

# Safety Moment

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## Biosafety Program

University of Calgary | VP Services | Environment, Health and Safety

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# Biosafety Program

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- The university is required to implement and maintain a Biosafety Program to protect its people, assets and the environment from exposure to, and contamination with, biohazards that are being used for research and teaching purposes.
- Biohazards include, but are not limited to, infectious material (e.g. bacteria, viruses, fungi, cell lines, blood) and microbial toxins (e.g. botulinum toxin, cholera toxin and diphtheria toxin).

# Biosafety Program

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The following distinguishing features of the Biosafety Program are determined to be of higher risk and single out the university as having one of the most complex and varied Biosafety Programs in Canada:

- work involving the virus causing COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2) in a Level 3 animal facility
- work involving Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)
- small and large animal containment zones (e.g. infections in chickens, pigs, cattle)
- work involving prions (e.g. agent causing Mad Cow Disease or Chronic Wasting Disease)
- work involving fish pathogens (fish acquired domestically/internationally)
- planned work for a wild microbiome facility

The Biosafety Program is designed to produce and monitor compliance with acts, regulations, directives, standards and guidelines published by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), provincial regulators and other parties with oversight over biosafety and biosecurity.

# Biosafety Committee

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- The UCalgary Biosafety Committee is an advisory committee to the Vice-President (Research), ensuring the effectiveness of the Biosafety Program. It is responsible for developing standards or procedures to be followed when handling biohazards in accordance with the applicable requirements. Committee membership is comprised of a cross-section of the affected University stakeholders including representatives from: several faculties, technical staff, the Animal Health Unit, Office of the Vice-President (Research), Environment Health and Safety (EHS), and the Research Services Office.

# Biosafety Committee

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- EHS advises the Biosafety Committee on the development of the Biosafety Program to achieve compliance with relevant legislation. EHS is also responsible for the Laboratory Safety Program, a key foundational element that supports the Biosafety Program. The University Biosafety Officer is also the manager of laboratory safety within EHS and is responsible for directing the University of Calgary Biosafety Program.