

GENERAL MANUAL- POLICY/PROCEDURE

Effective Date: March 2010
Reviewed: April 2011
Revised: August 2013

<p><i>Issued By:-</i> Occupational Health, Wellness and Safety, Joint Health and Safety Committee <i>Approved by:-</i> Senior Leadership <i>Reviewed by:-</i> Joint Health and Safety Committee, AODA, HR&HE</p> <p><i>Title:-</i> <u>SCENTED PRODUCTS AND FRAGRANCES</u></p>
<p>Policy Number: VI-k-30-31</p>
<p>Key Words: Scents, Scented Products, Fragrances,</p>
<p>Stakeholders: All members of the Mount Sinai Hospital Community including; Employees, Physicians, Researchers, Students, Volunteers, Contractors, Patients, Visitors, and members of the public.</p>
<p>Policy Statement:</p> <p>Mount Sinai Hospital is committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment for all and will strive to eliminate the use of products with scents and fragrances to prevent any adverse reactions in patients, staff and other people working and/or visiting the hospital premises. In such cases, where any member of the MSH Community requires assistance regarding a scent-sensitivity, MSH will take all reasonable steps to accommodate (as per the Accommodation Policy).</p> <p>Personal Scented Products Use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MSH will make all reasonable efforts to inform all members of the MSH community that they are expected to refrain from using, wearing and/or applying scented personal care products in all spaces owned, rented or leased by Mount Sinai Hospital. • All member of are expected to refrain from using, wearing and/or applying scented personal care products in all spaces owned, rented or leased by Mount Sinai Hospital. <p>Hospital Products Purchasing and Use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occupational Health, Wellness and Safety will review all existing products within the MSDS Database on an annual basis to determine if all ingredients are acceptable as a scent-free product. • If a fragrance-free option is not possible for environmental products, variances will be noted to Occupational Health, Wellness and Safety, tracked using the MSDS database and reviewed annually or as new fragrance-free alternatives become available. Wherever possible these variant products should have very minimal/low fragrance and/or emit low levels of volatile organic compounds (VOCs). • MSH/Plexxus Purchasing will make all reasonable efforts to inform suppliers of this policy and ensure all products used and purchases by the hospital such as cleaning products, soaps, paints, hand hygiene products etc., are fragrance free. • All hospital departments must adhere to this policy when purchasing any products outside of standard purchasing processes. • Wherever possible, MSH Building Services or Support Services teams will give one week’s advance notice of activities in the area where work is being conducted that may produce odours such as carpet cleaning, spring-cleaning, painting, spraying, waxing, stripping the floors, etc. so that affected personnel can make arrangements or have their duties modified during that time.



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Title:- **SCENTED PRODUCTS AND FRAGRANCES**

Definitions:

Employee: A person who works for or provides services to the Hospital on a full- or part-time basis, whether unionized (belonging to a bargaining unit) or not, including supervisory, managerial administrative staff, and Senior Officers.

Scented Product and Fragrance: Refers to any product including, but not limited to:

- a) Personal Products such as perfume, cologne, essential oils, scented aftershave lotions, scented deodorant, scented moisturizing hand lotion, body or face washes, lotions or sprays, massage oils, scented sunscreen, and any scented hair shampoo, conditioner, mousse, gel, hairspray, scented powder or talc, solid or
- b) Environmental Products such as spray air fresheners, incense and potpourri, scented candles, cleaning products, detergents, laundry products, sterilizing products, adhesives, etc.

MSH Community: Includes all employees, healthcare professionals, physicians, students, volunteers, researchers, contractors, patients, visitors to the hospital and members of the public.

Standards and Regulations:

Occupational Health and Safety Act

Roles and Responsibilities:

Managers/Supervisors:

- Instruct and educate employees about the Scented Products and Fragrances Policy.
- Ensure this policy is followed within their department.
- Assist employees in addressing concerns regarding scented products and fragrances.
- Review and investigate any employee incident reports related to scented products and fragrances and implement appropriate corrective actions.

Employees:

- Consider, if comfortable approaching members of the MSH community to inform them of this policy.
- Complete an Employee Incident Report if experiencing an adverse reaction to a scented product. This completed form must be submitted to the Department Manager/Supervisor and Occupational Health, Wellness and Safety.

Occupational Health, Wellness and Safety:

- Develop educational materials such as fact sheets etc. and conduct employee education sessions as required to communicate this policy to the MSH Community.
- Review all Employee Incidents Reports related to scented products and fragrances and assist Managers/Supervisors and the Resources Department with the implementation of the corrective actions.
- Review annually, all products used within MSH to ensure they are acceptable as per this policy.
- Documents product variants and review if fragrances free alternatives exist as required.
- Evaluate the Scented Products and Fragrances Policy on an annual basis in consultation with the Joint Health and Safety Committee.



