

WORKPLACE INSPECTION PROGRAM

NIST S 7101.26

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¹ For revision history, see Appendix A.

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39 **1. PURPOSE**

40 The program provides requirements for the conduct of comprehensive safety and health
41 inspections of NIST workplaces by trained and experienced inspectors using a specified
42 deficiency hazard classification process. This program also specifies requirements to inform
43 those affected of unsafe or unhealthful working conditions (UWCs) identified through the
44 inspection process, and to identify common deficiencies for targeted hazard reduction
45 campaigns.

46
47
48 **2. BACKGROUND**

49 As a federal agency, NIST must meet the workplace inspection requirements of 29 CFR
50 1960, including inspection frequency, inspector qualifications, training, posting, and
51 abatement requirements. This suborder specifies how NIST fulfills these requirements.

52
53
54 **3. APPLICABILITY**

- 55 a. The requirements of this suborder apply to all NIST-owned facilities, NIST-controlled field
56 sites where NIST activities are conducted for six months or longer in a calendar year, and all
57 non-residential workplaces where NIST employees and covered associates, i.e., staff,
58 conduct work activities [e.g., NIST-controlled field sites, Hollings Marine Laboratory,
59 Institute for Bioscience and Biotechnology Research (IBBR), JILA] for periods of six
60 months or more.
- 61
- 62 b. The requirements of this suborder do not apply to residential work locations (e.g., telework
63 and remote work locations).

64
65
66 **4. REFERENCES**

- 67 a. 29 CFR Part 1960, Basic Program Elements for Federal Employee Occupational Safety and
68 Health Programs and Related Matters, specifically:
- 69
- 70 (1) 29 CFR 1960.25, Qualifications of Safety and Health Inspectors and Agency Inspections,
71 which establishes minimum inspection frequency and inspector qualifications;
- 72
- 73 (2) 29 CFR 1960.26, Conduct of Inspections, which establishes minimum inspection and
74 reporting requirements, employee and management participation, and inspector
75 authorities;
- 76
- 77 (3) 29 CFR 1960.30, Abatement of Unsafe or Unhealthful Working Conditions, which
78 establishes minimum posting and abatement requirements; and

79 (4) 29 CFR 1960.56-58, Training of Safety and Health Specialists, Inspectors, and Collateral
80 Duty Safety and Health Personnel which establishes the basic training required to
81 conduct inspections and specify hazard abatement.

82
83

84 **5. APPLICABLE NIST DIRECTIVES**

85 a. NIST O 7101.00: *Occupational Safety and Health Management System* ([Internal link only](#))

86

87 b. NIST S 7101.03: [Stop Work](#)

88

89 c. NIST S 7101.20: [Work and Worker Authorization Based on Hazard Reviews](#)

90

91 d. NIST S 7101.23: [Safety Education and Training](#)

92

93

94 **6. REQUIREMENTS**

95 a. Inspection Scope

96

97 (1) The scope of inspection is to identify hazards in all workplaces during announced or
98 unannounced inspections.

99

100 b. Inspection Frequency

101

102 (1) Workspaces shall be inspected at the following frequencies:

103

104 (a) At least annually for offices, office-like spaces, and other spaces where activities
105 requiring a hazard review by NIST S 7101.20 are not conducted.

106

107 (b) At least twice annually for workspaces where one or more activities are required to
108 have hazard reviews in accordance with NIST S 7101.20.

109

110 c. Equivalency for Inspections of Off-site Locations²

111

112 (1) For off-site locations not owned by NIST, equivalent inspections conducted by or on
113 behalf of the site owners are acceptable, provided:

114

115 (a) Affected NIST staff and the OSHE Workplace Inspection Program Manager are
116 provided a copy of the inspection results; and

117

² Please see Section 3.a for examples of applicable locations.

- 118 (b) OUs, in consultation with OSHE inspectors, shall verify that abatement actions
119 adequately eliminate UWCs impacting workers in the workspace.
120
- 121 d. Inspector and Inspection Team Member Qualifications
122
- 123 (1) Lead inspectors shall be NIST employees who meet the training requirements specified in
124 Section 6.n.
125
- 126 (2) OU lead inspectors shall be a Division, Group, or OU Safety Representative.
127
- 128 (a) If an OU does not have a Division, Group, or OU Safety Representative, they may:
129
- 130 i. Identify a staff member to complete the training requirements specified in
131 Section 6.n to qualify that staff member as an OU lead inspector; or
132
- 133 ii. Contact OSHE and an OSHE staff member shall serve as the lead inspector.
134
- 135 (3) OSHE lead inspectors shall meet the qualifications of an Occupational Safety and Health
136 Inspector. (See Section 7.i)
137
- 138 (4) Covered associates may participate in inspections to the extent allowed by their
139 agreements or contracts.
140
- 141 (5) Any staff member may serve as a subject matter expert (SME) based on their knowledge
142 of the hazards associated with the work and equipment in the spaces under inspection.
143
- 144 e. Assigning Lead Inspectors and Inspection Teams
145
- 146 (1) For each office, office-like space, and other OU-owned space where work is conducted
147 and a hazard review is not required:
148
- 149 (a) OUs shall assign an OU lead inspector.
150
- 151 (b) OUs should encourage space contacts and supervisors to attend and participate in
152 announced inspections in their spaces.
153
- 154 (2) For workspaces where one or more activities are required to have hazard reviews:
155
- 156 (a) OSHE shall assign an OSHE lead inspector.
157

