

# St. Michael's

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<b>Title:</b>	<b>Organisational Structure for Biosafety at St. Michael's</b>		
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## Introduction

A biosafety program, which in context of the Canadian Biosafety Standards and Guidelines (CBSG) includes a biosecurity component, is designed to prevent infections and illnesses among workers and the general public and protect the environment from harm by preventing the release of potentially infectious material or toxins. A biosafety program should work to promote, encourage and reinforce safe work practices, provide a metric to improve safety performance, and help to increase regulatory compliance through a combination of training, documentation, inspections, evaluation, review, and clear communication.

The complexity of any biosafety program will depend on the nature of the organization and the activities performed by it. Larger, more complex organizations such as those found at St. Michael's, have dedicated biosafety staff members whose role it is to ensure that the biosafety program is implemented and reviewed. Key to the success of any biosafety program is a strong commitment from senior management, supervisors and individual workers within the organization.

## Associated Procedure

### Organisational Structure of Biosafety Program at St. Michael's Hospital

Under the provisions of the Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act, **St. Michael's Hospital**, as an employer, has a duty of care towards its workers. It is responsible for ensuring compliance with the Act and all applicable regulations and for taking every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of workers.

Senior management is the ultimate authority and is responsible for delegating appropriate authority for biosafety. Senior management is also responsible for ensuring that adequate resources are available to support the biosafety program and compliance with legal requirements, and for ensuring that biosafety concerns are appropriately prioritized and addressed.

### Vice-President of Research

Under the terms of the biosafety program, the Vice-President of Research has been

designated as the Responsible Individual tasked with being responsible for developing and promoting biosafety policies at St. Michael's, as well as the ability to delegate to appropriate individuals, responsibilities to oversee the biosafety program.

### **Research Biosafety Committee**

The VP Research has delegated responsibility to the Research Biosafety Committee (RBC), and its Chair, for the oversight of the biosafety program at St. Michael's. The Chair, with the support of the Committee, has the responsibility for, among other things, reviewing and approving all biosafety permits at St. Michael's, issuing guidance on biosafety issues and overseeing inspections of the laboratory areas. The Terms of Reference, which lists the duties and responsibilities for this body, can be found elsewhere within this site.

### **Biological Safety Officer (BSO)**

A BSO must be appointed by any institution which is applying for an HPTA licence. Experience in the handling, use and safe disposal of biohazardous material is a primary requirement for the role of a BSO, as is knowledge of the HPTA and the HPTR, and any other federal or provincial legislation. This knowledge can be obtained through a combination of education, training and experience. A BSO is also required to have knowledge of biosafety and biosecurity standards, policies and practices applicable to the biohazards at St. Michael's.

### **References**

Occupational Health and Safety Act 1990

Human Pathogens and Toxins Act 2009

Human Pathogen Importation Regulations 1994

Canadian Biosafety Standards and Guidelines 1st Ed. 2013

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**Contact**

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