



نظام الشارقة للسلامة والصحة المهنية
Occupational Safety & Health Sharjah

حكومة الشارقة
هيئة الوقاية والسلامة
Government of Sharjah
Prevention And Safety Authority



Code of Practice

Employee Welfare and Wellbeing

OSHJ-Cop-15

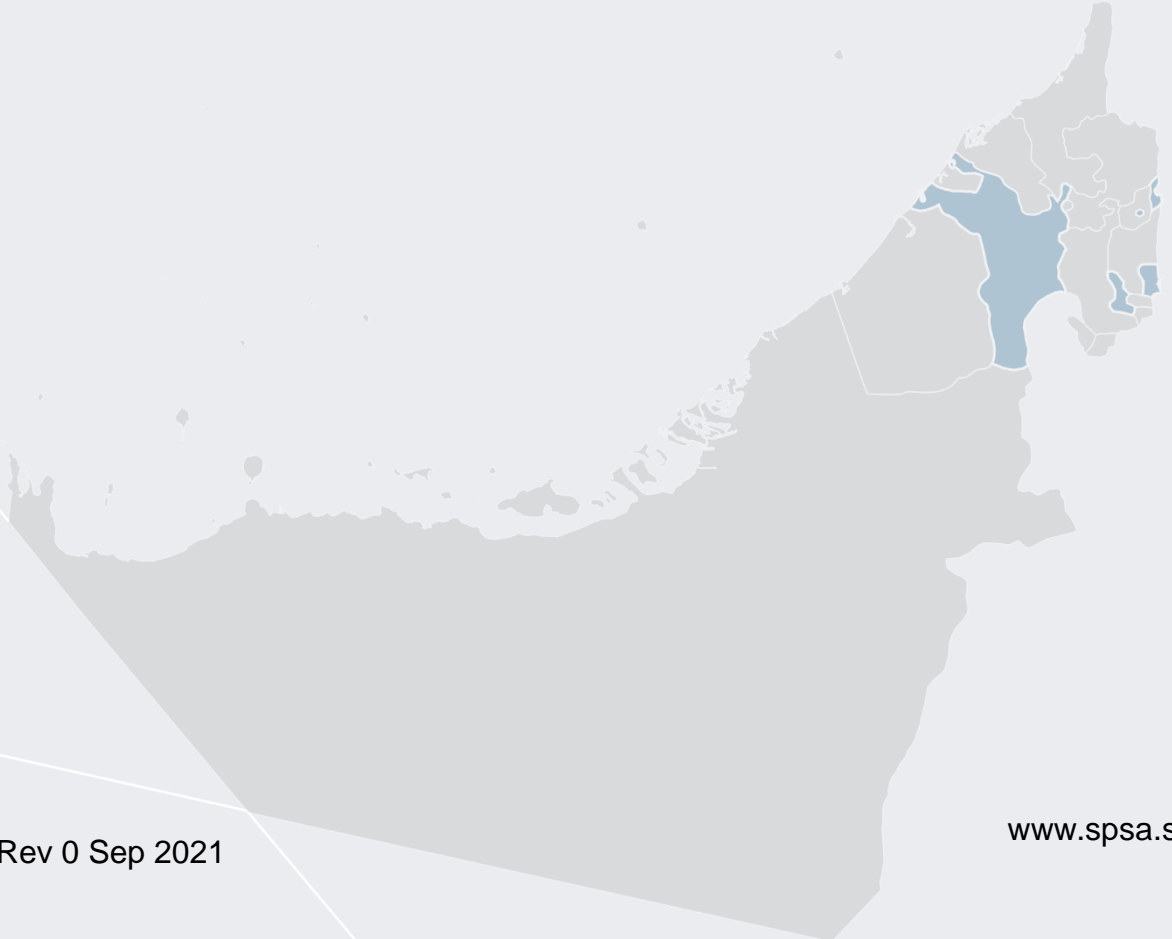


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1 Introduction

Providing good workplace welfare facilities for employees is an important part of providing a safe and healthy working environment. The entity must provide workplace welfare facilities that are necessary for the safety, health and wellbeing of employees.

Developing employee wellbeing is good for employees and the entity as they work to create positive working environments where employees and the entity can thrive together. Good safety, health and wellbeing can be a core driver for employee engagement and the performance of the entity. Wellbeing directly influences employee work behaviour, work attendance and day to day performance.

2 Purpose and Scope

This Code of Practice (CoP) has been developed to provide information to entities to assist them in complying with the requirements of the Occupational Safety and Health System in Sharjah.

