

# Safety Committee Charter and Bylaws

## CHARTER AND BYLAWS

Approved on November 28, 2006  
Rev. Feb 2020

### Mission Statement

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The University has a responsibility to provide a safe and healthy environment for faculty, staff, students, and visitors, while completing University-related work responsibilities. The Safety Committee ensures there is an infrastructure that provides proactive identification, evaluation and resolution of hazards for the safety and health of employees, students, and visitors. The Committee oversees safety-related matters for the campuses of the University of Tennessee Knoxville and the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture (UTIA) campus in Knoxville. UTIA personnel and operations that are not based on the agricultural campus in Knoxville (as regular location of work) are excluded from the scope of this committee, although coverage may be extended to them via UTIA policy. The Committee reports to the Campus Executive Safety Council.

### Responsibilities

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- Advise the Chancellor or Campus Executive Safety Council in matters concerning workplace safety and health-related policies and procedures.
- Maintain, review and where appropriate improve or suggest improvements to policies and procedures related to the safety and health of employees, faculty, students and visitors;
- Innovate, improve and support enhancements to institutional safety culture;
- Monitor, improve, and stimulate awareness of workplace safety, health and environmental compliance;
- Support an effective injury prevention program;
- Establish appropriate subordinate committees as necessary to focus on a specific area of risk to the university.
- Ensure representation, coordination, and communication from subordinate committees with a safety or health focus for the purpose of presenting trends and issues to senior leadership;
- Review and recommend action after an event where a serious or significant workplace safety or health issue arose during a university-related activity involving faculty, staff, students and/or visitors;
- Ensure the University of Tennessee Knoxville and UTIA Knoxville campus are compliant with system-wide policy SA0800 establishing a safety committee.

Due to the complexity of large research university operations, subordinate committees are necessary to effectively achieve the responsibilities of the UTK Safety Committee. The purpose of subordinate committees is to facilitate structured communications between committees and to standardize elevation of safety related issues to campus executives. The primary responsibility of some subordinate committees is to assure UT Knoxville researchers operate within federally-mandated requirements for rights, safety, welfare and/or humane treatment of research subjects. These committees will remain operationally independent in terms of meeting their goals and responsibilities. No procedures outlined in these bylaws supersede federal and state compliance requirements. It is recommended that researcher-related safety concerns discussed at these committees be communicated to the UTK Safety Committee.

As a function of the Safety Committee's responsibilities, subordinate committees include,

- Emergency Management Steering Committee



- Institutional Animal Care Use Committee
- Institutional Review Board
- International Risk Management Committee
- University of Tennessee Space Institute (UTSI) Safety Committee
- Laboratory Safety Committee
  - Biological Safety Committee
  - High Hazard Chemical Review Committee
  - Laser Safety Committee
  - Radiological Safety Committee
- Traffic Safety Committee
- Workplace Safety Committees

The subordinate committees list may be revised anytime there are changes in a subordinate committee's responsibilities and/or priorities. The Safety Committee shall review these changes and submit its recommendation to the Executive Safety Council for approval prior to revising the list.

## Committee Members

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Membership is a three-year appointment, unless otherwise stated, primarily defined as chairs of subordinate committee augmented by positions to provide specific subject matter expertise. Members can be appointed to consecutive terms if their subcommittee assignment or university position if it serves the best interest of achieving the responsibilities of the Safety Committee. Committee members can recommend an appropriate alternate to represent them in their absence. Alternates approved by the UTK Safety Committee will have voting rights only in the absence of the assigned members. Committee members are:

- University of Tennessee Knoxville Safety Director (**Committee Chair**)
- Assist/Assoc. Vice Chancellor for Student Life
- Associate Athletic Director for Facilities
- Associate General Counsel
- Associate Vice Chancellor for Facilities
- Associate Vice Chancellor for Human Resources
- Associate Vice Chancellor for Research Compliance
- Associate Dean for Research: College of Arts and Science
- Associate Dean, College of Education, Health and Human Science
- Associate Dean for Research: College of Engineering
- Dean of UT AgResearch
- Dean, College of Veterinary Medicine (designated proxy)
- Director of Emergency Management
- Director of Risk Management
- Public Relations Specialist from Office of Communications and Marketing and Employee Relations Committee non-exempt representative
- SGA or GSS student representative (1: ideally a two-year term)

Ad hoc and ex officio members may be added by Committee consent for one or more meetings to resolve particular matters or situations.