- 158 (b) OUs shall assign at least one OU inspector, who is either a Division, Group, or OU
159 Safety Representative, to serve on the inspection team under the direction of the
160 OSHE lead inspector.
161
- 162 (c) OUs may assign additional inspectors and SMEs who are knowledgeable in the
163 hazards associated with the work and equipment used in the space(s) under inspection
164 to assist with hazard identification.
165
- 166 (d) OUs should encourage space contacts and supervisors to attend and participate in
167 announced inspections in their spaces.
168
- 169 (3) For workspaces that are not assigned to an OU:
170
- 171 (a) OSHE shall determine the inspection frequency based on hazards in the space.
172
- 173 (b) OSHE shall assign an OSHE lead inspector.
174
- 175 (c) OSHE may assign additional inspectors and SMEs who are knowledgeable in the
176 hazards associated with the work and equipment used in the space(s) under
177 inspection to assist with hazard identification.
178

179 f. Inspection Checklists
180

- 181 (1) Checklists developed by OSHE shall be used to add rigor to the inspection process, to
182 provide consistency NIST-wide, and to focus inspections on workplace hazards.
183

184 g. Pre-inspection Planning
185

- 186 (1) Prior to inspection, the following information shall be available to the lead inspector:
187
- 188 (a) All available relevant information which pertains to the occupational safety and
189 health of the workplace to be inspected which may include but is not limited to:
190 hazard reviews or job hazard analyses; industrial hygiene monitoring records;
191 chemical inventory; biohazardous material registrations; special ventilation designs;
192 room layout; incident reports; results of previous inspections; and any associated
193 corrective, preventive, or abatement action plans.
194
- 195 (b) Name and contact information of the workplace supervisor (typically the lowest level
196 of line management) with responsibility for the workplace to be inspected;
197

- 198 (c) Name of space contacts for spaces to be inspected;
199
200 (d) Name and contact information of the union representative, as applicable, of
201 employees assigned to the workplace to be inspected; and
202
203 (e) Any special requirements or precautions necessary to enter the workplace, such as
204 escort requirements, minimum personal protective equipment, or safeguards
205 necessary to protect research activities.
206

207 (2) OSHE-Led Inspection Scheduling and Coordination
208

- 209 (a) OSHE shall establish the inspection schedule in coordination with the Division Chief
210 or designated OU Safety Program Coordinator or Division or Group Safety
211 Representatives to facilitate OU participation for areas that require inspection.
212
213 (b) The Division Chief or equivalent shall ensure personnel are appointed to participate
214 in the inspection. The Division personnel shall include the Division or Group Safety
215 Representative and may include additional inspectors and SMEs who are
216 knowledgeable in the hazards associated with the work and equipment used in the
217 space(s) under inspection.
218
219 (c) The Division Chief, or their designated participants, shall inform the OSHE inspector,
220 in advance, of the general types of work activities and conditions to be inspected, to
221 have the proper equipment (*e.g.*, personal protective equipment, flashlight, circuit
222 tester) available to conduct an effective inspection.
223
224 (d) The workspace supervisor shall notify union representatives of announced
225 inspections.
226

227 h. Conduct of Inspections
228

- 229 (1) Reasonable effort shall be made by the inspection team to conduct inspections as
230 announced, during normal work hours, and to avoid interference or adverse impact on
231 laboratory, shop, or office operations. Inspections may be announced or unannounced to
232 the workplace supervisor and staff of the workplace to be inspected. Where access to a
233 workplace is restricted by regulation or policy, the lead inspector shall arrange for an
234 escort or obtain permission from the responsible party for entry for each inspection.
235
236 (2) The lead inspector, with input from inspection team members:
237

- 238 (a) Shall identify and classify all identified deficiencies using the following
239 classifications³ (refer to Section 7 for definitions):
240
241 i. Catastrophic
242
243 ii. Severe
244
245 iii. Moderate
246
247 iv. Minor
248
249 v. Administrative.
250
251 (b) Should record all observations or recommendations within the scope of the inspection
252 [see also Section 6.e pertaining to the use of inspection checklists].
253
254 (3) Regardless of classification of deficiency, if an inspection team member determines an
255 imminent danger exists, the lead inspector shall immediately:
256
257 (a) Instruct affected staff to stop work in a manner that does not increase the danger;
258
259 (b) Provide interim instructions to secure the workspace or activity (*e.g.*, using signage or
260 barriers) to prevent exposure to the danger and inadvertent restart of the activity;
261
262 (c) Notify the workplace supervisor of the danger; and
263
264 (d) If the supervisor's response does not sufficiently protect staff from the hazard, initiate
265 a Stop Work Order (SWO)⁴.
266
267 i. If a SWO is issued, subsequent actions to address the imminent danger shall
268 be in accordance with the requirements of NIST S 7101.03.
269
270 (4) Any deficiency which can be readily abated during the inspection should be abated.
271
272 (a) The abatement measure(s) shall be communicated to the workplace supervisor.

³ The classification system amongst all OSHE's programs is the same. Equivalency with OSH Act, OSHA Field Operation Manual, and 29 CFR 1960.2(v) is as follows: Minor is equivalent to Other than Serious. Moderate, Severe, and Catastrophic are equivalent to Serious. The definition of Imminent Danger is the same within this suborder as defined in Section 13(a) of the OSH Act.

