



## **REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH GUIDELINES**

### **APPLICABLE TO STUDENTS, EMPLOYEES, VOLUNTEERS, AND OTHERS WORKING WITH CHEMICAL, BIOLOGICAL, RADIOACTIVE, AND/OR POTENTIALLY HARMFUL PHYSICAL AGENTS**

The University of Alaska values its students and employees and strives to provide a safe and healthy environment. However, sometimes our work and learning entails the use of, or potential exposure to, hazardous chemical, biological, radioactive, or physical agents. The purpose of this guideline is to increase awareness and outline the responsibilities of the various parties regarding the issue of exposure to reproductive health hazards, which includes hazards to potential future offspring. Each party's roles and responsibilities are independent of the others'.

Reproductive health hazards are defined as chemical, physical, radiological or biological agents that can cause either reproductive impairment or adverse developmental effects. Agents for which recommended exposure limits, such as permissible exposure limits (PELs), threshold limit values (TLVs) or the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) recommended exposure limits (RELs) must be evaluated from the standpoint of protecting reproductive health. When reviewing material safety data sheets (MSDSs) for issues related to reproductive health, be sure that the referenced exposure limit have been evaluated to determine whether the basis for those exposure limits were established with a

- Consultation with the University's Environmental, Health and Safety officer(s) and/or Risk Management professionals
  - Reputable and reliable internet websites and publications
  - Chemical hygiene publications
  - Training
  - On-site hazard analysis
  - Consultation with medical or other professionals
4. At their request, assist and advise faculty, students, and employees in identifying feasible alternatives and safer means to accomplish work and educational objectives.

### **RISK MANAGEMENT/ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & SAFETY DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Serve as the body through which health and safety policy decisions are made;
2. Coordinate with the Office of Sponsored Programs, or equivalent office, individual supervisors, departments, institutes, and other committees or offices to ensure that faculty, students and employees are informed regarding potential reproductive health hazards in the university environment;
3. Provide direction, guidance, and training to involved parties regarding ways to minimize exposure to reproductive health hazards in the university environment;
4. Provide on-site hazard analysis as appropriate, and assist in determining appropriate methods to minimize exposure to within acceptable limits;
5. Provide, or arrange for, exposure testing and monitoring as appropriate;
6. Consult with physicians or other professionals, as necessary, to ensure that exposure to hazardous environments is within acceptable limits to safeguard reproductive health.

### **STUDENT/EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. If willing, formally declare your pregnancy or other reproductive health issues to your instructor/supervisor as soon as you become aware of it, and request modifications to work or classroom assignments, if needed;
2. Take due care not to expose yourself to any unnecessary chemical, biological, radioactive, or hazardous physical agents;
3. Follow all recommended work practices and wear appropriate personal protective equipment;
4. Report all unintended or improper exposure incidents to your instructor/supervisor;
5. Attend all required safety training and seek additional training or information if you become aware of a reproductive health issue that applies to you;
6. Be aware that the University endeavors to provide information regarding relevant facts and safety issues involving reproductive health. However, there are circumstances and situations that may not pose a clear threat or are not specifically identified by regulatory guidance as a reproductive threat. In these cases, you, not the University, must make the ultimate decision whether to accept a risk to you or to an unborn fetus.
7. Be sure to consult with your personal physician about all potential hazards and your decision whether to confront them;
8. For Employees: Work with your supervisor to identify possible alternate job duties or temporary reassignment within the department. If alternate duties cannot be provided, consult with Human

