

POLICY:

Washington State University Tri-Cities (WSUTC) is committed to promoting a safe and healthy work environment for its research and academic facilities. In order to maximize the security of campus facilities and property, and to maintain the safety of individuals in potentially hazardous areas it is necessary to restrict facility access only to those individuals with appropriate knowledge, training, and/or supervision.

Safety rules and policies are in place in order to protect visitors, students, and employees from harm. It is the responsibility of all users and staff to act in a professional, courteous and safe manner at all times while on the WSUTC campus. All shop and laboratory users have a responsibility to protect themselves and others by conducting their work safely, reporting risks and hazards not anticipated by existing rules and policies, and preventing others from conducting procedures that may be unsafe. All users are expected to adhere to the conditions included below, as well as other policies applicable to their specific space(s).

PURPOSE:

To ensure that access to facilities is controlled to protect users, facilities, and property.

DEFINITIONS:

- After hours:** Any time outside of campus operating hours, as defined below.
- Business hours** 8:00AM to 5:00PM, Monday through Friday
- Campus Operating hours** Any time during which buildings are publicly accessible. These times may vary by building and/or seasonally, and are subject to change.
- Restricted Work Areas:** Any location where hazardous materials, equipment, and/or environmental conditions are present.

PROCEDURES:*Access to Facilities*

Most campus facilities, including office spaces and common areas, are open and accessible to the public during campus operating hours. All buildings are closed on Sundays and on university holidays. Some variation in building hours may occur during summer session (May through August), and all hours are subject to change.

Each building includes Restricted Work Areas, as defined above, to which access is limited to authorized personnel. These spaces will remain locked at all times, and access to them requires

approval of the employee's immediate supervisor and the department head responsible for the space.

Interior Spaces

Access to spaces inside the buildings – such as offices and laboratories – will be granted to those individuals assigned to the spaces with the approval of their department manager, subject to the following limitations.

Mechanical/Service Areas

Only authorized personnel may access campus mechanical/service areas, including mechanical rooms, custodial rooms, pipe chases, rooftops, and rooms containing electrical, telephone, or computer control panels. Authorized personnel include staff from University service departments; i.e., Facilities Maintenance; Environmental Health and Safety; Campus Security; and Information Technology Services. Non-University service personnel and contractors may access such spaces when authorized by the applicable University service department. All other individuals visiting these spaces must be accompanied by and **directly** supervised by an authorized person, and must comply with all relevant safety requirements, including all requirements regarding the use of personal protective equipment.

Research Laboratories & Shops

Research laboratories are generally accessible, with proper permission, up to 24 hours a day, seven days a week for authorized individuals. Access to these spaces is limited to individuals associated with the research and approved by the supervisor of the space. Researchers' authorization to access laboratories may be limited to specified hours, at the discretion of the supervisor and/or department director, or to access while accompanied by the supervisor. No access will be granted until individuals have completed safety training appropriate to the space and the equipment therein, and that training has been verified by EH&S.

Academic Laboratories & Shops

Access to academic laboratories and shops is typically limited to scheduled class periods, which vary each semester. Access outside of class periods will be granted only to those responsible for building operations, safety/security, or setup of academic presentations.

Students

Students shall not be provided unsupervised and unaccompanied access to any Restricted Work Areas. Student employees whose duties meet one of the above descriptions may be provided access to Restricted Work Areas during business hours only, to the extent required to fulfill those job duties, subject to the approvals, restrictions, and training appropriate to the space.

Building Exterior Access

Campus operating hours will accommodate most needs related to university business. Individuals may request exterior access but must provide a purpose which relates to

university business, and a duration for which access is requested. Such requests must be approved by the immediate supervisor, the department head responsible for the space, and are subject to review by Campus Security.

