Footwear Standard

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1.0 Purpose

1.1 The Footwear Standard (hereafter known as the "Standard") outlines the necessary responsibilities, procedures, and tools to ensure the health and safety of all personnel exposed to foot hazards while at work.

2.0 Scope

2.1 This Standard applies to all facilities and staff of Vancouver Coastal Health. This includes:

a. Staff;
b. Physicians;
c. Researchers;
d. Students; and
e. Anyone else carrying out duties for VCH or at VCH facilities.

3.0 Policy

3.1 The corporate Occupational Health and Safety Policy mandates implementation of and compliance with the Standard by all staff, contractors, students and visitors.

3.2 Documentation, forms and tools associated with the Standard will be maintained on the Workplace Health Health & Safety at Work section of the intranet.

4.0 Applicable Regulations and Standards

4.1 The Standard (and associated forms, tools and documentation) complies with WorkSafeBC's *Occupational Health & Safety Regulation:*
Sections 8.22 – 8.23 of Part 8 Personal Protective Clothing & Equipment.

4.2 As per the above WorkSafeBC regulations, the Standard (and associated documentation, forms and tools) complies with Canadian Standards Association (CSA) Standard Z195-M92: *Protective Footwear.*

5.0 Responsibilities

5.1 **Executive Team and Directors** must ensure:

a. Managers and supervisors are familiar with the contents of the Standard and their responsibilities under the Standard.
b. Resources required for the implementation and administration of the Standard are made available.

5.2 **Managers and supervisors** must:

a. Be familiar with the contents of the Standard and their responsibilities under the Standard.
b. Implement and enforce the Standard as it applies to their department(s)/program(s)
c. Ensure foot hazards are identified and assessed in a timely fashion.

d. Ensure staff is familiar with the contents of the Standard and their responsibilities under the Standard.
e. Ensure staff is informed, before commencing work, of any foot hazards and applicable control methods.
f. Ensure staff use, maintain and store (where applicable) protective footwear.
g. Ensure problems and issues associated with protective footwear are documented and corrected as soon as possible.

5.3 **Staff** must:
a. Obtain appropriate footwear to protect themselves from job specific hazards.
b. Use, maintain and store (where applicable) footwear in accordance with the Standard and unit/site/department procedures.
c. Replace footwear that are no longer in good condition.

5.4 **Workplace Health** will:
a. Maintain the Footwear Standard and related tools and resources.
b. Provide support to managers and supervisors to:
   i. Identify and assess potential foot hazards.
   ii. Develop appropriate controls for foot hazards.
   iii. Determine which situations require protective footwear, as well as the level/type of protection required.
c. Provide technical support to stakeholders as required. This includes, but is not limited to, working with groups such as HSSBC in the selection and procurement of protective footwear.

5.5 **Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committees (JOHSCs)** will:
a. Promote the use of protective footwear.
b. Receive concerns and make recommendations for improvement of the Standard to site leadership and Workplace Health.

5.6 **Contractors (Physicians and others)** will:
a. Comply with the Standard and any other footwear policies/protocols provided by Workplace Health or other applicable stakeholders.

5.7 **Post-Secondary Students** will:
a. Comply with the Standard and any other footwear policies/protocols provided by Workplace Health or other applicable stakeholders.

5.8 **BC Clinical and Support Services Society (BCCSS) Buyers or Purchasing Coordinators** will:
a. Engage Workplace Health and other applicable stakeholders (e.g. Infection Control, Facilities Maintenance) when reviewing and/or considering a change in footwear contracts and inventory.

6.0 Hazard Assessment

6.1 Footwear must be chosen based on job tasks and the potential for injuries associated with those job tasks as determine by a risk assessment.

6.2 The following factors must be considered:

a. Slipping,
b. Uneven terrain,
c. Abrasion,
d. Ankle protection and foot support,
e. Crushing potential,
f. Temperature extremes,
g. Corrosive substances,
h. Puncture hazards (sharps),
i. Electrical shock, and
j. Any other recognizable hazards.

7.0 Footwear Categories

Category 1: Certified Safety Footwear

7.1 Certified safety footwear is required if the risks of staff's work indicates foot protection be provided by protective toe caps, metatarsal protection, puncture resistance soles, dielectric (electric shock) protection or any combination of these. This may be in addition to specialized materials, design and construction for the protection against corrosive chemicals or other workplace hazards.

7.2 The most common certified safety footwear available will meet CSA Standard for Grade 1 protective toe caps and puncture resistant sole plates.

