

Hearing Protection Program Procedure

Intent:

The Hearing Protection Program Practice Directive and its corresponding Procedure, aims to clearly identify necessary processes regarding distributing hearing protection for students, faculty, and staff within the Music Department and the Audiology Department.

Scope:

This procedure applies to all faculty, staff, and students exposed to noise levels equal to or greater than 85dB, measured as an 8 hour TWA, while engaging in coursework, teaching, or other activities on University grounds.

Definitions:

Ear Protection. Devices used to protect the ear, either externally from elements such as cold, intrusion by water and other environmental conditions, debris, or specifically from noise.

Audiology. The branch of science and medicine concerned with the sense of hearing.

Audiogram. A chart, graph, or table resulting from an audiometric test showing an individual's hearing threshold levels as a function of frequency. Baseline audiogram is the audiogram against which future audiograms are compared.

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Decibel (dB). Unit of measurement of sound level.

Standard Threshold Shift (STS). Change in the hearing threshold, relative to the baseline audiogram for that employee, of an average of 10 dB or more at 2000, 3000, and 4000 hertz (Hz) in one or both ears.

Time-Weighted Average (TWA). The average sound level exposure within the workplace using a baseline of an 8 hour per day schedule. Since it is an average, the time spent in loud areas and quiet areas are factored in. If the environment is louder than 85 dB it might not take a full 8 hours to reach the 85 dB average.

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Procedure:

Students, Faculty and Staff exposed to noise levels equal to or greater than 85dB (8 hour TWA) will obtain proper hearing protection from our Department of Risk Management.

Eligibility and Constraints

The hearing protection program applies to any employee or student whose exposure to noise is equal to, or greater than 85 dB, measured as an 8 hour TWA. Please refer to our "[Definitions](#)" section for more information and/or clarification.

Noise Measurements and Monitoring

See below for noise measurements and monitoring, which include the following:

1. Noise exposure monitoring must:
 - a. Accurately identify employees and students who are subject to noise at or above 85 dB either averaged over 8 working hours or weighted over an 8 hour time TWA).
 - b. Be done if employees and students are exposed to a constant noise level at or above 85 dB over an 8 hour period.
2. New monitoring must be done each time noise exposure is increased through changes in production or controls. When exposure is increased, more employees and students may need to be included in the program.
3. Employees and students, or their representatives, have the right to observe exposure monitoring and are required to be notified of the monitoring results.
4. Exposure monitoring instruments must be properly calibrated according to the manufacturer's instructions. Methods of calibration are unique to each instrument.

Hearing Protectors

When engineering and administrative controls are not feasible to decrease employees noise exposures below 85 dB, hearing protectors should be provided.

1. Hearing protection devices shall be provided at no cost to all employees and students who are exposed to noise levels of 85 dB or more, show signs of a threshold shift or have not yet had a baseline audiogram established.
2. Attenuation (amount of noise reduction) provided by the protective equipment shall be at least enough to lower noise exposures to an 8-hour time-weighted average of 85 dB or below.
3. Employees shall be given the opportunity to select their hearing protectors from a variety of suitable hearing protectors provided by the employer.
4. The supervisor shall ensure proper initial fitting and supervise the correct use of all hearing protectors.

Hearing Protection Distribution

Ear plugs will be distributed to employees and students in the Music Department and the Audiology Department who meet the appropriate hearing protection needs. Upon receipt of their first, free pair of ear plugs, the appropriate faculty, staff and/or students will sign their [Hearing Protection Program Acknowledgement Form](#).

Note: If a faculty member, staff person and/or student loses their first, free pair, then they must pay for their own replacement pair of ear plugs in order to proceed with participating in the associated course(s).

Step	Action
1.	Faculty and staff receive ear plugs from Risk Management Department.
2.	Faculty and staff distribute ear plugs to Music and Audiology students.
3.	Students sign Hearing Protection Program Acknowledgement Form.
4.	Students pay fee for additional pair if first pair is lost.

Training Program

Annual training is required for employees and students in the hearing protection program and shall include:

1. The effects of noise on hearing.
2. The purpose, use, and care of hearing protectors.
3. The advantages, disadvantages, and attenuation of various types of protection.
4. Instruction in the selection, fitting, use and care of hearing protectors.
5. The purpose of audiometric testing and an explanation of the test procedures.

Training dates and the employees in attendance will be documented.

Resources:

[Hearing Protection Program Practice Directive](#)

[Hearing Protection Program Acknowledgement Form](#)

Administration:

Approval Details

Approval Authority:	Federal Law: Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) 29 CFR 1910.95 State of Wisconsin: Industry, Labor and Human Relations (ILHR) 32.15 Board of Regents: Regent Policy Document 23-2
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Revision History

Version	Revision date	Description of changes	Author
1.0	07/01/2019	Procedure established	Quality Assurance Improvement Manager

Contact Person/Unit

Contact Person/Unit:	Director of Risk Management & Safety
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Keywords

Keywords:	Hearing Protection, Hearing Conservation, Music Department, Audiology Department, Ear Plugs, Ear Protection.
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Hearing Protection Program Acknowledgement Form

The purpose of this program is to establish and maintain safe work practices that are intended to prevent occupational noise-induced hearing loss for relevant faculty, staff, and students.

In accordance with the [University of Wisconsin-Whitewater Hearing Conservation Program](#), our campus will be supplying faculty, staff, and students within the Music Department and the Audiology Department with hearing protective ear plugs.

The following rules apply to this program:

1. The ear plugs must be worn during any and every class that is within the Music Department or the Audiology Department that has a noise level greater than 85 dB.
2. If your first pair is lost or damaged, you must pay a replacement fee for a new pair.

By signing below, I confirm I have received a pair of hearing protective ear plugs and agree to pay the required replacement fee if these ear plugs become lost or damaged.

Course Title	
Course Instructor	

Student Printed Name	
Student Signature	
Date	

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Director of Risk Management and Safety, who can be reached by e-mail at fredricl@uww.edu or by phone at (262) 472-5723.

Resources:

[Hearing Protection Program Practice Directive](#)

[Hearing Protection Program Procedure](#)