Director Research Facilities	January 01, 2021
03	Director Research Facilities	November 27, 2023
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