7.3 See Appendix B for CSA standard protection classifications and symbols.

7.4 Note: Certified safety footwear with ferrous metal protective toe caps and/or sole plates present a hazard when working within the caution area of an Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) device. Non-ferrous metal or composite toe caps and/or sole plates are required when working within the caution area of an MRI device.

Category 2: Safety Footwear

7.5 There are some risks of injury that require footwear to meet the VCH standards for safety footwear, but not for certified safety footwear. For example nurses do not require protective toe caps, but do require footwear that will provide adequate foot support, prevent slipping and provide protection should blood or body fluids be splashed or spilled on their foot. This will fall into category 2: Safety Footwear.

7.6 Athletic shoes are acceptable for occupational use provided the style & construction provides protection from the danger to which the staff will be exposed and be in good condition. For example if the hazard is slipping, then the sole must be in good condition and not worn smooth. Another example would be if the shoe had a mesh-type covering over the toe area. The nylon mesh would not be acceptable in a laboratory, or patient care areas that handle bio-hazardous fluids and or sharps (e.g. needles) that may penetrate a shoe with a nylon mesh upper if dropped.

7.7 The following are not acceptable as Category 2 Safety Footwear:

a. Footwear that does not provide protective qualities against abrasion, cuts or bruising, and/or the absorption of hazardous, toxic or infectious fluids/materials, such as:
    i. Any footwear with an open toe or heel including footwear with minimal metatarsal (top side foot) coverage, minimal heel coverage or heel straps (e.g. sandals and flip-flops).
    ii. Mesh, thin or no material (e.g. slippers)
    iii. Footwear with openings/holes in the toe cap or upper surface (e.g. Crocs style footwear).
b. Footwear with high (>60mm) or unstable heels.
c. Footwear having a smooth (e.g. leather) sole.

Category 3: Other

7.8 This category refers to occupations, such as many office personnel, where there are no risks of foot injury for which special requirements are necessary.

8.0 Safety Footwear Requirements

Direct Care Areas & Diagnostic Areas

8.1 All staff working in or entering areas where direct care is provided to patients, clients, or residents must wear category 2 safety footwear.

8.2 All staff working in or entering diagnostic areas (e.g. laboratories) must wear category 2 safety footwear.

8.3 Administrative, clerical and other staff that work in offices located near or within Direct Care or Diagnostic Areas may wear category 3 footwear while in their office or walking directly to and from their office. These staff must wear category 2 footwear when circumstances or their work activity requires it (e.g. staff leave their office and enter a risk area to interact with someone of perform an aspect of their job).

Community and Field Locations

8.4 Staff working in community clinics, community public/private facilities, client homes, and community or private businesses must wear category 2 safety footwear as per 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3.

8.5 Staff working in client homes or businesses should change to suitable indoor safety footwear or wear slip resistant shoe covers/booties over existing safety footwear if requested by the client.

8.6 Staff that must work or travel outside during adverse weather must wear footwear that is appropriate for the weather and environmental factors. This includes footwear suitable for wet, cold, slippery, icy, snowy or rough terrain where good all-weather traction, ankle support and slip resistant characteristics are necessary. Microspike or Yaktrax-type sole covers are recommended for icy/snowy conditions.

Trade Areas/Tasks & Construction Zones

8.7 Staff shall wear a minimum of category 1 certified safety footwear with steel toe and sole plate puncture protection (Grade 1,Green triangular CSA patch on the outside) at all times while in a trade area, while preforming a trade tasks in any areas, and while in a construction zone.

Material Handling Areas

8.8 Staff who operate or work around forklift trucks, use pallet jacks, or handle skids, as well as staff who move heavy equipment, must wear category 1 certified safety footwear with steel toe protection (Grade 1, Green CSA label on the inside) at all times while conducting these activities or conducting work in the areas where these activities are taking place.

Safe Walkways

8.9 Staff using a safe walkway as a transit route are not required to wear certified safety footwear however they (a) must stay within the area defined by painted or other accepted lines, and (b) must wear safety footwear (i.e., no open toes) or open heels. Any personnel conducting work within the safe walkways must wear category 1 certified safety footwear.

9.0 Evaluation of Standard

9.1 The Standard will be reviewed annually, and will be updated sooner as required based on change in regulation or operations.

10.0 References

10.1 *Footwear Policy.* June 2004. Vancouver Coastal Health Authority.

10.2 *Standard Z195-M92: Protective Footwear.* 1992. Canadian Standards Association.

10.3 *Safety Footwear Standard*. August 2014, Fraser Health Authority.

