

Title: Indoor Air Quality

Adopted: November 12, 2014

Effective: November 12, 2014

Amended/Reviewed: April 14, 2026

This procedure must be interpreted, applied, and implemented in ways that uphold Indigenous and human rights and responsibilities, promote accessibility, and prevent and address (and do not reinforce) discrimination/discriminatory barriers.

1.0 RATIONALE

This Procedure provides a transparent, step-by-step process for the reporting and investigation of indoor air quality (IAQ) concerns. A successful resolution of IAQ inquiries requires a process in which concerns are handled promptly, responsibilities are clear, and lines of communication are maintained.

The Ontario Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development under the Occupational Health & Safety Act, and the Durham Region Health Department under the Health Protection and Promotion Act, have regulatory authority for indoor air quality. The intent of this procedure is to meet the criteria set by this legislation.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

2.1 Indoor Air Quality (IAQ): The physical, chemical, and biological characteristics of indoor air in non-residential workplaces with no internal industrial processes or operations that can affect the comfort or health of the occupants. (Health Canada, Indoor Air Quality in Office Buildings: A Technical Guide). IAQ items typically result from interactions between building materials and/or activities within the building, weather and building occupants.

2.2 Initial Assessment: A fact-finding exercise to investigate the complaint at its source and resolve it locally, if the solution is within the school's ability to do so.

2.3 Detailed Assessment: A detailed assessment during which air quality indicators, possible pollutant sources, and heating, ventilation and air-conditioning (HVAC) systems are investigated and may be measured.

3.0 RESPONSIBILITY

3.1 Administrator

Upon receiving an IAQ concern from a staff member, student, or parent/guardian, the administrator shall contact Health and Safety for direction and conduct an initial assessment using a form provided by Health and Safety.

Following the detailed assessment, any investigative results provided by the Health & Safety department shall be made available to staff members, students and parents upon request, through the Administrator.

3.2 Health and Safety Department

Upon receiving the initial assessment from an Administrator, Health & Safety shall review the report and conduct a detailed assessment. Health & Safety shall provide investigation results to the Administrator and the Joint Health and Safety Committee, where a report is produced.

3.3 Lead Custodian

Lead Custodians shall assist Administrators in completing the initial assessment by providing and required information and submitting work orders, as required.

3.4 Senior Manager, Facilities Services

The Senior Manager, Facilities Services will review recommendations involving major corrective measures and establish scope, schedule and secure budget.

4.0 APPLICATION AND SCOPE

This procedure applies to all DDSB schools and worksites.

5.0 PROCEDURES

5.1 Indoor Air Quality Form

Upon receiving an IAQ concern from a staff member, student, or parent/guardian, the Administrator shall contact Health and Safety and conduct an initial assessment using the Indoor Air Quality form provided by Health and Safety.

5.2 Initial Assessment

Part One of the Indoor Air Quality form is the Initial Assessment and contains a checklist of items the school can assess and correct at the school level (e.g., administrative, custodial task or maintenance work order). The Initial Assessment is completed in tandem by the Administrator and Lead Custodian. Completing this checklist may resolve the IAQ concern.

5.3 Detailed Assessment

If the IAQ concerns remain unresolved after the Initial Assessment, Part Two of the Indoor Air Quality form will be completed by the Administrator and will initiate the detailed assessment by Health and Safety.

Part Two of the form will outline the nature of the complaint (including when these complaints occur/alleviate), potential causes, and what has been done to date to rectify the situation (including Maintenance Work Order numbers, if applicable).

Additional optional information the building occupant is experiencing can also be provided. This information can assist in developing an IAQ profile for the school/workplace. The more complete the IAQ profile, the easier it is to diagnose and rectify the IAQ concern. Do not include personal medical information or diagnoses on the form.

During the detailed assessment, air quality indicators and possible pollutant sources are investigated and measured, if applicable. A visual inspection of the heating ventilation and air-conditioning (HVAC) system is also conducted.

5.4 Corrective measures

Minor corrective measures will be addressed by site-based staff or through a maintenance work order, as applicable. Recommendations involving major corrective measures will be reviewed with the Senior Manager, Facilities Services or delegate, to establish scope, schedule and to secure budget.

5.5 Reporting Process

Upon completion of the detailed assessment, Health and Safety will provide a report summarizing the findings to the school administrator and the Joint Health and Safety Committee. The report shall be made available to the initial complainant, staff members, students, and parents upon request, through the administrator.

5.6 Records Management

All records related to Indoor Air Quality investigations shall be managed by Health and Safety in accordance with the Board's Records and Information Management (RIM) Procedure and the Records Retention and Classification Schedule (RRCS).

6.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

- Occupational Health and Safety Act, Ontario
- Health Promotion and Protection Act, Ontario