

# KINGSTON GENERAL HOSPITAL

## ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY MANUAL

**Subject: Safe Footwear**

**Number: 02-099**

Prepared/Reviewed by: Occupational Health, Safety & Wellness

Page: 1 of 5

Original Issue: 2008.11

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### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to reduce the risk of slips, trips, falls, prevent exposure to biological and chemical agents, and minimize the risk of traumatic foot injury in workers.

1. To comply with sections 8, 9(1), and 11(c-d) of *Ontario Regulation 67/93-Health Care & Residential Facilities* made under the Occupational Health & Safety Act, by ensuring that all persons engaged in activities which expose the worker to the hazard of foot injury, or pose a risk of slips/trips/falls or exposure to biological, chemical, or physical agents, wear safe and appropriate footwear.
2. To set a hospital footwear standard.
3. To prevent workplace injury.

### Applicability

This policy applies to all workers performing work activities within the hospital including:

1. Kingston General Hospital (KGH) employees,
2. Credentialed and appointed staff,
3. Affiliates (individuals not employed by the hospital who perform specific tasks at the hospital, including contractors and employees and subcontractors of contractors, supplied labour/temp agency staff, vendors, consultants, working visitors, learners, volunteers, and any other persons carrying on work, research or education activities at KGH).

Where manager/supervisor is referenced, this includes all those who have charge of a workplace/work area in the hospital, or authority over a worker. This includes both KGH and non-KGH employees who function in a 'supervisory' capacity under the *Occupational Health & Safety Act*.

### Policy

1. All workers are required to wear footwear appropriate to the potential hazards present in their work environment.
2. Where workers enter areas of the hospital where more stringent footwear requirements apply (e.g. laboratories, warehouse, clinical areas), they must comply with the footwear requirements of the area they are entering. Exception: this does not apply to situations where the worker is accessing the area solely to travel to a location within or adjacent to it (e.g. walking to a meeting room located on a clinical unit).
3. In restricted areas where safety footwear is mandated in all cases (e.g. warehouse, laboratories), signage will be posted at the entrance to the area.
4. Staff who are not wearing footwear in adherence to this policy will be asked to leave the area to obtain appropriate footwear.
5. Violations of this safety policy will lead to progressive discipline.
6. Staff who must travel outside to go between buildings will wear appropriate footwear for the weather conditions (e.g. in snowy weather, wear winter boots when travelling between main site and Barrie Street houses).

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### Responsibilities

Managers/Supervisors - It is the responsibility of all managers and supervisors to be familiar with the footwear standard, advise workers of footwear requirements, and enforce staff compliance with the footwear requirements.

1. Workers - It is the responsibility of all workers to wear safe and appropriate footwear in compliance with the provisions of this policy and to maintain footwear in good condition.
2. Occupational Health, Safety & Wellness (OHSW) Team - OHSW is responsible for assisting with the assessment of hazards and classifying the risk of foot injury, assisting with the selection of appropriate footwear based on the identified risk, monitoring incident/injury statistics related to footwear and reporting to the Joint Health & Safety Committee (JHSC).

### Footwear Requirements for All KGH Properties

1. Footwear should be in good repair, fit well and be comfortable, and be of sturdy construction with a maximum heel height of 2½." Beach flip flops and footwear with high heels/platform soles greater than 2.5" are prohibited on KGH property.

Examples of unacceptable footwear:



Note - Beach flip flops are open toed with a flat sole held loosely on the foot by a Y-shaped strap that passes between two toes and around either side of the foot. They may also be held to the foot with a single strap over the front of the foot rather than thong.

2. In addition to the generic requirements below, areas can also have specific footwear requirements based on the nature of the hazards likely to be present in a work area and/or related to the performance of a specific type of work (see risk assessment below).
3. Departmental/Risk Specific Requirements - Based on work activities, nature of the work environment, and/or risk of exposure to hazards, the following footwear standard will apply:
  - a) All patient care areas, clinics, food handling areas, and areas using wheeled equipment All those working in these areas must wear footwear which provides a fully enclosed toe area, an enclosed heel or support strap, a low heel height (less than 1½"), and be made of slip resistant material. Running or walking shoes are examples of appropriate footwear. Clogs are only permitted in cases where they have an enclosed heel/heel-strap and a full top (no holes) with fully enclosed toe area.