⁴ Note that all staff have stop work authority and OSHE staff members are specifically authorized to issue oral Stop Work Orders in accordance with NIST S 7101.03.

- 273 (b) The abatement measure(s) shall be recorded in WIRS.
274
- 275 (5) When, in the opinion of an inspection team member, it is necessary to conduct personal
276 monitoring (sampling) of a staff member’s work environment, the lead inspector shall
277 record the need for such monitoring as a deficiency and recommend as an abatement
278 action arranging for such sampling by OSHE.
279
- 280 (6) During the course of an inspection, any staff member shall be permitted to bring to the
281 attention of an inspection team member any UWC which they have reason to believe
282 exists in the workplace.
283
- 284 (7) The workplace supervisor and staff members should be encouraged to accompany the
285 inspection team during the workplace inspection to assist as needed, and, if an employee-
286 designated representative is accompanying the inspection team, to provide that
287 representative with more detailed knowledge of any existing or potential UWCs in the
288 workplace.
289
- 290 (a) Additional representatives of OU management and staff may accompany the
291 inspection team if the lead inspector or the OU determines that such additional
292 representatives will further aid the inspection.
293
- 294 (b) Different representatives may accompany the inspection team during different
295 portions of an inspection.
296
- 297 (8) At the conclusion of an inspection, within 1 business day, the lead inspector shall confer
298 with the workplace supervisor or their designated representative, either in person,
299 virtually, or on the phone, to receive informal advice on any apparent deficiencies
300 identified during the inspection and to provide the lead inspector with any pertinent
301 information regarding conditions in the workplace.
302

303 i. Inspection Reports
304

- 305 (1) The NIST web-based application titled “Workplace Inspection Reporting System
306 (WIRS)” shall be used to document workplace inspections subject to this suborder.
307
- 308 (2) The lead inspector shall enter the workplace inspection into WIRS no later than 5
309 business days following an inspection.
310

- 311 (a) If there are compelling reasons why this cannot be completed within 5 business days,
312 the lead inspector shall notify the workplace supervisor and the Program Manager for
313 this suborder of the reason for the delay.
314
- 315 (3) The inspection report shall contain the following information:
316
- 317 (a) Names of the lead inspector and inspection team members;
318
 - 319 (b) Name of workplace supervisor;
320
 - 321 (c) Organizational information (OU, Division, and Group);
322
 - 323 (d) Date of inspection;
324
 - 325 (e) Location(s) inspected (*e.g.*, building, room);
326
 - 327 (f) Information pertaining to deficiencies identified, including:
328
 - 329 i. Description of deficiency;
330
 - 331 NOTE: Existing deficiencies recorded during previous inspections that
332 remain unabated should not be duplicated in WIRS.
333
 - 334 ii. Deficiency classification.
335
 - 336 iii. Reference to suborder, regulation, or other standard; and
337
 - 338 iv. Whether deficiency was fully abated during the inspection.
339
 - 340 (g) For deficiencies classified as catastrophic, severe, or moderate that are not fully abated
341 during the inspection:
342
 - 343 i. Recommended abatement actions;
344
 - 345 ii. Recommended interim protective measures; and
346
 - 347 iii. Additional comments or observations, if applicable.
348
- 349 (4) The workplace supervisor shall be notified when inspection report entry has been
350 completed.

- 351 j. Notices of Unsafe or Unhealthful Working Conditions
352
353 (1) If an inspection results in a finding of a catastrophic, severe, or moderate UWC that is not
354 fully abated during the inspection, the workplace supervisor shall establish an abatement
355 date in WIRS and generate a UWC notice.
356
357 (a) The UWC notice shall:
358
359 i. Classify and describe the nature of the UWC;
360
361 ii. Reference the suborder or other standard it violates;
362
363 iii. Provide information on interim controls taken;
364
365 iv. Provide a plan for abatement;
366
367 v. Provide a timeframe for abatement; and
368
369 vi. Indicate if the UWC is an imminent danger.
370
371 (b) The UWC notice, or a copy of it, shall be immediately posted at or near the location
372 where the UWC exists; if that is not possible, it shall be posted in a prominent place
373 where all affected staff can read it; or
374
375 (c) An electronic copy of the notice may be provided to staff via email in lieu of posting
376 when the following conditions are met:
377
378 i. Each staff member conducting activities in the workplace is provided an
379 electronic copy;
380
381 ii. Each staff member routinely accesses a computer (to ensure they have timely
382 access to the notice);
383
384 iii. The UWCs addressed by the notice do not present a risk to other staff who
385 may intermittently access the workplace (*e.g.*, to perform maintenance); and
386
387 iv. The UWCs addressed by the notice are fully abated within 21 calendar days.
388
389 (d) Any additional notices describing special measures in effect during abatement of the
390 UWC shall also be posted or provided electronically by the workplace supervisor.

