

## YALE UNIVERSITY GUIDELINES FOR WORKING ALONE IN A LABORATORY

A person is considered as working alone if they are working by themselves in such a way that assistance is not readily available should injury, illness or emergency occur. For example, you are working alone if no one could hear your cry for help. This can occur during normal working hours as well as in the evening, at night or during weekends. Working alone outside of typical business hours (M-F 8:00 am-6:00 pm) is especially problematic due to the increased likelihood of no one being available to assist if an unexpected event was to occur. These guidelines apply to all work with hazardous materials or hazardous equipment in laboratories at Yale University.

**Minors:** Minors include anyone under the age of 18. No minors are allowed to work with hazardous materials in a laboratory at Yale University unless under supervision at all times and with direct approval by EHS. See “Policy Governing Minors in Yale Laboratories” at <http://provost.yale.edu/faculty/policy/minors-in-labs>.

**Undergraduate Students:** All undergraduates must be under supervision of a senior researcher or instructor when working with hazardous materials in a laboratory.

**Laboratory Researchers (Graduate Students, Postdocs, Lab Staff, Principal Investigators):** Although not recommended, laboratory researchers may need to work alone in laboratories and should follow these guidelines to do so safely.

### Prohibited Materials and Equipment When Working Alone

In general, researchers may not work alone in a laboratory with the following high hazard materials:

- Pyrophoric Chemicals
- Explosive/ Highly Reactive Compounds
- Acutely Toxic Chemicals and Gases
- Large Volumes of Concentrated Corrosive Chemicals
- Class 3+ tools
- High pressure equipment

### General Guidelines on Working Alone

All laboratory researchers who may work alone in a laboratory should follow these general guidelines:

- **Notify others.** Let your PI, manager or supervisor know when you will be working off hours and what you will be doing. Participate in the **risk assessment** of this activity with your PI, as necessary.
- **Ask a buddy** to check in on you periodically.
- **Be alert** and aware of your surroundings. Wearing ear buds or headphones should be avoided as it reduces situational awareness.
- **Wear required PPE** in the laboratory, even after hours. No shorts, skirts or sandals should ever be worn in the laboratory, and eye protection is always required.
- **Avoid walking alone.** Remember that the Yale Security Walking Escort Service (203-432-9255) is available to walk you to your car and to and from any point on campus. The Nighttime Safe Rides program is available from 6:00 pm-6:00 am to take you door to door within the campus boundary (203-432-6330).
- **Download** the free [Yale LiveSafe App](#) to use as a personal security device to communicate with the police and for friends and family to temporarily follow your location on a real-time map.