Any requests for after-hours access to campus buildings will be restricted as follows:

- Faculty: Permanent faculty residing on the Tri-Cities campus may request access to the building(s) in which they have an office or research space only. Adjunct or visiting faculty shall not have after-hours access to facilities unless they are attached to research being supervised by a permanent faculty member residing on the Tri-Cities campus.
- Staff: only those staff with responsibility for maintaining campus infrastructure and/or emergency response (such as maintenance, IT, and EH&S) will have regular after-hours access. Other staff may be granted temporary access to perform critical tasks, with the written approval of their department, specifying the building(s) to which access is requested, an explanation for the need, and a defined end date for the activity. Temporary access requests will be limited to no more than 90 days.
- Graduate Students/researchers: Graduate students & post-doctoral researchers may be given access to the building(s) in which they perform projects or research, with the written approval of their supervising faculty member and department.
- Undergraduate students: Undergraduate students shall not be granted after-hours access to any campus facilities. Where undergraduates are engaged in activities requiring after-hours access, they must be directly supervised and accompanied by faculty or staff.

Any individual granted after-hours access must notify their immediate supervisor of their intention to work after hours, and what activities they will be performing. Working in any Restricted Work Area is prohibited unless the appropriate level of supervision required for their activities is present. Additionally, any individual accessing buildings after hours must carry a valid WSU ID card, a valid access key/card/fob, and must present both to Campus Security, Richland Police, or other campus authority upon request.

Restriction of Access

Users whose actions result in danger to themselves or others will have their access restricted, suspended or revoked at the discretion of the department director or EH&S. The duration of such restrictions will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Access restrictions can be considered regardless of whether a clear violation of safety rules or policies exist, if the action leading to the hazard was careless and the hazard was predictable. It is not necessary to specify a rule violation if those actions defy common sense and/or good laboratory/shop practices. Similarly, being unaware of rules, unfamiliar with equipment and/or processes, and/or being short on time are not acceptable excuses for unsafe behavior. Users are expected to act in a manner which will avoid creation of hazards. If persons accessing the space are unsure what existing policies are, or what the result of their actions will be, they must not access the space.

Access to any space by one or more individuals may be restricted or revoked due to any of the following (this list is not exhaustive):

- Deliberate, repeated, or reckless noncompliance with any safety regulation, policies, and/or instruction from EH&S.
- Misuse and/or improper disposal of chemicals
- Failure to adhere to access restrictions, including requirements for after-hours work
- Working on unapproved procedures, or working on elevated risk SOPs in an unapproved manner, or failing to follow precautions identified in SOPs (such as leaving sensitive or hazardous reactions/processes unattended)
- Providing access to unauthorized individuals
- Failing to report incidents or near-misses

In many cases, access will be restricted until the user is able to complete re-training and demonstrate an understanding of the relevant requirement(s). Where the user's action or inaction displays a disregard for safety and/or creates a significant risk to others working in the space, the duration of access restriction will be increased, and lifting the restriction will require additional re-training, and may also require restriction of activities, limitation of access, and/or increased supervision of activities within the space. In extreme cases, such as where a reckless or malicious disregard for safety is shown, access may be permanently revoked.

Closure of Spaces

In rare cases, a space may be closed at the discretion of EH&S or the director responsible for the space, barring access to all personnel. The duration of such restrictions will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Spaces may be closed as a result of any of the following:

- Systemic safety violations: occurrence of multiple concurrent or consecutive incidents which threaten the safety of occupants and/or jeopardize regulatory compliance, which indicate a general lack of safety knowledge or a disregard for safe practices.
- Repeated incidents: two or more injuries or near-miss incidents within a short period, which may indicate a need for physical changes to the space.
- Discovery of any imminent safety hazard which may result in significant injury or property damage.
- Any incident or accident which requires investigation.

Length of closures will vary, based on the severity of the concern(s) and efforts required to address them. In order to prevent impacts to research, student academic progress, and the university, closures will be avoided to the extent possible, and their duration kept to a minimum. However, the safety of users shall not be compromised in order to maintain or resume any operations.

RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS:

[BPPM 50.20, Access to University Facilities](#)

[BPPM 50.24, After-Hours Use of University Buildings](#)

PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT POLICY