- 391 (e) Each posted notice shall remain posted until the UWC has been abated.
392
- 393 k. Abatement of Deficiencies
394
- 395 (1) Any deficiency which cannot be readily abated during the inspection should be
396 remediated at the very earliest, but no later than 21 calendar days of receipt of the
397 inspection report.
398
- 399 (a) Where appropriate, line management should prioritize efforts to abate deficiencies
400 based upon the classification of the deficiency, *e.g.*, resources should be dedicated to
401 addressing deficiencies classified as “catastrophic” ahead of those classified as
402 “moderate”.
403
- 404 (b) The staff member addressing the deficiency on behalf of the workplace supervisor
405 shall record in WIRS:
406
- 407 i. Sufficient detail regarding the abatement action(s) taken; and
408
- 409 ii. The date of full implementation.
410
- 411 (2) For any deficiency which cannot be abated within 21 calendar days of receipt of the
412 inspection report, an abatement plan shall be developed.
413
- 414 (a) The plan shall provide sufficient detail for abatement and appropriate timelines,
415 including anticipated date of full implementation.
416
- 417 (b) The plan shall be recorded in WIRS.
418
- 419 (c) The plan shall be communicated to affected staff.
420
- 421 (d) When fully implemented, the staff member addressing the deficiency shall record the
422 date of full implementation in WIRS.
423
- 424 (3) Interim Measures
425
- 426 (a) For those deficiencies classified as Catastrophic, Severe, or Moderate which cannot
427 be readily abated, interim protective measures shall be developed and implemented
428 where necessary to protect staff within 7 calendar days.
429

- 430 (b) For those deficiencies classified as Minor which cannot be readily abated, interim
431 protective measures should be developed and implemented where necessary to protect
432 staff within 7 calendar days.
- 433
- 434 (c) No interim measures are required for deficiencies classified as Administrative.
- 435
- 436 (4) When a workplace supervisor cannot abate a deficiency within their authority, the
437 supervisor shall request assistance from the next level supervisor up to the OU Director.
- 438
- 439 (5) When the OU cannot abate a deficiency within their authority, the OU Director shall
440 request assistance from the Associate Director for Management Resources to secure
441 abatement and advise the NIST Chief Safety Officer (CSO). The CSO and all personnel
442 subject to the hazard from the deficiency shall be advised of this action and of interim
443 protective measures in effect and shall be kept informed of subsequent progress on the
444 abatement plan.
- 445
- 446 (6) When applicable, if a deficiency cannot be abated without assistance of the General
447 Services Administration or other Federal lessor agency, the OU shall act with the lessor
448 agency to secure abatement.
- 449
- 450 (7) For inspections of sites not owned and operated by NIST, moderate, severe, and
451 catastrophic UWCs, including imminent danger UWCs, that are the responsibility of the
452 host organization and not adequately addressed, OU management, in consultation with
453 OSHE, shall take appropriate action to ensure the safety and health of potentially
454 impacted NIST staff. Actions may include, when necessary, relocation of potentially
455 impacted NIST staff to a safe work environment.
- 456
- 457 (a) If imminent danger UWCs are not fully abated within 21 days of receipt of the
458 inspection report, the Division Chief, or equivalent, shall notify the Chief Safety
459 Officer (CSO) in writing.
- 460
- 461 (b) UWCs that are the responsibility of the OU to abate shall be addressed in accordance
462 with Section 6.k(1) through Section 6.k(4).
- 463
- 464 1. Verification of abatement.
- 465
- 466 (1) An OSHE inspector shall physically verify that abatement actions adequately eliminate or
467 mitigate all catastrophic, severe, and moderate UWCs. Verification should occur within
468 60 days of the inspection report but shall occur no later than during the next subsequent
469 inspection.

- 470 (a) At the request of an OSHE inspector, an OSHE Program Manager may verify
471 abatement actions to determine whether they have been completed.
472
- 473 (2) An OU inspector shall physically verify that abatement actions adequately eliminate or
474 mitigate all minor UWCs and administrative deficiencies. Verification should occur
475 within 60 days of the inspection report but shall occur no later than during the next
476 subsequent inspection.
477
- 478 (3) Abatement actions determined to be inadequate shall be re-opened in WIRS until UWCs
479 have been satisfactorily abated.
480
- 481 m. Inspections by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)
482
- 483 (1) OSHA has the authority to conduct announced and unannounced safety and health
484 inspections of federal workplaces and operations. All NIST personnel shall cooperate
485 fully during any such inspection.
486
- 487 (2) The Chief Safety Officer (CSO) shall be notified whenever OSHA inspectors request
488 access to NIST facilities and shall assign an OSHE representative to coordinate the
489 inspection process. The OSHE representative shall:
490
- 491 (a) Notify the affected OU(s) of the inspection, when permitted to do so by OSHA;
492
- 493 (b) Accompany⁵ the OSHA inspector(s), along with an OU representative whenever
494 practical, while on-site;
495
- 496 (c) Document the observations of the OSHA inspectors, including photographing areas
497 photographed by OSHA; and
498
- 499 (d) Enter the results of the inspection into the Safety Event Logging System (SELS) web
500 application.
501
- 502 (3) OUs, in coordination with the OSHE representative, shall abate any UWCs identified
503 during the inspection in accordance with OSHA instructions and requirements of this
504 suborder, if possible.
505
- 506 (4) The CSO, in coordination with affected OUs, shall represent NIST on all inspection-
507 related correspondence with OSHA.

⁵ For workplaces outside of Gaithersburg and Boulder, OSHE shall coordinate with the responsible OU to ensure an OU representative addresses the requirements of Sections 6m(2)(b) and 6m(2)(c).

