

Administrative Procedure 4090

Environmental Sensitivity

Board Governance Policy Cross Reference: [1, 12, 13](#)

Administrative Procedures Cross Reference:

[Anaphylaxis and Life Threatening Allergies](#)

[Hazardous Materials Management](#)

[Workplace Safety and Health](#)

Form Cross Reference:

Legal/Regulatory Reference:

The Interlake School Division (ISD) prioritizes the safe and healthy learning and work environments in their schools and other facilities. The Division shall develop and maintain programs to identify, report, minimize and/or control hazards and where possible, eliminate them. These programs shall include safe work procedures, control of chemical and biological hazards, CPR and/or first aid training, and procedures to follow in the event of an emergency.

A. Definitions

Environmental Sensitivity (ES) - describes a chronic condition whereby a person has symptoms when exposed to certain chemicals or other environmental agents at low levels tolerated by most people. The symptoms may range in severity from mild to debilitating.

ES has also been called multiple chemical sensitivity, chemical intolerance, environmental hypersensitivity, environmental illness, toxicant-induced loss of tolerance, and idiopathic environmental intolerance.

Allergen - a type of antigen that produces an abnormally vigorous immune response in which the immune system fights off a perceived threat that would otherwise be harmless to the body. Such reactions are called allergies.

Adverse Symptoms - headache, upper respiratory symptoms, shortness of breath, difficulty with concentration, and loss of coordination, loss of consciousness or seizures, asthma attacks, severe allergic reactions and skin irritation.

B. Purpose

An ES friendly environment helps create a safe and healthy learning environment and workplace. People with ES, allergies or asthma may suffer adverse symptoms when exposed to chemicals, allergens or other environmental agents. ISD will work with the Maintenance Department to ensure that products used to clean the schools and workplace are fragrance-free and follow best practices to limit employee exposure to chemicals.

ISD recognizes the adverse symptoms caused by exposure to chemicals and allergens and in its endeavor to maintain its facilities as a safe and healthy place of employment and learning, Principals and building managers will be able to implement an ES friendly workspace when made aware that a student, staff member or parent is experiencing an adverse symptom to a chemical, scent or allergen in the workplace.

C. Procedures

This procedure applies to all employees, students and visitors of ISD and to all facilities owned and operated by ISD, including company owned vehicles.

- an ES Plan will be implemented on a case by case bases dependent on the supervisor's assessment;
- trigger items that may cause adverse symptoms may be cologne, perfume, aftershave lotion, scented lotion/hand soaps, fragranced hair products and or similar products, air fresheners, candles, cleaning/other chemicals, allergens from food, plants and animals;
- staff, students and visitors affected by ES shall take reasonable precautions to self- manage their conditions and will advise the Principal if they are affected by specific scents, chemicals or allergens;
- the Principal will meet with the individual to clarify the issue and to understand the impact that the scent, chemical or allergen is having and the actions that will be taken to address the problem;
- an ES Plan will be developed without causing undue hardship to students or staff. The ES plan will be communicated to the ISD Workplace Safety and Health Committee, staff, students and parents highlighting the key points of the plan and requesting everyone's cooperation and understanding to create a safe environment for all. Signs and posters may be displayed in the building if required.
- staff, students and visitors will avoid strong or excessive use of personal care products such as cologne, perfume, aftershave lotions, scented lotions, fragranced hair products and/or similar products. All will refrain from possessing, on the school property, any allergen causing products that have been banned from the specific school;
- employees will be informed of the ISD Environmental Sensitivity Procedure when hired;
- when required by an ES Plan in that school, visitors will be informed of the ISD Environmental Sensitivity Procedure by their hosts or through correspondence; and
- repeated or consistent disregard for an Environmental Sensitivity Plan by staff, students or a visitor may result in disciplinary action.