



## Common Work Practices in the Laboratory

### Personal Safety Work Practices

The following is a list of common personal safety work practices:

- Do not recap needles or re-sheath scalpels.
- Do not eat, drink, or store food or drinks in the laboratory.
- Do not apply makeup or lip moisturizer, or handle contact lenses in the laboratory.
- Wear proper PPE such as safety glasses and a laboratory coat upon entering the laboratory.
- Wash your hands:
  - After removing your gloves
  - Before exiting the laboratory
- Wear appropriate clothing such as closed-toe shoes and long pants.
- Tie back loose hair.
- Be sure you are up to date with your vaccinations.
- Do not mouth pipette.

### Facility Safety Work Practices

The following is a list of common facility safety work practices:

You should:

- Make sure emergency equipment, like fire extinguishers and exit routes, are not blocked.
- Know the location and protocols for fire extinguisher and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) use.
- Know the location and procedures to use eyewashes, safety showers, first aid kits, biological spill kits, chemical spill cabinets, and exits.
- Maintain proper airflow by keeping laboratory doors closed.
- Clean up spills, loose paper, and clutter on the floor to reduce slips and falls. Similarly, laboratory furniture must be easily cleanable. Laboratory chairs cannot be cloth covered.

### General Safety Work Practices

The following is a list of general safety work practices:

- Discard anything that can puncture skin into sharps containers. Do not re-sheath or recap needles before putting them in the sharps container.
- Broken glass, like capillary tubes, that are biohazardous can be discarded with other sharps.
- Place non-biohazardous broken glass in a separate waste receptacle from the sharps container.
- Place chemicals in assigned storage areas.
- Label all containers.
- Escort visitors at all times.

This job aid is a component of the free, on-demand CDC training course “Fundamentals of Laboratory Safety.” Find the course at <https://reach.cdc.gov/training>