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n. Training

(1) OU Lead inspectors⁶ shall complete:

(a) Initial Lead Inspector Training

- i. OSHA 6008: Intro to OSHA for Other Federal Agencies; and
- ii. Practical, hands-on training provided by OSHE on conducting inspections to include:
 - (i) How to conduct inspections, evaluate hazards, and suggest general abatement procedures and interim protective measures;
 - (ii) Procedures for classifying UWCs as imminent danger, catastrophic, severe, moderate, minor, or administrative.
 - (iii) Inspector authorities;
 - (iv) Inspection procedures and techniques;
 - (v) Handling differing opinions of team members;
 - (vi) Considerations for establishing abatement dates; and
 - (vii) Preparation of reports and other documentation to support the inspection findings.

(b) Refresher Lead Inspector Training, every three years to include items 6.n.(1)(a)ii.

(2) OSHE inspectors shall complete:

(a) Training as indicated in 6.n.(1)(a).

(3) Lead inspectors shall complete the training specified in safety and health suborders applicable to the hazard(s) in the workspace they are to inspect.

⁶ This training is also available to union representatives who shall assist in conducting workplace safety and health inspections.

- 546 (4) OU managers and supervisors shall complete the training on the Workplace Inspection
547 Program for managers and supervisors provided by OSHE.
548
- 549 o. Recordkeeping
550
- 551 (1) WIRS shall maintain the following records for at least five years after deficiency closure:
552
- 553 (a) Inspection reports;
554
- 555 (b) Notices of UWCs;
556
- 557 (c) Abatement plans, when required;
558
- 559 (d) Description of abatement actions taken, when required;
560
- 561 (e) Date abatement actions were completed;
562
- 563 (f) Name of staff who modify data, where applicable; and
564
- 565 (g) Name of the person who completes the abatement.
566
- 567 (2) Training records shall be maintained in accordance with the requirements of NIST S
568 7101.23.
569
- 570 (3) Records shall be made available to an Authorized Representative of the Secretary of
571 Labor upon request.
572
- 573 p. Summary Reports
574
- 575 (1) The Workplace Inspection Program Manager shall prepare and submit an annual report
576 to the CSO for distribution to the Executive Safety Committee (ESC).
577
- 578 (2) The annual report shall include the following information:
579
- 580 (a) Summary of the inspection results reported through WIRS;
581
- 582 (b) Summary of abatement action status on inspection findings tracked through WIRS;
583
- 584 (c) Summary of compliance with timelines specified in this suborder related to conduct
585 of inspections, filing of reports, and implementation of abatement actions;

- 586 (d) Identification, prevalence, and trending of common safety issues; and
587
588 (e) Recommendations of common safety issues to be considered for safety improvement
589 efforts.
590
591 (3) The Workplace Inspection Program Manager shall compile, analyze, and report
592 inspection data periodically at the direction of the CSO.
593
594

595 7. DEFINITIONS

596 Definitions common to all NIST safety and health suborders can be found in Section 6 of
597 NIST O 7101.00. The definitions specific to this suborder are as follows:

- 598
599 a. Abatement – Action by an employer to comply with a cited standard or regulation or to
600 adequately mitigate or eliminate a recognized deficiency identified during an inspection.
601
602 b. Abatement Plan – A set of planned actions to abate a recognized deficiency and their
603 estimated completion dates.
604
605 c. Annual – For the purposes of this suborder “annual” means within the 12-month period
606 defined by the calendar year.
607
608 d. Authorized Representative of the Secretary of Labor – A person or agent of the Secretary of
609 Labor whose authority and jurisdiction originates from the Secretary of Labor; routinely a
610 Department of Labor employee.
611
612 e. Deficiency – A deviation from established safety, health, or environmental requirements.
613 NOTE: A deficiency may be an unsafe or unhealthful working condition if it presents a
614 hazard (*e.g.*, unguarded pinch point) or an administrative deficiency if it does not (*e.g.*,
615 missing "emergency contact" sticker on telephone).
616
617 (1) Catastrophic (Severity Hazard) – A serious hazardous condition or practice that could be
618 reasonably expected to cause death(s) or permanent disability; system or facility loss;
619 major property damage, lasting environmental or public-health impact.
620
621 (2) Severe (Severity Hazard) – A serious hazardous condition or practice that could be
622 reasonably expected to cause serious injury (serious physical harm); temporary total
623 disability (more than 3 months); subsystem loss or significant facility/property damage,
624 temporary environmental or public-health impact.
625

- 626 (3) Moderate (Severity Hazard) – A serious hazardous condition or practice that could be
627 reasonably expected to cause injury requiring medical treatment beyond first aid; lost
628 workdays; more than slight facility/property damage; external reporting requirements;
629 more than routine clean-up.
630
- 631 (4) Minor (Severity Hazard) – A hazardous condition or practice that could be reasonably
632 expected to cause injury requiring first aid or minor medical treatment; no lost time,
633 negligible or slight facility/property damage; no external (outside NIST) reporting
634 requirements, routine cleanup.
635
- 636 (5) Administrative Deficiency – A deviation from established requirements that does not
637 create an unsafe or unhealthful working condition.
638
- 639 f. Imminent Danger Condition or Practice – Any serious condition or practice that could
640 reasonably be expected to cause death or serious physical harm immediately or before it can
641 be eliminated through normal procedures.
642
- 643 g. Inspector – A NIST employee having the training and qualifications required to conduct
644 assigned workplace inspections on their own or as a member of an inspection team.
645
- 646 h. Lead Inspector – An inspector that documents an inspection.
647
- 648 i. Occupational Safety and Health Inspector – An OSHE Employee who is an occupational
649 safety and health specialist, Certified Safety Professional, or Certified Industrial Hygienist
650 possessing competence to recognize and evaluate workplace hazards and identify mitigation
651 options.
652
- 653 j. Occupational Safety and Health Specialist – A person meeting the Office of Personnel
654 Management standards for one of the following classifications:
655
- 656 (1) Safety and Occupational Health Manager/Specialist GS-018;
657
- 658 (2) Safety Engineer GS-803;
659
- 660 (3) Engineer GS-800;
661
- 662 (4) Industrial Hygienist GS-690;
663
- 664 (5) Fire Protection and Prevention Specialist/Marshal GS-081;
665

