Standard Operational Procedure
OHP-SOP-003

Occupational Health Screening Procedure for Hearing Conservation

1. Purpose

To establish a procedure to protect employees' hearing through audiometric screening aimed at early detection of hearing loss or deterioration, resulting from occupational noise exposure. Audiometry is an essential part of Concordia University's Hearing Conservation Program.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all Members of the University Community in job positions that have been identified as having exposure or potential exposure to noise that exceeds the 8 hour time-weighted average (TWA) of 85 dBA, as determined by Environmental Health and Safety.

This occupational health screening procedure is a component of the Hearing Conservation Program. In addition to complying with government regulations, this occupational health screening procedure establishes baseline data on employee hearing and provides a mechanism for early detection of occupationally induced hearing loss and for early identification of hearing problems which allows for appropriate interventions.

3. Definitions

Preferred Candidates: Applicants for vacant positions who have successfully completed the interview process and who have been short-listed for filling the vacant position.

University Sanctioned Activity: May include but is not limited to working, research, studying, working as an intern, and/or volunteering.

Members of the university community include:

- Employee - a person who, under a contract of lease of personal service or contract of apprenticeship is hired to work full-time or part-time in a permanent or a temporary position at the University. Employees include faculty and staff.
- Student - an individual who has contracted with and is registered at the University for an academic purpose.
- Intern - Students performing an internship, with or without remuneration, for a company or an institution.

An Undergraduate, Graduate or Postgraduate student carrying work for the University is per definition, an employee.

Standard Threshold Shift (STS): a change in hearing threshold relative to the baseline audiogram of an average of:

- OSHA Standards: 10 dB or more at 2000, 3000, and 4000 Hz in either ear;
- Quebec standards: 25 dB or more at 500, 1000, 2000 and 4000 Hz in either ear.

Time-Weighted Average (TWA): a time-weighted average is the average exposure over a specified period, usually a nominal eight hours.

4. Occupational Health Screening Requirements

- All Members of the University Community who occupy positions that been identified as having exposure or potential exposure to noise that exceeds the 8 hour time-weighted average (TWA) of 85 dBA will be enrolled in the Hearing Conservation Program, which includes Occupational Health Screening for Hearing Conservation.
- All Preferred Candidates who are applying for positions that have been identified as having exposure or potential exposure to noise that exceeds the 8 hour TWA of 85 dBA will complete baseline audiometric screening as part of their Fitness for Duty Evaluation (OHP-DOC-003).
- All individuals enrolled in the Hearing Conservation Program will complete audiometric screening every 2 years throughout their employment.
- All individuals enrolled in the Hearing Conservation Program will complete a final audiometric screening upon retirement or termination of employment at the university.

4.1 Audiometric Screening

Audiometric screening will include the following:

- Completion of the audiometric questionnaire (OHP-FORM-004) or equivalent;
- An otoscopic exam;
- An audiogram;
- Inform the individual of the screening results; and
- Referral to a medical specialist, if indicated.

4.2 Audiometric Screening Results

Where an audiogram shows a Standard Threshold Shift, a retest will be performed within 30 days. The best audiogram will be retained as the official result.

Environmental Health and Safety, in conjunction with the Occupational Health Physician, will analyze individual and aggregate data for early detection and trends of occupationally induced hearing loss.

4.3 Audiometric Screening Recordkeeping

Audiometric screening results will be maintained in the individual's Occupational Health File maintained by Environmental Health & Safety.

Occupational Health Files are not a medical file. They contain Occupational Health Program and screening records (e.g. questionnaires, testing and examination results, interviews or reports from professionals, including licensed health care providers). Occupational health files are maintained and

handled in accordance with Concordia University's privacy policies and Records Management Retention Rules, and with provincial regulatory requirements.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

In addition to the Roles and Responsibility stated in the Occupational Health Program Standard Operating Procedure OHP-DOC-001, the following roles and responsibilities also apply:

5.1 Individuals Requiring Enrollment in Occupational Health Screening Program for Hearing Conservation

All individuals identified as requiring enrollment in the Occupational Health Screening Program for Work Hearing Conservation are responsible for:

- Adhering to the Occupational Health Screening Requirements described herein (Section 4);
- Complying with the requirements for the Hearing Conservation Program, which includes avoiding exposure to loud noise for 14 hours prior to audiometric screening;
- Completing all required training before beginning to work in areas or completing tasks with as exposure or potential exposure to noise that exceeds the 8 hour TWA of 85 dBA;
- Reporting any exposure, injury, near-miss, or illness that may be associated with exposure to noise exceeding 85dB to their Supervisor, and submitting an Injury/Near-Miss Report Form (EHS-FORM-42) as soon as possible, as per the University's Policy on Injury Reporting and Investigation (VPS-42);
- Reporting to the Occupational Health Physician any medical or health condition or change in medical or health condition that could potentially affect their hearing; and
- Consulting with their physician, a physician through Health Services, or the Occupational Health Physician regarding concerns related to exposure or potential exposure to noise that exceeds the 8 hour TWA of 85 dBA.

5.2 Supervisors and Principal Investigator

Supervisors and Principal Investigators are responsible for:

- Identifying individuals requiring Occupational Health Screening;
- Complying with the requirements for the Hearing Conservation Program;
- Ensuring that all individuals under their responsibility have been informed about the potential risks of exposure or potential exposure to noise that exceeds the 8 hour time-weighted average (TWA) of 85 dBA;
- Ensuring Occupational Health Screening requirements are met for all individuals under their responsibility before allowing them to work in areas or completing tasks with as exposure or potential exposure to noise that exceeds the 8 hour TWA of 85 dBA;
- Assuming all costs associated with this program, with the exception of audiometric screening;
- Ensuring all required training is completed before beginning to work in areas or completing tasks with as exposure or potential exposure to noise that exceeds the 8 hour TWA of 85 dBA;
- Providing all required personal protective equipment (PPE) and safety equipment;
- Reporting to the Occupational Health Physician, any medical or health condition or change in medical or health condition that individuals have self-identified that could potentially affect

their hearing. A medical recommendation from the Occupational Health Physician may be required; and
- Reporting any exposure, injury, near-miss, or illness that may be associated with exposure to noise exceeding 85dB to the Occupational Health Program Coordinator, and submitting an Injury/Near-Miss Report Form (EHS-FORM-042) as soon as possible, as per the University's Policy on Injury Reporting and Investigation (VPS-42).

5.3 Environmental Health & Safety

Environmental Health & Safety is responsible for:
- Ensuring the services of an Occupational Health Physician are available for consultation, when required by the Occupational Health Program Coordinator, the Manager, Industrial Hygiene & Prevention (EHS), or any individual identified as requiring enrollment in the Occupational Health Screening Program for Hearing Conservation;
- Assuming the costs associated with audiometric screening;
- Determining noise levels, degrees of exposure and identifying the target population for enrollment into the Hearing Conservation Program; and
- The management of the Hearing Protection Program, maintaining records and investigating cases of occupational hearing loss.

5.4 Occupational Health Physician

Occupational Health Physician is responsible for:
- Determining the occupational health screening requirements for hearing conservation;
- Reviewing all audiometric screening results;
- Communicating audiometric screening results to at risk individuals;
- Determining if cases of identified hearing loss in at risk individuals are due to workplace exposures.
- Communicating restrictions to at risk individuals and their Supervisor; and
- Being available for consultation, when required, to the Manager, Industrial Hygiene & Prevention (EHS); or any individual identified as requiring enrollment in the Occupational Health Program for Hearing Conservation.

5.5 Occupational Health Program Coordinator (EHS)

The Occupational Health Program Coordinator is responsible for:
- Coordinating the Occupational Health Screening Program for Hearing Conservation, in collaboration with the Manager, Industrial Hygiene & Prevention (EHS) and the Occupational Health Physician;
- In collaboration with the Manager, Industrial Hygiene & Prevention (EHS), responding promptly to any reported exposures, injuries, near-miss, or illness that may be associated with the exposure to noise exceeding 85dB; and
- Maintaining and preserving the confidentiality of all occupation health records.

5.6 Human Resources

Human Resources is responsible for:

- Notify the Manager, Industrial Hygiene & Prevention (EHS) of all new hires, job transfers, and terminated or retiring employees.

6. Signature

This SOP requires the following approvals:

Pietro Gasparrini		June 1, 2017
Director		
Environmental Health & Safety	*Signature*	*Date*