## Office Safety

1. **Purpose**

To establish requirements for safe office practices.

1. **General**
2. Overhead Items:

* Always use a ladder or step stool to reach articles high above the floor.
* Never use a swivel chair or other makeshift device to reach high places.
* Avoid storing heavy objects above eye level.

1. Wall Hangings. Pictures and wall hangings should be secured with the proper fasteners.
2. Staples, Staplers, and Paper Cutters:

* Remove staples with a staple puller and dispose of used staples properly.
* Never overload or force staplers or paper cutters.
* Paper cutters must be left in the closed and latched position when not in use.

1. Paper Cuts

* Use a moistener to seal envelopes in order to avoid mouth cuts and germs.
* Avoid paper cuts by picking up individual sheets of paper at the corner.
* Exercise caution when turning book pages or going through files.

1. Scissors, Cutters, Sharp Objects

* Pass scissors handle first, blades together.
* Store them where they will not fall.
* Keep razor-type cutters (such as X-ACTO knives and box cutters) covered or shielded when not in use.
* When opening boxes with box cutters, always cut away from your body, not toward your body.
* Do not place pointed objects, such as pencils, pens, and letter openers with pointed ends upward in containers or pockets.
* Never throw loose glass pieces into a wastebasket. Dispose of broken glass in a marked container, such as a box.

1. **Printers, Copiers, Facsimiles**

* Avoid touching the heated parts of printers, copy machines and fax machines whenever adding or changing paper or removing paper jams.
* Never stick a metal object, such as a letter opener, into a machine, including typewriters.
* Do not allow paper or other materials to accumulate behind machinery.
* When possible, close the cover of copy machines while copying.
* Avoid looking directly at the intense light.
* Hearing protection may be required in some areas where many copiers, printers, etc. may be running simultaneously, creating a dangerous noise level. Obey the Hearing Protection Required signs. (Refer to the Hearing Conservation Program for further information.)

1. **Paper Shredders**

* Keep ties, dangling jewelry, and loose clothing away from the paper shredder by standing to the side of the machine while operating it.
* Stand in a position which allows immediate access to the on/off switch.
* If the shredder does not have an automatic shutoff, turn it off after each use.
* Avoid overloading the machine.
* If the machine becomes jammed, do not attempt to manually unjam the machine until the power is turned off and the machine is unplugged. (Refer to the Lockout/Tagout Program for further information.)

1. **Solvents and Cleaners**

* Check instructions on containers and Material Safety Data Sheets for pertinent information regarding personal protective equipment required. (Refer to the Hazard Communication Program and Personal Protective Equipment Program for further information.)
* Solvents and cleaners should be properly stored, with larger volumes possibly requiring special cabinets. (Refer to the Hazard Communication Program for further information.)

1. **File Cabinets / Arranging and Using File Cabinets**:

* Whenever possible, file cabinets should be arranged side by side and bolted together.
* Do not overload the upper drawers of file cabinets.
* Open only one file cabinet drawer at a time.
* Never leave an open file drawer unattended.
* Close desk and file cabinet drawers when they are not in use.
* Do not position file cabinets and files so that open drawers block passageways.
* Two-drawer file cabinets must not be stacked unless they are designed to be stacked and are fastened together.
* File cabinets must not be stacked on top of tables or desks unless they are designed for such use. Even if they are bolted to the wall, they may fall if the table is moved because of excessive unsupported weight.
* Tall or large file cabinets, bookcases, and cabinets should be bolted to the wall, particularly in libraries or file rooms.

1. **Electrical Equipment**

* Do not attempt any electrical repairs unless you are qualified to do the work. (Refer to the Electrical Safety Program and the Lockout/Tagout Program for further information.)
* Worn electrical cords shall be replaced promptly by qualified personnel.
* Keep walking areas clear of telephone and electrical cords. Temporary cords which cross walkways or work areas shall be securely taped down or placed under protective rubber strips.
* Electrical outlets shall not be overloaded.
* Use only properly grounded, 3-pronged plugs, or double insulated appliances approved by recognized testing laboratories.
* Hands should be dry before plugging, unplugging, or operating electrical equipment.
* Turn off coffee pot warmers when they are not in use. Be sure to check them every day before leaving to be sure they are turned off.
* Never block forced-air heater outlets.
* Avoid overloading electrical circuits by contacting office maintenance personnel before utilizing an electric heater.
* Avoid leaving microwave ovens unattended when in use.
* Keep coffee and other beverages away from electrical equipment.
* Unplug electric staplers and pencil sharpeners and any other electrical device before opening them for servicing. (Refer to the Lockout/Tagout Program section for further information.)

1. **Computer Workstations**

When using computers for long periods of time, you should:

* Take breaks and look away from the screen periodically.
* Stretch to reduce muscle tension.
* Utilize proper posture.

1. **References**

* Code of Federal Regulations, Part 1910.1200 – “Hazard Communication”
* Code of Federal Regulations, Part 1910, Subpart E – “Exit Routes, Emergency Action
* Plans and Fire Prevention Plans” Code of Federal Regulations, Part 1910, Subpart I – “Personal Protective Equipment”