- 666 (6) Health Physicist GS-1306;
667
668 (7) Occupational Medicine Physician GS-602;
669
670 (8) Occupational Health Nurse GS-610;
671
672 (9) Safety Technician GS-019;
673
674 (10) Physical Science Technician GS-1311;
675
676 (11) Environmental Health Technician GS-699;
677
678 (12) Chemist GS-1320;
679
680 (13) Health Technician GS-645; and
681
682 (14) Physicist GS-1310.
683
684 k. Office-Like Space – A space, such as a conference room, copier room, break room, lobby,
685 hallway, storage room, closet, or ordinary computer room that has the same types of hazards
686 as a typical office or office environment.
687
688 l. Normal Work Hours – Hours in which business is typically conducted: Monday through
689 Friday 8 AM – 5 PM, local time. Lunch break falls between 12 PM and 1 PM, local time and
690 inspections should not be scheduled during this time.
691
692 m. Serious Physical Harm – Impairment of the body in which part of the body is made
693 functionally useless or is substantially reduced in efficiency on or off the job. Such
694 impairment may be permanent or temporary, chronic or acute. Injuries involving such
695 impairment would usually require treatment by a medical doctor or other licensed health care
696 professional. Injuries that constitute serious physical harm include, but are not limited to,
697 amputations (loss of all or part of a bodily appendage);⁷ concussion; crushing (internal, even
698 though skin surface may be intact); fractures (simple or compound); burns or scalds,
699 including electric and chemical burns, likely to require medical treatment; cuts, lacerations,
700 or punctures involving significant bleeding and/or requiring suturing; and sprains and strains
701 likely to require medical treatment. Illnesses that constitute serious physical harm include,

⁷ An amputation is the traumatic loss of a limb or other external body part. Amputations include a part, such as a limb or appendage that has been severed, cut off, amputated (either completely or partially); fingertip amputations with or without bone loss; medical amputations resulting from irreparable damage; and amputations of body parts that have since been reattached.

702 but are not limited to, cancer; respiratory illnesses (silicosis, asbestosis, byssinosis, *etc.*);
703 hearing impairment; central nervous system impairment; visual impairment; poisoning; and
704 musculoskeletal disorders.

- 705
- 706 n. Stop Work Order – Formal notification to cease work activities that present an imminent
707 danger.
- 708
- 709 o. Unsafe or Unhealthful Working Condition – Any condition or practice in any workplace that
710 could have a direct or immediate adverse impact on safety or health.

711

712 **NOTE:** Deficiencies classified as Imminent Danger, Catastrophic, Severe, Moderate, and
713 Minor are UWCs.

- 714
- 715 p. Workplace – A physical location where NIST work is performed.
- 716
- 717 q. Workplace Supervisor – First-level supervisor, or other designated OU line manager, with
718 primary responsibility for ensuring a safe and healthful work environment in their specific
719 workplace.⁸ In most cases, the workplace supervisor is the Group Leader.

720

721

722 **8. ACRONYMS**

723 Acronyms common to all NIST safety and health suborders can be found in Section 7 of NIST O
724 7101.00. The acronyms specific to this suborder are as follows:

- 725
- 726 a. CFR – Code of Federal Regulations
- 727
- 728 b. CSO – Chief Safety Officer
- 729
- 730 c. ESC – Executive Safety Committee
- 731
- 732 d. OSHA – Occupational Safety and Health Administration
- 733
- 734 e. OSHE – Office of Safety, Health, and Environment
- 735
- 736 f. OU – Organizational Unit

⁸ Note that where NIST staff perform work in workplaces not owned and operated by NIST, the workplace will not be under the complete control of the NIST workplace supervisor. When the NIST workplace supervisor requires changes within the physical location, the workplace supervisor should work with the owners of the workplace to effect the necessary changes, or modify NIST work practices as necessary to ensure the safety and health of NIST staff.