This Code of Practice (CoP) defines the minimum acceptable requirements of the Occupational Safety and Health System in Sharjah, and entities can apply practices higher than, but not lower than those mentioned in this document, as they demonstrate the lowest acceptable level of compliance in the Emirate of Sharjah.

3 Definitions and Abbreviations

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Entities: | Government Entities: Government departments, authorities or establishments and the like in the Emirate. Private Entities: Establishments, companies, enterprises and economic activities operating in the Emirate in general. |
| Risk: | Is the combination of likelihood of the hazard causing the loss and the severity of that loss (consequences). |
| Risk Assessment: | The systematic identification of workplace hazards and evaluation of the risks associated. This process takes existing control measures into account and identifies and recommends further control measures where required. |
| Wellbeing: | An employee in a state of being comfortable, healthy or happy. |
| Workplace: | A place that the entity allocates for the performance of the work. This term shall also include the employees' resting places, their accommodation and similar places that the entity allocates to employees. |
| Welfare Facilities: | Include changing, washing, rest, eating and toilet facilities that are clean and necessary for the wellbeing of employees. |
| Workstation: | An area with equipment for the performance of a specific task, such as computer station or a specific location on an assembly line, control room, etc. |

4 Responsibilities

4.1 Entity Responsibilities

- Ensure the workplace has adequate welfare facilities for employees and others using the workplace;
- Ensure where required that the welfare facilities are adequate to new and expectant mothers and persons of determination;
- Ensure resources are available for the provision and maintenance of the welfare facilities;
- Assess and identify risks to employees wellbeing and introduce control measures to eliminate or reduce those risks;
- Ensure the workplace has safe access and egress to and from the workplace.

4.2 Employee Responsibilities

- Not endanger themselves or others;
- Follow precautionary control measures to ensure work activities are performed safely and without risk to health;
- Cooperate with the entity and support the safety and health policies and procedures of the entity;
- Report any activity or defect relating to employee welfare and wellbeing which they know is likely to endanger the safety of themselves or that of any other person.

5 Requirements

The entity shall comply with the requirements of the Occupational Safety and Health System in Sharjah (OSHJ System) with regards to employee's welfare and wellbeing. The entity shall, in addition to employee's welfare requirements, take into account the needs of persons of determination and new and expectant mothers, ensuring the workplace is suitable, particularly pedestrian routes, toilets and workstations.

5.1 Risk Assessment

The entity shall provide welfare facilities based on UAE Federal Law and OSHJ System requirements but is not restricted to these requirements. Risk assessment of the workplace may require the entity to add welfare facilities in excess of these requirements, depending on the size, distribution, layout and work activities of the organisation.

All aspects of employee welfare and wellbeing must be risk assessed and any control measures identified that can eliminate or reduce risks to employees implemented. The entity shall assess risks to welfare, examples include but are not limited to:

- Housekeeping – Assess the number of employees utilising various areas, shift patterns used, the type of work activities being conducted, how to keep floors and pedestrian routes clear of obstructions and liquid spills, rest areas, changing rooms and how often they need to be regularly cleaned, and how any waste materials generated are safely handled, stored, transported and disposed of.

- Toilets and washing amenities – Assess the provision for easy access for persons of determination, the adequacy and numbers of toilets and washing facilities for the number of employees.
- Lighting – Assess the type of work activities being undertaken, what does the work involve, the availability of natural lighting, artificial lighting and the employees undertaking the activities.
- Drinking water – Assess the amount of water employees require for working at certain times of the year, the distribution of employees and the work activities they are undertaking and how to supply water to employees.
- Maintenance – Assess the regular maintenance of equipment and machinery such as maintaining air conditioning or cooling equipment to ensure risks that could affect employee welfare are not introduced,
- Access and egress – Assess the adequacy of not just how employees and others enter and leave premises in normal conditions and in emergencies and consider how people work and move through the workplace. Such as, can doors open in the direction of travel, can people see through doors when opening them and are emergency exits clearly identified.
- Workstations - This includes the size of the workstations they work in, are they sufficient in size for the work activities they perform, suitably ventilated and provided with adequate lighting.

These are some examples of what the entity should consider when conducting risk assessments. The entity should recognise that their greatest asset is their employees and their welfare and wellbeing should be a top priority for any organisation.

Further information on risk assessment can be found in OSHJ-CoP-01: Risk Management and Control.

5.2 Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC)

The entity shall ensure workplaces are adequately ventilated with fresh clean air which should be drawn and filtered from a source which is not contaminated by fumes, gases, dust, smells or chemicals. Ventilation should also remove excess heat and humidity and provide a comfortable working temperature without causing draughts and be regularly serviced and maintained.

