1. **Purpose:**

   Personal protective equipment (PPE), such as lab coats, gloves and safety glasses/goggles, is required to ensure that laboratory personnel are protected from laboratory hazards.

   This policy applies to all personnel, including faculty, staff, students and visitors in the University's research laboratories and teaching labs.

2. **Applicable Legislation:**

   Occupational Health & Safety Act
   http://nslegislature.ca/legc/statutes/occphtm

   Occupational Safety Regulations Part 3 – Personal Protective Equipment

   Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission
   General Nuclear Safety & Control Regulations

   Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission
   Radiation Protection Regulations

   Public Health Agency of Canada
   Laboratory Biosafety Guidelines 3rd Edition – 2004
3. **Responsibilities:**
   In accordance with the above regulations all faculty, staff, students and visitors must wear appropriate PPE whenever the potential for exposure to a hazardous material exists. Safety is a shared responsibility.

**Responsibilities of Directors, Department Heads/Chairs and Managers.**

a) Ensure that an assessment of potential hazards has been completed for all areas under his/her control

**Responsibilities of Supervisors/PI’s**

a) The supervisor/PI must be knowledgeable of the hazards in their area of responsibility.
b) They must ensure that all staff and students are aware of the hazards present and have been informed of the proper use and care of PPE
c) They must ensure that staff and students under their supervision have taken all required safety courses.
d) They must ensure that staff and students wear required PPE all times when a hazard exists.

**Responsibilities of Staff and Students:**

a) Wear required PPE at all times in an area where a hazard exists.
b) Maintain PPE in good condition.

PPE will vary based on the hazard. PPE must be used when engineering and administrative controls are not possible and can be used to complement these controls when they cannot completely eliminate the hazard.

**PPE complements engineering controls such as fume hoods, BSC’s, glove boxes etc... Good work practices will also include good personal hygiene.**

4. **Procedures:**

a) **Lab Coats:**
   i) Lab coats **shall** be worn by all staff and students in research and teaching labs whenever there is a potential for exposure to hazardous materials which would include – chemicals, biological agents, nuclear substances, corrosives, flammables, open flames/hot processes and pyrophoric materials.
ii) Lab coats should be knee length, closable and have full length sleeves.

iii) Lab coats should never be worn with sleeves rolled up, if there is a possibility of the sleeve becoming entangled or catching on equipment coats with elasticised or knitted cuffs should be used.

iv) Wear lab coats only in the lab or work area.

v) Lab coats must be removed when leaving the work environment. Lab coats are not permitted in public areas such as passenger elevators, lecture spaces, cafeterias, libraries, building foyers etc..

vi) Lab coats contaminated with biological materials must be autoclaved prior to laundering.

vii) Lab coats contaminated with radioactive materials must be disposed of as radioactive waste.

viii) Lab coats must be stored separate from street clothes.

ix) **Home laundering is unacceptable**, unless otherwise exempted by the Environmental Health & Safety Office.

x) This policy applies to research and teaching labs only. There will be instances such as is the case with Animal Care personnel who will wear a unique colored lab coat to cover scrubs when they are outside the Animal Care quarters.

b) Gloves:

i) Appropriate gloves shall be worn by all staff and students in research and teaching labs whenever there is a potential for exposure to hazardous materials which would include – chemicals, biological agents, nuclear substances, corrosives, flammables, open flames/hot processes and pyrophoric materials.

ii) Gloves should be carefully selected for their degradation and permeation characteristics to provide proper protection.

iii) Gloves should be checked periodically to detect any tears which would compromise the integrity of the glove.

iv) Gloves should be changed at least every thirty minutes when handling radioactive materials.

v) Double gloving is recommended when handling radioactive materials.

vi) Gloves must be doffed prior to exiting the lab and hands washed carefully.

vii) **Gloves must not be worn outside the work area as contamination of common surfaces may occur.**
viii) When transporting hazardous materials between labs, use secondary containment that can be carried without gloves. For larger items use of a cart for transporting would be appropriate.

c) Eye & Face Protection

i) Appropriate eye and face protection shall be worn by all persons conducting an activity that involves potential eye and face hazards. Such hazards would include - chemicals, Biohazardous materials, high energy radioactive materials, flying particles, hot solids or liquids, lasers etc., This list is not all inclusive, a risk assessment will determine your needs.

ii) All laboratory employees and visitors should wear protective eyewear while in laboratories where chemicals are being handled or stored, at all times, even when not working directly with chemicals.

iii) Neither vision corrective eye glasses nor contact lenses offer the appropriate level of protection.

iv) Eye/face protection must be fitted properly and replaced immediately if damaged.

v) The type of eye protection required for laser operators is dependent on the spectral frequency and specific wavelength of the laser sources.

Additional PPE, such as foot protection, respirators etc., may be required depending on the level of hazard. An appropriate risk assessment will identify the level of PPE required. Consultation with the EH&S Office is required to determine respiratory protection needs.

Any deviations or exceptions to the procedures laid out in this policy must be approved by the Environmental Health & Safety Office.