- 737 g. SWO – Stop Work Order
738
739 h. UWC – Unsafe or Unhealthful Working Condition
740
741 i. WIRS – Workplace Inspection Reporting System
742

743
744 **9. RESPONSIBILITIES**

745 Roles and responsibilities common to all NIST safety and health suborders can be found in Section
746 8 of NIST O 7101.00. The roles and responsibilities specific to this suborder are as follows:
747

748 a. All Staff are responsible for:

- 749
750 (1) Cooperating fully during the scheduling and conduct of occupational safety and health
751 inspections;
752
753 (2) Bringing to the attention of inspectors any UWCs they have reason to believe exist in the
754 workplace; and
755
756 (3) Abating deficiencies when directed to do so by their workplace supervisor.
757

758 b. OU Directors are responsible for:

- 759
760 (1) Ensuring implementation of requirements of this suborder within their OU;
761
762 (2) Specifying the role of the OU Safety Coordinator with respect to this program; and
763
764 (3) Informing the CSO of workplace deficiencies that are not within their purview to abate,
765 at a NIST-owned workplace, NIST-controlled field location, or other facility where their
766 staff perform work covered by this suborder.
767

768 c. Division Chiefs or Equivalent are responsible for:

- 769
770 (1) Ensuring lead inspectors are assigned for areas with no Hazard Review activities;
771
772 (2) Ensuring assignments of inspection team members is managed;
773
774 (3) Ensuring workplaces where Division operations are conducted are inspected at the
775 required intervals;
776

- 777 (4) Ensuring designated OU or Division staff work with OSHE to schedule OSHE-lead
778 inspection of spaces in which work performed requires one or more hazard reviews;
779
- 780 (5) Ensuring the information detailed in Section 6.g is made available to lead inspectors to
781 plan inspections;
782
- 783 (6) Attending inspections led by OSHE upon request;
784
- 785 (7) Supporting workplace supervisors in abating deficiencies, as necessary; and
786
- 787 (8) Notifying the CSO, in writing, when moderate, severe, catastrophic, and imminent danger
788 deficiencies are not abated within 21 days at offsite locations.
789
- 790 d. Workplace Supervisors are responsible for:
791
- 792 (1) Attending inspections led by OSHE when requested;
793
- 794 (2) For workplaces with employees represented by unions, ensuring that union
795 representatives are provided the opportunity to accompany inspection teams;
796
- 797 (3) Ensuring deficiencies in their respective workplaces are abated in accordance with
798 program requirements of Section 6.k, *i.e.*, if they do not abate the deficiencies
799 themselves, they are responsible for assigning a staff member to address a deficiency; and
800
- 801 (4) Ensuring UWC notices are posted/distributed in accordance with program requirements
802 of Section 6.j.
803
- 804 e. Lead Inspectors are responsible for:
805
- 806 (1) Scheduling inspections in coordination with OU Management.
807
- 808 (2) Resolving differing opinions among team members, where applicable, serving as the final
809 arbiter of any disputes;
810
- 811 (3) Completing assigned workplace inspections and ensure that inspection reports containing
812 the information detailed in Section 6.i(3) are completed and recorded in WIRS within the
813 timeframe described in Section 6.i(2); and
814
- 815 (4) If an imminent-danger UWC is identified:
816

- 817 (a) Directing affected staff to stop work in a manner that does not increase the danger;
818
819 (b) Providing interim instructions to secure the workspace or activity (e.g., using signage
820 or barriers) to prevent exposure to the danger and inadvertent restart of the activity;
821 and
822
823 (c) Notifying the workplace supervisor of the concern.
824

825 f. OSHE Staff are responsible for:

826

827 (1) For those completing the required training, serving as lead inspectors for:

828

829 (a) OU workspaces where one or more activities are required to have hazard reviews;

830

831 (b) OUs who do not have staff trained to be lead inspectors; and

832

833 (c) Indoor spaces not assigned to an OU;

834

835 (2) Verifying abatement of imminent danger and catastrophic, severe, and moderate
836 deficiencies adequately eliminate or mitigate the hazards.

837

838 NOTE: Verification should be within 60 days of the inspection report and shall be
839 completed no later than the subsequent inspection.

840

841 g. OU Safety Coordinators, DSRs, GSRs, and Others Appropriately Trained as Inspectors are
842 responsible for:

843

844 (1) Serving as OU lead inspectors for OU-led inspections as directed by OU Management;

845

846 (2) Serving on OSHE-led inspection teams as directed by OU Management; and

847

848 (3) Assisting OU managers and OSHE lead inspectors in verifying deficiency abatement.

849

850 h. Inspection Team Members are responsible for:

851

852 (1) Assisting the lead inspector in completing inspection reports containing the information
853 detailed in Section 6.i(3), especially in:

854

855 (a) Identifying and classifying deficiencies; and

856

857 (b) Recommending abatement actions and interim protective measures for moderate,
858 severe, catastrophic, and imminent-danger deficiencies not fully abated during the
859 inspection.

860

861 i. OSHE Program Managers are responsible for:

862

863 (1) Developing and maintaining inspection question sets aligned with assigned suborders;
864 and

865

866 (2) Upon request, verifying abatement of imminent danger and catastrophic, severe, and
867 moderate deficiencies within the scope of their program management assignment.

868

869 j. Workplace Inspection Program Manager is responsible for:

870

871 (1) Developing and maintaining inspection checklists in collaboration with OSHE Program
872 Managers.

873

874 (2) Providing written guidance on classifying UWCs;

875

876 (3) Preparing and submitting an annual summary report to the CSO; and

877

878 (4) Compiling, analyzing, and reporting inspection data periodically at the direction of the
879 CSO.

880

881

882 **10. AUTHORITIES**

883 Authorities common to all NIST safety and health suborders can be found in Section 9 of NIST
884 O 7101.00. The authorities specific to this suborder are as follows:

885

886 a. Lead Inspectors⁹ and Inspection Team Members:

887

888 (1) To have access, at reasonable times, to any building, installation, facility, construction
889 site, or other area, workplace, or environment where work is performed in order to
890 conduct an assigned inspection; and

891

892 (2) To interview and/or consult with management and staff separately, privately, or as a
893 group concerning matters of occupational safety and health to aid the conduct of effective
894 and thorough inspections.