Employees working outdoors or in work environments indoors that generate high levels of heat, such as foundries or kitchens, are at risk from high air temperatures or, exposure to high thermal radiation or, high levels of humidity, should be provided with a cool resting area.

Employees working in cold areas and are at risk from exposure to cold temperatures, such as work in refrigerator, freezers, etc shall be provided with a rest area that is warm.

Employees working outdoors in heat must be provided with a cool resting area.

Further information on managing safety in heat can be found in OSHJ-GL-15: Safety in Heat.

5.3 Lighting

The entity shall ensure lighting is sufficient to enable people to work and move about safely within the workplace. It needs to allow employees and others to carry out their work effectively, without adopting awkward postures or straining their eyes to see.

Some tasks may require local lighting to be provided at individual workstations, in addition to general lighting or require different lighting at different times during the day or if working during the night.

Further information on lighting requirements can be found in **Appendix 1: Lighting Requirements**.

5.4 Housekeeping

The entity shall ensure every workplace, including furniture, furnishings, fittings, toilets, washrooms, rest and break rooms and communal spaces are kept clean and in a sanitary condition.

The entity shall ensure the prompt removal of waste materials as necessary to prevent the build up of waste from causing safety and health issues.

Further information on waste materials and disposal can be found in OSHJ-CoP-19: Waste Management.

5.5 Room Dimensions

The entity shall provide sufficient space to allow employees and others to move around work areas safely. The volume of the room, when empty divided by the number of people normally working in it should be at least 11 cubic metres. 11 cubic metres is a minimum space requirement and may be insufficient in some places depending on the layout, contents and the nature of the work.

All workstations shall be suitable for the employees using them and for the nature of their work. Employees must be able to leave workstations quickly in an emergency. If work can or must be done in a seated position, seats or chairs must be provided and suitable for the employees using them and for the work being done. Seating shall provide adequate support for the lower back, and footrests provided for employees who cannot place their feet on the floor.

5.6 Maintenance

The entity shall ensure that within the workplace certain equipment, machinery, devices and systems is maintained to preserve the safety, health and wellbeing of employees. Regular maintenance is required for ventilation systems, machinery, equipment and devices which would cause a risk to safety, health and welfare if a fault occurred; and equipment and devices intended to prevent or reduce safety and health risks. Maintenance requirements are usually specified in the manufacturer's manual.

The entity shall record and retain maintenance records.

Further information on the maintenance of equipment, machinery, devices and systems can be found in OSHJ-CoP-13: Safe Work Equipment.

5.7 Floors and Pedestrian Routes

Pedestrian and vehicles routes include any stairs, fixed ladder, doorway, gateway, loading bay or ramp. The entity shall ensure there are sufficient pedestrian and vehicle routes, of sufficient width and headroom to allow employees and vehicles to move safely.

Floors and vehicle routes shall be sufficiently strong enough for the loads placed on them and the vehicles expected to use them. The surfaces must not have holes, be uneven or slippery and kept clear of obstructions to prevent slipping and tripping.

Restrictions shall be clearly indicated, where sharp or blind bends are unavoidable or vehicles need to reverse. Measures such as one-way systems, visibility mirrors and speed limits introduced.

Screens shall be provided to protect employees who have to work where they would be at risk from exhaust fumes, or to protect employees from materials likely to fall from vehicles.

Additional measures need to be taken where pedestrians have to cross or share vehicle routes. These include marking of routes, provision of crossing points, bridges, subways and barriers.

Stairs shall have handrails at an appropriate height to assist people when ascending and descending the stairs. Staircases with openings on either side, shall be provided with a top and middle guardrail.

Loading bays shall have at least one exit point from the lower level or a refuge shall be provided to avoid people being crushed or trapped by vehicles. Where vehicles offload by tipping into a pit or similar place, and vehicles or persons could fall into it, barriers and wheel stops shall be provided.

5.8 Falls and Falling Objects

The entity shall ensure a high standard of protection is in place to prevent employees from falling from heights and protect employees from objects falling onto them.

Materials and objects need to be stored and stacked in such a way that they are not likely to cause injury. Storage racking and shelving needs to be of adequate strength and stability for the loads to be placed upon it.

Further information on storing and stacking materials can be found in OSHJ-GL-11: Safety in Warehousing.

Further information on falls from height can be found in OSHJ-CoP-04: Work at Height Safety.

5.9 Transparent or Translucent Doors, Gates or Walls and Windows

Windows, transparent or translucent surfaces in walls, partitions, doors and gates should be made of safety materials or be protected against breakage. If there is a risk of employees coming into contact with it, they shall be marked or incorporate features to make it apparent that it is not a pedestrian route.

