

HEALTH AND SAFETY RULES for Work in Natural Environments

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Preamble

We are pleased to welcome you to the Faculty of Forestry, Geography, and Geomatics, where health and safety are among our core values. Committed to providing appropriate supervision throughout your studies and professional activities, the Faculty presents this document summarizing the main rules that must be respected by everyone, at all times, during fieldwork activities.

These rules are an integral part of the competencies to be acquired and are highly valued in today's scientific environment. Furthermore, the professors, professionals, and technicians of our Faculty serve as resource persons who will teach you safe working methods to help you develop sound practices that will be essential throughout your career.

This document was drafted and approved by the Faculty's Occupational Health and Safety Committee – Field Section.

The Dean,

Nancy Gélinas

Framework

Scope of Application

Activities covered: Courses, field laboratories, research outings, internships, and educational field trips.

Responsibilities

Administration

- Ensure a compliant and accessible occupational health and safety (OHS) framework.
- Support the application of OHS rules for field activities.

Field Activity Supervisors

- Plan and supervise activities in a safe manner.
- Inform participants of risks and safety instructions.
- Verify required authorizations, training, and documentation.
- Intervene in the event of a dangerous situation or emergency.

Participants

- Comply with OHS rules and instructions provided.
- Use the required PPE.
- Report any dangerous situation or incident.
- Maintain safe behavior at all times.

General Rules

- Always comply with the health and safety instructions communicated by the person responsible for the field activity.
- Obtain the necessary authorizations to access the territory. Respect private property, as well as municipal, regional, or provincial regulations and site access agreements.
- Never leave the group or activity site without informing the responsible person.

- Avoid working alone; when authorized, comply with established safety and communication measures.
- Maintain safe, respectful, and professional behavior at all times.
- Immediately report any dangerous situation, incident, or accident to the responsible person and [complete a hazardous situation or accident report](#).
- Wear the required personal protective equipment (PPE) at all times, according to the activity and terrain conditions.
- Dress appropriately for weather conditions and the natural environment.
- Keep the activity site clean and safe; remove all waste and equipment at the end of the activity.
- The consumption of alcohol, drugs, or any substance that may impair alertness and judgment before or during a field activity is strictly prohibited.
- Inform the responsible person of any medical condition or special situation that could affect safety (while respecting confidentiality).
- Immediately cease the activity and follow instructions in the event of dangerous conditions (e.g., extreme weather, forest fires).

Field Activities in Remote Areas and Mobility Programs

- Work in natural environments involves increased risks, particularly in remote areas.
- An area is considered remote when access to medical assistance or a healthcare facility cannot be obtained within one hour using available means of transportation or emergency services.
- For any field activity conducted in a remote area or as part of a mobility program:
 - [A Travel Declaration](#)¹ must be completed in the **ABEO** web application and **submitted at least four (4) weeks** before departure. The declaration must include a communication plan and an emergency response plan.

¹ [Security when travelling | International | Université Laval](#)

- The Ulaval Monde team will conduct the necessary follow-ups to obtain required authorizations.
- Travel declarations are strongly recommended for field activities elsewhere in Canada.
- All laws and regulations related to the transport and shipment of dangerous goods must be respected at all times.
- Before any field activity, verify weather conditions, hunting season periods, road conditions, and available means of communication.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Field activity supervisors identify associated risks², determine the required PPE before departure, and inform participants.
- Participants must ensure that their PPE is compliant, in good condition, and used properly.

Indicative PPE may include:

- Safety boots or footwear appropriate to the terrain
- Appropriate protective clothing (long pants, long sleeves)
- Safety helmet, when required
- Safety or protective eyewear
- Task-appropriate gloves
- High-visibility clothing (e.g., vest or bib)

Specific PPE may be required depending on the activity (e.g., forestry work, proximity to water bodies, use of equipment).

Failure to wear the required PPE may result in removal from the field activity.

² Resource: [Risks Associated with Working Outdoors and in Natural Environments in Quebec - APSSAP](#)

Required Training

Some field activities require mandatory health and safety training based on risks and equipment used. Indicative training may include:

- WHMIS
- Wilderness survival
- Remote area first aid
- First aid
- Safe operation of equipment or vehicles
- Activity- or environment-specific training (e.g., riparian environments)

For additional training options, consult the [Training section](#) of the Faculty website.

Transport and Shipping of Dangerous Goods

- The course or project supervisor must ensure that all individuals involved in packaging and transport have received the required training.
- Mandatory training in packaging and shipping dangerous goods is required where applicable.
- Dangerous goods must be transported in compliance with applicable regulations (e.g., gasoline, propane, chemicals, dry ice, liquid nitrogen).
- An emergency response plan (ERP) must be in place in case of an incident.
- A visual inspection of lithium batteries is recommended before departure and upon return from the field.

Certain products require special handling during transport, including:

- Flammable products
- Corrosive products
- Explosive products
- Toxic products

Risks and requirements vary depending on the nature of the products transported. [Learn more about it here.](#)

Vehicle Use

For travel using rental vehicles or University vehicles:

- Hold a valid driver's license (Class 5).
- Complete mandatory OHS training (e.g., snowmobile operation – SST-35, ATV operation – SST-23).
- Identify the vehicle using [the required safety signage](#).
- Plan for an appropriate daily communication method.
- Carry an emergency kit and other required [vehicle safety equipment](#).

The Faculty provides certain PPE and field equipment free of charge through its equipment and vehicle [loan service](#).

Emergency Measures

- Activate the emergency protocol and locate first aid kits and rescue equipment.
- Follow the communication and emergency response plans established through ABEO.
- Immediately notify all team members.
- Secure the site.
- Report the situation to your immediate supervisor and complete a hazardous situation report as soon as possible.
- Disciplinary measures may be applied in cases of non-compliance.

Student Insurance Coverage

- A student's status (scholarship recipient or employee) must be determined based on the nature of their relationship with the supervising professor. Several elements are considered, including:
 - Employment relationship
 - Intellectual property of results
 - Autonomy in task execution
 - Research project definition
- In principle, work performed as a scholarship recipient must be directly related to the pursuit of studies and degree completion.
- Private supplementary insurance may be obtained if necessary.
- In case of doubt, [consult the appropriate institutional resources.](#)

Right to Refuse

Every worker has the right to refuse to perform work if they have reasonable grounds to believe that it presents a danger to their health or could expose another person to a similar danger.

- The danger may be immediate or potential.
- The refusal must be exercised individually, even if several people do so simultaneously.
- The worker must inform their supervisor and remain available on site.

Non-Compliance with Rules

The administration or health and safety officers reserve the right to notify the individuals concerned and the project supervisor of any breach. Individuals with inappropriate behavior will be met with, and corrective measures must be implemented promptly.

The Université Laval may take action in response to behavior or actions by a staff member that violate professional obligations, particularly when safety rules are not respected or when personal or collective health and safety are endangered.

MANDATORY: Acceptance of the Rules

All students conducting fieldwork must accept the FFGG health and safety rules. By completing the acceptance form, you acknowledge having read this document and agree to comply with the rules and directives for safe, professional, and responsible conduct in natural environments as part of your academic activities: [Acceptance of health and safety rules at FFGG laboratories](#)