895

⁹ These authorities also apply to OSHA compliance officers.

896 b. Lead Inspectors:

897

898 (1) To restrict participation on an inspection if necessary to ensure a fair and orderly
899 inspection.

900

901

902 **11. DIRECTIVE OWNER**

903 Chief Safety Officer

904

905 **12. APPENDICES**

906 a. Appendix A: Revision History

907

908

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910
911

Appendix A. Revision History

Revision No.	Approval Date	Effective Date	Brief Description of Change; Rationale
0	05/18/15	04/01/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None – Initial document
1	11/30/15	<p>10/01/16 for first set of requirements</p> <p>10/01/17 for remaining requirements (those noted in comment boxes)</p> <p>See Footnote 2.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added Footnote 2 to indicate more clearly that some of the requirements of this suborder will be effective on October 1, 2016, the remainder (those noted in comment boxes) on October 1, 2017. Changed effective date of first set of requirements from 04/01/16 to 10/01/16. Changed effective date of remaining requirements (those noted in comment boxes) 04/01/17 to 10/01/17 Revised dates in comment boxes to reflect these changes. Rationale for changes in effective dates: (1) Allow more time to develop the iPad application module of the Workplace Inspection Reporting System; (2) allow more time to develop and provide inspector training; and (3) align the effective date of the Workplace Inspection Program with the beginning of a fiscal year.
2	07/29/16	07/29/16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Made numerous edits solely for clarity Made program applicable to covered associates Added training requirement for managers and supervisors Added a responsibility under employees and covered associates to abate deficiencies when directed to do so by their workplace supervisor Added responsibilities for “OU Management above the Level of the Workplace Supervisor” to (a) support workplace supervisors in abating deficiencies, as necessary, and (b) verify, to the extent necessary, that abatement actions adequately eliminate serious and imminent danger UWCs [NOTE: The second responsibility was associated with the

Revision No.	Approval Date	Effective Date	Brief Description of Change; Rationale
			<p>requirement in Section 6i(3). As originally worded, Section 6i(3) assigned this responsibility to the “OUs”; it should have been more specific and assigned it to management above the level of the workplace supervisor.]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removed Appendix B; will provide stand-alone tool instead
3	04/19/17	04/19/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Made minor edits Added requirement that all inspectors, including lead inspectors, be NIST employees Indicated that covered associates may serve on inspection teams as subject matter experts Added comments in Section 9 to indicate that certain responsibilities will not take effect until October 1, 2017 Clarified the responsibilities of OU management and Lead Inspectors regarding managing the assignments of inspection team members
4	03/22/18	10/01/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removed the comments indicating that requirements related to the following would be effective on 10/01/17: classification of deficiencies, use of WIRS, posting of UWC notices, recording of suborder/regulatory references.
5	1/5/21	01/05/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated suborder links.
6	9/19/24	10/1/2017	<p>Major revision of the suborder including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added that the lead inspector of a space with a hazard review activity must be an OSHE lead inspector Removed that an OU director may appoint a qualified person as an Occupational Safety and Health Specialist Added “Safety Engineer GS 803” as a potential Occupational Safety and Health Specialist Provided clarifying information for offices and office-like spaces to include other areas not

Revision No.	Approval Date	Effective Date	Brief Description of Change; Rationale
			<p>typically thought of as office like spaces.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added definition of lead inspector. • Added responsibility that employees should cooperate when scheduling inspections. • Clarified that OU Management responsibility to appoint lead inspectors is limited to spaces without hazard review activities. • Modified abatement plan timeline from 30 days after receipt of inspection report to 7 days after receipt of inspection report. • Added responsibility of workplace supervisor to attend inspections when requested by OSHE staff. • Removed limited scope application for inspections at greater frequencies. • Added requirement to notify the Chief Safety Officer, in writing, when Moderate, Severe, Catastrophic, and Imminent Danger UWCs are not abated within 30 days for offsite locations. • Use of checklists during inspections has changed from optional to required. • Added that checklists shall be developed and maintained by WIP PM in conjunction with OSHE PMs. • Changed notification of inspection to 30 calendar days. • Added definition of normal work hours. • Added a requirement for the supervisor or designated representative to meet with the inspector post inspection. • Changed that inspection reports must be submitted within 5 business days- from 15 calendar days. • Added a requirement for the lead inspector to notify the WIP PM, in addition to the area supervisor, when an inspection report cannot be completed in 5 business days.

Revision No.	Approval Date	Effective Date	Brief Description of Change; Rationale
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added additional pre-inspection planning requirements to further delineate requirement of supervisors, OSHE, and OU inspectors. • Clarified that a SWO shall be initiated by the lead inspector if employees do not heed instructions related to imminent dangers. • Increased training requirements for inspectors. • Removed composite inspection team training qualifications. • Added training requirements for OSHE employees serving as lead inspectors. • Clarified requirements for elevating deficiency abatements when they cannot be completed. • For imminent dangers, changed “Urge” to “Direct” • Updated deficiency classification system to align with risk matrix terms used for hazard reviews.
Admin. Rev.	5/2/25		Changed 6.m.(2)(d) to indicate use of the Safety Event Logging System (SELS) web application instead of the Action Tracking System (ATS)

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