11.0 Version Control Table

Version Number	Purpose / Changes	Lead / Contributors	Date
1	Original VCH Policy		01/07/2004
2	Reformatted into new standard format. Updated content – expanded footwear category definitions and expectations; added CSA safety symbols table.		29/01/2016
3	Annual Review/ no changes		23/08/2017
3.1	Updated links in document to reflect change from VCH Connect to MyVCH		16/01/2019

Appendix A – Definitions

Certified Footwear
Footwear that is tested and approved by international testing laboratories in regards to the products safety integrations and protection factors. Certified footwear is required to have toe protection, metatarsal protection, puncture resistant soles, electrical protection or any combination of these. The footwear must then meet the requirements of the WorkSafeBC (WSBC) OH&S Regulation 8.22(3). This regulation states that the following standards are acceptable.

a) *CSA Standard CAN/CSA-Z195-M92, Protective Footwear,*
b) *ANSI Standard Z41-1991 American National Standard for Personal Protective Footwear*
c) *British Safety Institute Standard BS EN 345:1993 Specification for Safety Footwear for Professional Use*
d) *British Safety Institute Standard BS EN 346:1993 Specification for Protective Footwear for Professional Use*

Construction Zones
Identified areas where any alteration, erection, repair, dismantling, demolition, structural or routine maintenance, painting, land clearing, earth moving, grading, excavating, trenching, digging, boring, drilling, blasting, concreting, the installation of any machinery or any other work deemed to be construction by the WSBC OH&S Regulation 20.1.

Material Handling Area
Areas where forklift trucks, pallet jacks, or skids are being used, or where heavy equipment is being moved.

Staff
Means all employees (including management and leadership), Medical Staff Members (including physicians, midwives, dentists and Nurse Practitioners), residents, fellows and trainees, health care professionals, students, volunteers, contractors and other service providers engaged by VCH.

Safety Footwear
Footwear which completely encloses the foot (heel, toe and metatarsal) and is constructed of leather or another appropriate solid material. Traction will be provided by a slip-resistant sole and heel material with a ribbed, dimpled or grooved surface and will provide effective slip-resistant traction on wet and slippery surfaces and suitable for the environmental conditions encountered during work. This footwear must be in good condition.

Sandals and footwear with heel straps are not acceptable under this classification.

Safe Walkway
Access through safety footwear required areas that are defined by yellow lines painted on the floor.

Trade Area
Any workshop outside of defined safe walkways, interstitial floors and mechanical rooms.

Appendix B – CSA Safety Symbols

Outside labels	Location	Criteria	Intended application
	The label shall appear at ankle height or on the tongue of the right shoe.	Green triangle indicates sole puncture protection with a Grade 1 protective toe to withstand impacts up to 125 joules.	For any industrial environment, especially that of construction, where sharp objects (such as nails) are present; heavy work environments.
	The label shall appear at ankle height or on the tongue of the right shoe.	Yellow triangle indicates sole puncture protection with a Grade 2 protective toe to withstand impacts up to 90 joules.	For light industrial work environments requiring puncture protection as well as toe protection.
	The label shall appear at ankle height or on the tongue of the right shoe.	White rectangle with orange Greek letter omega indicates soles that provide resistance to electric shock.	For any industrial environment where accidental contact with live electrical conductors can occur. **Warning:** *Electrical shock resistance deteriorates with wear and in a wet environment.*
	The label shall appear at ankle height or on the tongue of the right shoe.	Yellow rectangle with green "SD" and grounding symbol indicates soles are static-dissipative.	For any industrial environment where a static discharge can create a hazard for workers or equipment.
	The label shall appear at ankle height or on the tongue of the right shoe.	Red rectangle with black "C" and grounding symbol indicates soles are electrically conductive.	For any industrial environment where low-power electrical charges may create a hazard for workers or equipment.
	The label shall appear at ankle height or on the tongue of the right shoe.	White label with green fir tree symbol indicates chainsaw protective footwear.	For forestry workers and others exposed to hand-held chainsaws or other cutting tools.
	The label shall appear on the outside of the right shoe.	Blue rectangle indicates a Grade 1 protective toe with no protective sole.	For industrial work environments not requiring puncture protection.
	The label shall appear on the outside of the right shoe.	Grey rectangle indicates a Grade 2 protective toe with no protective sole.	For institutional and non-industrial work environments not requiring puncture protection.

Note: The ® symbol represents the preferred positioning for the registered identifying logo or mark of the certification organization