## Ad Hoc Subcommittees

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Ad hoc subcommittees may be appointed as necessary to address occupational safety & health and risk management-related matters. These subcommittees may be composed solely of members from the Safety Committee or may include non-members.

## **Quorum and Voting Rights**

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A quorum for a meeting will be a simple majority of assigned members. For purposes of passing a resolution or policy at a meeting, a simple majority of committee members attending a meeting with a quorum is sufficient. Voting rights may be exercised during the attendance of a Committee meeting or by electronic ballot. All members of the Committee, except ad hoc and ex officio members, have voting rights.

## **Proceedings**

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Meetings will be conducted in accordance with the Committee Chair's Rules of Order. The Chair will issue all points of order, summarize initiatives as necessary, moderate discussion, and call for motions. Motions, seconds, and/or other propositions may be made by any voting member of the Safety Committee.

Where meeting outcomes create changes in policies, draft changes in policy, changes in procedure and/or draft changes in procedure, the changes will need to be communicated promptly to the Executive Safety Council. The communication mechanism may vary due to circumstances and/or needs, but can include communications from the offices of the Associate Vice Chancellor for Public Safety, the Associate Vice Chancellor for Research Compliance and the UTIA Agricultural Research Dean; the Safety Offices of the two campuses, or a communication issued by the Committee through the Committee members.

## **Agendas**

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Agendas are assembled by the Committee Chair and distributed to the Committee one week in advance of a scheduled meeting. However, sudden changes in circumstances or emergency events may require the Chair to present an updated agenda at the meeting. Also, all agendas should include updates from the subcommittees and an item for "Any Other Business". Any Committee member may request of the Chair that an item be included in the agenda.

## **Minutes**

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Minutes of the meeting shall include a copy of the meeting agenda, a list of members present and members absent, notes about the sequence of items discussed, the substance of the discussions, the statement of any resolutions and vote outcomes for those resolutions, statements about action items and who has responsibility for the action item and a list of handouts, and a list of issues and/or trends to be briefed to the Campus Executive Safety Committee. Minutes shall be:

- Compiled by a staff member reporting to the Committee Chair
- Available one week before the next meeting via e-mail and reviewed at the beginning of that meeting for correction and/or approval.
- Maintained on the UTK EHS website at a web link for the Safety Committee.

Minutes are provided in summary form to the Executive Safety Council.

## **Meeting Frequency**

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The Safety Committee shall meet quarterly. Special meetings of the Safety Committee may be called to address matters needing immediate attention. Members who are unable to attend are encouraged to send a representative from their respective unit to serve as their proxy. Members shall provide the name of their proxy, in advance, to the Chair for approval. Proxies shall have voting authority on behalf of the member. Members are asked to limit their proxy selection to no more than two alternate representatives. The representatives shall have the ability to make commitments to the Safety Committee on behalf of their organization.

### **By-Laws Review and Revision**

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By-laws for the Safety Committee shall be reviewed at least every two years but may be reviewed “in real time” if changes in university administrative structure or policy necessitate. The By-law revision process will be managed by the Chair. It will involve either the Committee as a whole or an ad hoc subcommittee appointed by the Committee. All revisions will be framed as motions to the Committee for voting on by the Committee and submitted with the meeting Agenda prior to the meeting. Revisions to the By-laws must be shared with the Committee two weeks prior to a vote being held and be approved by the affirmative vote of a majority (51%) of the Committee membership. Ballots for such votes may be presented in person at the meeting where the vote occurs or made via electronic ballot to the Chair between release of recommended change and the established deadline.

