

# UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA SAN FRANCISCO

## POLICY ON REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND WORKERS/TRAINEES IN THE RESEARCH LABORATORY SETTING

### Personnel

This policy applies to all pregnant and nursing laboratory workers or trainees who may be at increased risk for development of infectious diseases, pregnancy complications or fetal birth defects as a result of research laboratory activities. This policy also applies to men and women who have concerns or questions about the effect of their work conditions on their reproductive health. This includes personnel/trainees who do not directly work with potential pathogens or chemicals but may have exposure because they share the same laboratory space where the infectious agents or chemicals are studied. This policy also applies to LARC employees and other non-laboratory personnel including EH&S staff, facilities staff, and custodial workers.

### Education and Training of Laboratory Workers and Trainees

All laboratory workers and trainees will receive mandatory education and training regarding work place hazards specific to their work area and job duties before starting work and on an annual basis thereafter. As part of this training, workers/trainees will be advised that pregnant women are more susceptible to infection by infectious agents that pose little risk for healthy individuals. Additionally, chemicals and infectious agents present in the research laboratory setting may have harmful impacts on an unborn fetus. **Individuals will be given an informational handout with educational and contact information in the event they have any questions. Faculty/staff/trainees who have questions concerning their reproductive health will not be asked to identify themselves, but will be referred to resources cited in the handout.**

### Counseling of Pregnant Laboratory Workers and Trainees Regarding Risk

#### At the time of hire:

- Employees/trainees will be counseled regarding the increased risk of illness in pregnant workers as a result of infectious disease exposure in the workplace. They will also be provided with information regarding the potential risks to the fetus associated with the exposure to chemicals or infectious disease in the laboratory setting.
- Pregnant or nursing employees/trainees will be encouraged to call the UCSF Public Health Officer to develop a list of potential pathogens and chemicals in their work area. The UCSF Public Health Officer will conduct an individual risk assessment based on the laboratory BUA(s) and potential workplace exposures from materials listed on the BUA and laboratory animals and equipment.
- All employees/trainees who contact the UCSF Public Health Officer will be encouraged to discuss the results of the risk assessment with their physician and/or Occupational Health Services. The primary care provider for UCSF students is Student Health Services

- In the event the laboratory workers/trainees have persistent concerns regarding risks of employment, they shall be advised to make an appointment with UCSF Occupational Health Service.
- UCSF Occupational Health Services will assess risks and advise the worker/trainee regarding resources and options. The worker/trainee shall be encouraged to work in areas that minimize risk of injury/illness.

During the course of employment:

- Educational material regarding the risks for pregnant women will be provided yearly to all laboratory employees/trainees. This information will include reminders that employees are encouraged seek advice from the UCSF Public Health Officer regarding potential infectious hazards, their physician as well as the appropriate UCSF clinic for confidential counseling, risk assessment, and recommendations for accommodation.

**Resources:**

Public Health Officer  
Office of Environment, Health and Safety  
Phone: 415-514-3531  
Fax: 415-476-0581  
Campus Box: 0942  
[PublicHealthOffice@ucsf.edu](mailto:PublicHealthOffice@ucsf.edu)

UCSF Occupational Health Services  
Phone: 415-885-7580  
Fax: 415-514-5614  
Campus Box: 1661  
<http://www.occupationalhealthprogram.ucsf.edu/>