

# BPA Policy 421-1

## Temporary Stop Work Authority

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## 1. Purpose & Background

The purpose of this policy is to maintain a safe work environment and establish the responsibility and authority for workers to identify and report an unsafe work environment.

The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 regulates working conditions for occupational safety and health to achieve a safe and healthy workplace. Through this act, BPA is required to provide working conditions that are free from recognized hazards likely to cause death or serious physical harm. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations 29 CFR 1960 and 29 CFR 1910 ensure that workers may stop work temporarily or decline to perform work that they believe endangers their safety or health, or that of other workers or members of the public, or that places BPA property, system reliability, or the environment at risk.

A worker may temporarily stop work for safety concerns without fear of reprisal.

## 2. Policy Owner

The BPA Chief Administrative Officer owns this policy. The Chief Safety Officer, designated as BPA's Safety and Health Official, is responsible for implementing and managing this policy. The Chief Safety Officer is responsible for approving changes to appendices or procedures within this policy.

## 3. Applicability

This policy applies to any person performing work for BPA, regardless of where the work is performed.

## 4. Terms & Definitions

- A. **Competent Person:** A person who is capable of identifying existing and predictable hazards in the surroundings or working conditions that are unsanitary, hazardous, or dangerous to employees; who has authority and is expected to take prompt corrective measures to eliminate them; and who has adequate training, experience, or knowledge regarding the equipment to determine if a hazard exists.
- B. **Fit for Use:** A determination by a competent person that equipment is working properly and does not pose a hazard when used in accordance with training or manufacturer's instructions.
- C. **Imminent danger:** Any condition or practice that could reasonably be expected to cause death, serious injury, or environmental harm.
- D. **Stand Down:** An immediate cessation of work.

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- E. **Stop Work Authority:** An immediate, *temporary* work stoppage authorizing and obligating workers to stop work, without fear of reprisal, when they believe a situation exists that places themselves, a coworker(s), or the environment in imminent danger.
- F. **Worker:** Any person performing work for BPA.

## 5. Policy

- A. **Authority and obligation to stop unsafe work:** When a worker believes a condition or practice is present that could reasonably be expected to cause death, serious injury, or environmental harm, they have the authority and obligation to immediately initiate a temporary work stoppage without fear of retaliation or reprisal.

- 1. **All workers must stand down:** All workers who are participating directly in the work that has been stopped must stand down until the risk has been removed or mitigated.

All workers directly impacted by the perceived hazard are required to discuss the issue following the work stoppage. If all workers involved agree that the issue has been resolved, work may resume. If not all workers involved agree that the issue is resolved, workers shall follow BPA Procedure 421-1-1, *Stop Work Resolution Procedure*.

- 2. **Placing Tags on unsafe tools and equipment:** Workers shall place a BPA tag stating *Danger – Do Not Use* (BPA Form 6410.36) on any unsafe tools or equipment to identify unsafe tools or equipment, as described in BPA Procedure 421-1-2, *Tagging Unsafe Tools and Equipment*.

Tools and equipment with *Danger – Do Not Use* tags on them will not be used until the hazard for a temporary work stoppage is removed or mitigated, if applicable, and the tools or equipment have been designated to be fit for use by a competent person.

## 6. Policy Exceptions

There are no exceptions to this policy.

## 7. Responsibilities

**Worker:** Workers who are performing work on a BPA property, in a right-of-way, at a site leased by BPA, or on property owned by others who have contracted with BPA to perform work there, are responsible for:

- A. Temporarily stopping work if they believe a situation exists that places themselves, other workers, members of the public, or BPA property or system reliability at risk of damage or injury.

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- B. Standing down if another worker participating in the same work has initiated a temporary work stoppage believing that a situation exists that places themselves, other workers, members of the public, or BPA property or system reliability at risk of damage or injury.
- C. Temporarily stopping the use of unsafe tools and equipment and placing a *Danger – Do Not Use* tag on that equipment when a piece of equipment has a perceived safety concern.

## 8. Standards & Procedures

- A. BPA Procedure 421-1-1, *Temporary Stop Work Resolution Procedure*
- B. BPA Procedure 421-1-2, *Tagging Unsafe Tools and Equipment*

## 9. Performance & Monitoring

- A. The Safety organization, in conjunction with BPA’s safety committees, is responsible for monitoring corrective actions, employee concerns, and job observations to identify policy improvement opportunities. Safety will brief these committees on identified opportunities for future improvements to this policy.
- B. BPA Safety organization monitors various aspects of safety related to temporary stop work, including the following:
  - 1. Job observations;
  - 2. Near hit review;
  - 3. Safety concern reviews;
  - 4. Work stoppage frequency;
  - 5. Injury or other safety incidents.

## 10. Authorities & References

- 1. 29 USC 15, *Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970*
- 2. 29 CFR 1977.12, *Exercise of any Right Afforded by the Act*
- 3. 29 CFR 1910.145, *Specifications for Accident Prevention Signs and Tags*
- 4. BPA Policy 420-1, *Safety and Health Policy*
- 5. Department of Energy, *Independent Oversight Review of the Bonneville Power Administration Safety Management Program* (February 2014)
- 6. Department of Energy, *Follow-up Assessment of the Bonneville Power Administration Safety Management Program* (January 2019)

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7. 29 CFR 1960.10(c), *Employee Responsibilities and Rights*
8. 5 USC 2302(b)(8)-(9), *Whistleblower Protection Act of 1989*
9. Pub.L. 112-199, *Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act of 2012*

## 11. Review

This Policy will be reviewed by BPA's Chief Safety Officer every three (3) years for error, omissions, relevance and alignment with applicable external laws, rules and regulations.

## 12. Revision History

Version Number	Issue Date	Brief Description of Change/Review
1.0	9/30/2020	Initial version
1.2	2/26/2025	Sunset review

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