Openable windows, skylights and ventilators should be capable of being opened, closed or adjusted without exposing any employees to risks of safety and health. Windows and skylights shall be designed so they may be cleaned without risk to safety and health.

Doors and gates should be suitably constructed and fitted with safety devices if necessary. Doors and gates which swing both ways and conventionally hinged doors on main pedestrian routes shall have a transparent viewing panel.

Power operated doors and gates shall have safety features to prevent employees being struck or trapped and, where necessary, shall have a readily identifiable and accessible control switch or device so that they can be stopped quickly in an emergency.

5.10 Escalators and Moving Walkways

Escalators and moving walkways must function safely and be equipped with necessary safety devices and be fitted with one or more emergency stop controls which are easily identifiable and easily accessible to users.

5.11 Toilets and Washing Rooms

The entity shall provide employees with suitable and sufficient toilets and washing facilities. There should be, at a minimum one toilet and wash basin for every 8 employees and if required the appropriate number of showering facilities required. In all cases independent facilities must be provided for men and women.

The entity shall make arrangements for people of determination to easily access toilets and washing facilities. Washing facilities must have hot and cold water, soap, clean towels or other means of cleaning or drying and must be regularly maintained and cleaned.

5.12 Drinking Water

The entity shall provide an adequate supply of drinking water for all employees in the workplace. The risk assessment should identify the environment where the work is being conducted, the work activities, the weather and the time of year to determine the supply of drinking water required for employees.

Drinking water shall be provided via bottled water and with a suitable amount of cups or a water dispensing system that is regularly cleaned, serviced and filters replaced according to the manufacturers recommendations.

The entity shall ensure that regular and routine cleaning and disinfection of all potable water storage tanks whether fixed or portable, shall be adequately cleaned at a minimum of once every 6 months.

5.13 Changing Rooms

The entity shall provide suitable changing rooms for employees to change into and out of work related clothing. They must ensure the employees privacy and provide secure storage of employees personal and work related clothing.

5.14 Rest Areas

The entity shall provide rest areas, with sufficient seating and large enough for the number of employees likely to use them at any time. Rest areas shall be provided for new and expectant mothers and be close to toilets and washing facilities.

5.15 Eating Areas

Where employees regularly eat meals at work, suitable and sufficient facilities shall be provided for the purpose. Such facilities shall be provided where food would otherwise be likely to be contaminated. Eating areas (canteens and pantry areas) shall include a place with sufficient seating, tables and facilities to eat meals and must be kept clean and hygienic and not be areas where personal protective equipment needs to be worn.

6 References

- OSHJ-CoP-01: Risk Management and Control
- OSHJ-CoP-04: Work at Height Safety
- OSHJ-CoP-13: Safe Work Equipment
- OSHJ-CoP-19: Waste Management
- OSHJ-GL-11: Safety in Warehousing
- OSHJ-GL-15: Safety in Heat

7 Amended Document Record

| | | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| TITLE | Employee Welfare and Wellbeing | | |
| DOCUMENT AMENDMENT RECORD | | | |
| Version | Revision Date | Amendment Details | Pages Affected |
| 1 | 15-SEP-2021 | New Document | N/A |
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APPENDIX 1. Lighting Requirements

Appendix 1: Lighting Requirements

| SN. | Operations | Candle/Foot | Lumen/SQ Meter |
|-----|---|-------------|----------------|
| 1. | Non-accurate operations such as sorting large objects | 6 | 54 |
| 2. | Medium accuracy operations such as assembling machines, the grinding of grains and stones, and other primary operations in the industry and steam reservoir rooms, the packaging of large containers sections, warehouses for tools and equipment necessary for medium operations and the like. | 10 | 108 |
| 3. | Assembly of medium accuracy parts, such as filing and turnings that do not require accuracy, grinding and testing of products, machines, sewing light coloured cloths, storing foods and the industry of plywood and leather and the like. | 20 | 215 |
| 4. | Accurate operations such as medium accuracy filing and turning, accurate tests, office works, and the final operations of the products and the like. | 20 | 215 |
| 5. | The operations that require a lot of accuracy such as the assembly of precision machinery, precision filing and turnings, shaping glass, precision carpentry, office work, drawing and the like. | 50 | 538 |
| 6. | The work that requires extreme accuracy and long patience such as precise testing operations, machine testing, jewellery and watch making, letter assembly in printing, the sewing of dark clothes and the like. | 150 | 1614 |