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Patient Relations:

- Receive and forward feedback related to scented products or fragrances from patients and/or visitors to the appropriate Department Managers/Supervisors and resource departments for them to address and resolve with the individual who provided the feedback.

Building Services, Redevelopment Project Office and Corporate Support Services:

- Inform contractors of this policy and ensure it is followed
- Provide departments one week's notice of activities that may produce odours

MSH/Plexxus Purchasing:

- Inform suppliers of this and ensure it is followed
- Ensure all products purchased by the hospital are fragrance free

Background Information:

Scented products and fragrances may cause health problems such as shortness of breath, headaches, migraines, and nausea and can trigger underlying respiratory and allergic conditions in sensitive individuals.^{1, 2}

Procedure:

1. Awareness and Communication

- An awareness program to support the policy will be developed and administered with annual refresher campaigns.
- Departments and clinics will display the appropriate signage to inform all members of the MSH Community that wearing, applying and using scented products is prohibited. Occupational Health, Wellness and Safety or Graphics and New Media can be contacted for the appropriate signage.
- An internal communication campaign will be put into place to inform staff.
- At new employee orientation, all employees will be provided with information about the Scented Products and Fragrances Policy.
- Information about the Scented Products and Fragrances Policy will also be included in the email reminders, instructions, appointment cards, outgoing phone messages, web site to patients, families, visitors, hospital volunteers and in contractor agreements.
- Occupational Health Wellness and Safety will provide advice on scent-free alternatives as required.

2. Reporting an Adverse Reaction to Scented Products and Fragrances

- Employees experiencing an adverse reaction to a scented product or fragrance should follow the MSH [Employee Incident Reporting Policy](#) (notify his/her manager, complete an employee incident report and send it to Occupational Health, Wellness and Safety Department). The manager is responsible for investigating the incident and implementing the appropriate corrective action.
- Patients or visitors experiencing an adverse reaction to a scented product or fragrance should notify Patient Relations of their concern. Patient Relations is responsible for investigating the concern and liaising with appropriate Resource Departments* as required.
- All members of the MSH Community requiring accommodation for a disability related to scent sensitivity



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may refer to the [Accommodation Policy](#) and the [Providing Access for People with Disabilities Policy](#) for more information.

3. Procedure and Recourse to Address Concerns Related to a Personal Scented Product or Fragrance

- Where possible, concerns about the use of scented personal products used by a co-worker, patient or visitor should be communicated to the individual in a polite and respectful manner. Advise the individual that Mount Sinai is a Scent Sensitive Environment. Ask the person to remove the scented product if possible, and/or to refrain from wearing the scented product in the future.
- Any member of the MSH Community who is not comfortable communicating this policy to the person using scented personal products should discuss the concern with the supervisor or manager of the department. The supervisor or manager may speak with the person or may refer to Resource Departments* for any assistance and support.
- A manager or designate has the authority to direct a person wearing the scented product to take steps to remove it so that the scent is minimized or no longer evident.
- If a person working or visiting MSH has been made aware of the policy repeatedly and continues to wear scented personal products and fragrances in the hospital, the area manager or supervisor should implement the [Disciplinary Process](#) and if required [Trespass to Property Order](#).

4. Procedure and Recourse to Address Concerns Related to an Environmental Scented Product or Fragrance

- If the source of the scent is a product used within Mount Sinai, contact the department manager responsible for the product to note the concern.
- The Department Manager is responsible for investigating the product and reviewing with MSH Purchasing and the Occupational Health, Wellness and Safety Departments to determine if the product may be replaced with a scent-free alternative.
- In the case where no suitable alternatives are available, this product will be added to the MSDS database as a variant and staff will be made aware of the hazard.

* Additional Resource Departments that will provide assistance and support to the manager:

- Human Resources,
- Patient Relations,
- Human Rights and Health Equity
- Occupational Health, Wellness and Safety
- Corporate Support Services
- Building Services
- Redevelopment Project Office

5. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed biannually and can be changed because of experience or new knowledge.

6. Related Policies

[Accommodation Policy](#)

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[Providing Access for People with Disabilities Policy](#)
[Employee Incident Reporting Policy](#)
[Disciplinary Process](#)
[Trespass to Property Order](#)

7. References:

1. Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety
http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/hsprograms/scent_free.html
2. Canada Safety Council <http://canadasafetycouncil.org/workplace-safety/perfume-workplace>