

Emergency Management British Columbia

Public Safety Lifeline
Volunteer

Occupational Health and
Safety

OHS Policy Principles

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- recognizes current training, policies and procedures have safety requirements.
- does not replace or override local government, provincial or federal legislation.
- provides overarching requirements while recognizing that disciplines have specific requirements.

Roles & Responsibilities Health and Safety

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Health and safety of Public Safety Lifeline Volunteers is a shared responsibility between EMBC/PEP management & staff, Public Safety Lifeline Volunteer Organisations and volunteers.

Health and Safety Statement

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Emergency Management British Columbia (EMBC) and the Provincial Emergency Program (PEP) are committed to supporting Public Safety Lifeline (PSL) Volunteers.

Health and safety policies, along with training and exercising are important in maintaining the first priority of the B.C. Emergency Response Management System (BCERMS).

Provide for the Safety and Health of All Responders

Roles & Responsibilities Provincial Emergency Program

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- develop, implement and maintain policies for the prevention of injuries and occupational diseases to Public Safety Lifeline Volunteers,
- fund training which includes safe practices during responses, and/or define training required prior to volunteers engaging in specific activities,
- provide tools to assist Public Safety Lifeline Volunteer organizations and volunteers in maintaining records of training, exercising and response,
- communicate requirements for first aid and transportation of injured volunteers according to WorkSafeBC regulations,
- ensure OHS is a standing item on advisory committee and Public Safety Lifeline Volunteer organization's meeting agendas.
- provide WorkSafe insurance, liability coverage, and reimbursement of expenses (when provided under reimbursement policies), for training, exercising and response activities under task number.

Roles & Responsibilities PSL Volunteer Organizations

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- Ensure records are maintained of training completed by individual volunteers, participation in exercise & roles volunteers fill during responses.
- Provide access to information on OSH policies, training & volunteer programs.
- Where a volunteer does not participate in training or exercising to maintain their skills and abilities to a adequate level remove the volunteer from active duty until a adequate level of participation is achieved.
- Provide access to training, exercising, response, and OHS agenda item records upon request from PEP staff.
- Have OHS as a standing item on organization's meeting agendas, with discussions and follow up actions recorded
- PLS Volunteer Organisations are responsible for OHS outside training, exercising and responses under PEP task number

PSL Volunteers

Roles and Responsibilities

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- Participate in training, exercising and response according to standards of care established with training programs and policies.
- Maintain a record of training, exercising and responses in training log book or journal format.
- Provide records of training certifications, training log books and any documented operational experience to the appropriate PSL Volunteer Organization and/or PEP staff upon request,
- Follow work safe practices at all times when training, exercising and responding.

Program Components

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Supervision of volunteers

While under training or response task number the supervision of PSL volunteers is the responsibility of the person designated within the reporting structure, the following are examples, actual may vary depending on discipline and event;

- Training; designated training officer or instructor
- Exercising; training officer or leader designated within reporting structure
- Response; person designated within reporting structure

Program Components (con't)

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Workplace inspections

While recognizing that sometimes PSL volunteers carry out duties outside of what would seem a normal workplace regular surveys must be conducted to identify potential hazards. Specific requirements are listed within training materials, and/or discipline specific OHS plans.

Program Components (con't)

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Accident Reporting

PEP policy 5.13 Workers Compensation Board claims is consistent with Worksafe BC requirements and outlines the processes to report injuries that have occurred while volunteering on a PEP Task.

Program Components (Con't)

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Incident investigations

An investigation will be conducted following any report of injury or near miss incidents involving PSL volunteers. The investigation may entail the Safety Officer and/or the supervisor interviewing the injured and other volunteers that were present/engaged in the activity when the incident occurred, if the injury is minor. Immediate action should be taken to eliminate the hazard or unsafe condition if the potential for further injury exists.

Program Components (Con't)

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Records and statistics

All PSL Volunteer Organizations are to maintain records of training, exercising, and response participated in by volunteers and provide access to these records upon request of a PEP representative.

Individual volunteers are to maintain records of their participation in training, exercising and responses and provide access to these records upon request of a PEP representative and/or a member of a Incident management team member.

Program Components (con't)

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Management meetings

Public Safety Lifeline advisory committees are to maintain OHS as a standing item on all meeting agendas. Items of concern are to be brought forward to PEP with recommendations for corrective action should they be deemed required.

Program Elements

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- First Aid
- Violence in the workplace
- Ergonomic
- Code of conduct
- Working alone
- Indoor Air quality
- Emergency preparedness and response

Public Safety Lifeline OHS Program

"For safety is not a gadget but a
state of mind"