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Examples of unacceptable footwear:



Vent holes



Heel open- no heel strap



Heel open

b) Laboratories

In the labs, the shoe must cover the entire foot (no straps), and should be impermeable. They must meet the criteria from above (a) with respect to heel height, and construction.

c) Outdoor Winter Work

Those working outdoors or travelling in winter must wear appropriate winter boots with non-slip soles. Staff leaving the building during the course of their work day (e.g. breaks, walking to Barrie street, etc.) must wear footwear appropriate to the weather conditions.

d) CSA-Approved Safety Footwear

For workers in certain areas (ie. Facilities and Maintenance), CSA-approved safety footwear with toe impact protection and non-slip soles will be required. Refer to the risk assessment (high risk) for details.

d) Refer to the risk assessment below for determination of footwear requirements.

**Risk Assessment**

<b>RISK</b>	<b>Job Tasks/Exposure</b>	<b>Appropriate Footwear</b>
<b>LOW</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Office environment</li> <li>• Chemical or biological agents are not handled</li> <li>• Needles and sharps are not used</li> <li>• Heavy materials are not handled</li> <li>• Equipment or furniture is not pushed, pulled, lifted or moved</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heel height of less than 2½”</li> <li>• Beach flip flops, flimsy shoes and high heels (greater than 2½”) are not permitted on KGH property.</li> <li>• Use good judgment with respect to the selection of footwear appropriate for work environment.</li> </ul>
<b>MODERATE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patient care &amp; clinical areas</li> <li>• Handling needles or other sharps</li> <li>• Blood/ body fluid splashes may occur</li> <li>• Handling/storage of blood, body fluids, infectious materials, and specimens.</li> <li>• Cleaning chemicals are used</li> <li>• Chemicals may be handled in controlled settings (e.g. in fume</li> </ul>	<p>Footwear should have the following characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sole made of non-slip material</li> <li>• Heel height low to moderate (less than 1½”)</li> <li>• Well-fitting shoe in which the foot is securely placed.</li> <li>• The foot must be covered. Ideally this should not be a mesh. Enclosed heel or heel strap.</li> </ul>

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	<p>hoods or on lab bench tops)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food handling areas</li> <li>• Pushing/pulling and lifting (patients, furniture, carts)</li> <li>• Laboratories</li> </ul>	<p>Sandals and other open toe shoes are <u>not</u> permitted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examples of appropriate footwear include running or walking shoes and flat street shoes.</li> </ul>
<b>MODERATE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Laboratories</li> </ul>	<p>Footwear should have the following characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sole made of non-slip material</li> <li>• Heel height low to moderate (less than 1½")</li> <li>• Well-fitting shoe in which the foot is securely placed and covered.</li> <li>• The shoe material must be durable and impermeable to protect from chemicals, hot liquids, or sharps such as needles (no mesh).</li> </ul>
<b>HIGH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintenance Staff</li> <li>• Heavy materials, heavy equipment handled</li> <li>• Moderate to large volumes of hazardous substances are handled</li> <li>• Electrical work</li> <li>• Construction sites and typical maintenance work (including electrical installation or repair)</li> <li>• Oil or acids may be used or spilled</li> <li>• Large quantities of chemical substances are handled or dispensed</li> <li>• Sharp objects (nails, wire, tacks, scrap metal, broken glass) present</li> <li>• OHSW has assessed the area as high risk with respect to foot injuries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Footwear must comply with CSA Standard Z195-09 and must be a Grade 1 safety shoe/boot with suitable toe impact resistance. Refer to <i>PPE Policy</i>.</li> <li>• The sole must be oil and acid resistant.</li> <li>• Safety boots must be worn where ankle injury is likely (e.g. construction sites).</li> <li>• Safety shoes or boots with a white patch (electrical shock resistance) are required where there is a potential for exposure to live electrical conductors.</li> <li>• OHSW may specify other footwear requirements based on the specific hazard.</li> </ul>

**Reimbursement for CSA-Approved Footwear (High Risk Areas)**

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Workers who are required to wear CSA-approved safety footwear receive an annual allowance for the purchase of CSA-approved footwear as per the collective agreement.

Authorizing Signature

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Leslee Thompson  
President and Chief Executive Officer