

 <p>Cornell University Environmental Health and Safety</p>	<p>Department Safety Representatives Overview</p> <p><i>Department Safety Representative Program/Operations</i></p>	<p>Guidance Document</p>
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The Department Safety Representative (DSR) serves a very important role with implementation of safety, health, and environmental programs on campus. The role of the DSR is to assist the director, unit head, and/or department chairperson meet their responsibilities for safety and compliance as described in the [University Health & Safety Policy 8.6](#).

While the director, unit head, or department chairperson can tailor the specific responsibilities of the DSR to meet the needs and operating style of their unit(s), EH&S recommends the DSR be assigned the responsibilities listed below as a way for colleges and units to meet their health and safety goals and obligations. EH&S encourages directors, unit heads, and department chairpersons to incorporate these responsibilities as part of a DSR’s job description and be reviewed as part of performance dialogues.

The role of the DSR is not intended to be a substitute for the responsibility of the director, unit head, department chairperson, principal investigators or supervisors to ensure a safe and healthy workplace for employees working under their supervision or in workplaces under their control. The role of the DSR is to lead and coordinate this effort. The resolution of disputes, lack of cooperation, final decision on funding and priorities, etc. will remain the responsibility of the director, unit head, department chairperson, principal investigators or supervisors as appropriate.

Colleges or units may choose one individual per department to serve as the DSR or one individual may be given responsibility for multiple departments, units, or facilities (“areas they represent”) as long as:

- The health and safety needs for the college or units are met, and
- The individual selected as the DSR has the training, knowledge, and support to carry out the role and responsibilities for the areas they represent.

DSRs can successfully fulfill the role as noted above by adhering to the following “PACT” of responsibilities:

Partnering

- Request and coordinate assistance from EH&S and other organizations that can provide guidance, training, and other services to facilitate the college or unit meeting required health and safety needs.

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- Assist directors, unit heads, department chairpersons, supervisors, and individuals within the areas they represent to establish departmental, unit, or facility-wide safety programs, priorities, objectives and targets for safety, health, and environmental performance.
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- Assist directors, unit heads, department chairpersons, supervisors, and individuals to identify (with assistance and guidance from EH&S) safety needs for the areas they represent are met (e.g., training, protective equipment, acquisition of safety equipment, and corrective measures including noncompliance items identified in safety audits).
- Encourage the formation of, and participate on college, unit, departmental, and/or facility-wide safety committee(s).

Accountability

- Work with EH&S to stay knowledgeable about University health and safety policies and procedures that apply to, and the health and safety issues that occur within, the areas they represent. Communicate to individuals working within the areas they represent about these policies and procedures.
- Work with EH&S to stay knowledgeable about the safety, health, and environmental services offered and provided to colleges and units, and communicate these services to individuals within the areas they represent.
- Conduct and/or facilitate routine inspections of work areas in the areas they represent using tools and resources provided by EH&S, including participation in EH&S inspection and consultation services. Facilitate corrective actions for any issues identified with the support and participation of EH&S, including bringing issues of noncompliance to the attention of directors, units heads and department chairpersons.

Communication

- Serve as a starting point to facilitate communication with regard to safety and health issues when established communication pathways are inadequate or unknown.
- Promote safety, health, and environmental training program and workshops (particularly EH&S trainings) throughout the areas they represent by distributing fliers and EH&S newsletters, and forwarding EH&S training announcements and other announcements via email or hardcopy. Inform individuals working in areas they represent about the requirements to obtain necessary training as identified by their supervisor and EH&S.

- Serve as a “conduit for information exchange” through facilitation and dissemination of safety, health and environmental information (particularly information sent out by EH&S) to all personnel, including visiting faculty and researchers, and student employees, within the areas they represent.
 - Communicate with supervisors in the areas they represent that all incidents and near misses should be reported and that a written [Incident/Accident Report](#) is completed.
- Training
- Attend EH&S training programs (and other safety, health, and environmental training programs and workshops) to increase and maintain knowledge about safety, health, and environmental issues that are applicable to the areas they represent.
 - Attend university DSR meetings and other college or unit level safety, health, and environmental related meetings and serve as the liaison for the areas they represent at these meetings.

Assist in Emergencies

- Be a part of assistance during Emergencies, meet with emergency responders
- Provide Emergency Responders with contact information; Provide EH&S with daytime and nighttime phone numbers and the name and phone numbers of a backup individual.
- Establish a Fire Warden program for your facility
- Develop an Emergency Action Plan for your facility
- Help facilitate emergency evacuation drills

Please note, depending on the complexity of the areas a DSR represents, there may be more responsibilities that are required to ensure the success of the DSR program (see the Laboratory Safety Manual for more examples).

EH&S Support for DSRs

Examples of how EH&S will provide support to DSRs to carry out these responsibilities listed above include:

- Provide the necessary training for DSRs to be successful.

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- Communicate with DSRs via the DSR-L listserv, EH&S website, EH&S newsletters, DSR Roundtables, etc.
- Provide support and resources to conduct facility inspections.
- Work with DSRs and other unit personnel to identify safety needs for new equipment and facilities when assistance is requested.
- Attend college, unit, department, and facility safety committee meetings when invited.

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