

Translational Health Science and Technology Institute

Department of Biotechnology

Ministry of Science & Technology

Government of India

Environment, Health and Safety Policy

(EHS policy)

Introduction

The EHS policy document describes the policy of the Translational Health Science and Technology Institute (THSTI) towards environment, health and safety (EHS) issues at the work place.

THSTI is a public funded research institute under the umbrella of Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Ministry of Science and Technology, Govt. of India. It is involved in multidisciplinary academic research activities with the aim to develop novel therapeutics, vaccines or diagnostic tools against priority diseases in India, and to generate insights into biomedical domains critical for public health. Like any academic research campus, THSTI campus hosts various research laboratories wherein students and scientific staff from different domains viz., chemistry, biology, computer science, mathematics and clinical science work on communicable and non-communicable diseases of national importance and relevance. A large team of administrative staff supports these scientific activities on a day-to-day basis.

Purpose and scope:

EHS policy document is prepared to:

- I. outline key points that ensure safe and healthy work practices of students and scientific staff with minimal to no impact to the surrounding natural environment
- II. describe institutional framework for its implementation.

EHS policy of THSTI:

- I. To provide a safe and healthy working environment in the THSTI;
- II. Minimize environmental and human exposure to hazardous substances;
- III. Comply with all applicable EHS laws and regulations of Govt. Of India;
- IV. Conserve electrical energy and water resources;
- V. Thrive towards a 'zero' discharge campus i.e. minimize domestic and laboratory wastes and follow stipulated guidelines and SOPs for waste segregation and management;
- VI. Evaluate, manage and mitigate EHS risks involved in day-to-day activities carried out at THSTI;
- VII. Provide appropriate training to all employees of THSTI for 100% compliance with the described EHS policy and the stipulated safety guidelines.

While THSTI stands committed to its EHS policy framework, the safety guidelines (as annexed in Annexure D) may be subject to periodic review and revision as deemed fit by the competent authority. The designed EHS policy will also be posted on the website of THSTI for easy access to all students and employees.

Annexure 1

Safety guidelines for implementation of the detailed EHS policy

The primary focus of the guidelines is to protect everyone in the THSTI premises from accidents, injuries and exposure to harmful substances. As an institute, THSTI is committed to reducing risk of adverse incidents and maintain a safe working environment. Additionally, the guidelines ensure THSTI's steadfast commitment to zero waste disposal for the protection of surrounding environment and maintenance of the ecosystem. Considering the multidisciplinary nature of the work which includes pre-clinical and clinical research, usage of chemical and biochemical reagents along with activities of normal administrative work, the below mentioned safety guidelines encompass three broad areas, viz.,

1. **Occupational safety and health (OSH)**
2. **Biosafety**
3. **Chemical safety**

The detailed documents of the respective guidelines are also available on THSTI's website and can easily be accessed through the listed web links.

1. Occupational safety and health (OSH) guidelines:

The OSH guidelines document describes practices for establishing a safe and healthy working environment at THSTI for all its employees, researchers, students, and visitors. It provides an overall structure of the OSH practices at THSTI. Details of the OSH guidelines can be accessed via the link <https://thsti.in/ethsti/pdf/OSH.pdf>

Purpose and scope:

- I. Mitigate accidents, injuries, and exposure to harmful substances;
- II. Delineate safety measures aimed at preventing and controlling hazards across THSTI premises; Elaborate planned/executed diverse periodical training programs and health monitoring systems critical to prevent accidents and be prepared for any unwanted incidents.
- III. Describe responsibilities of the THSTI employees and students to establish and maintain a safe and healthy working environment.

2. Biosafety guidelines:

It describes the Standard Operating Procedures and policies for handling and working with biohazardous materials within THSTI facilities. The Biosafety guidelines can be accessed by follow the link <https://thsti.in/ethsti/pdf/THSTI-BSG.pdf>

Purpose and scope:

- I. Ensure a safe working environment by complying to all applicable regulations concerning the use of biological agents, biological toxins, select agents, and recombinant DNA in the laboratory
- II. Provide guidelines on biological waste segregation, management and disposal within the campus to ensure zero discharge. These guidelines are applicable to those handling and working with potential biohazardous materials.

3. Chemical safety guidelines:

It describes practices to be followed for minimizing risk of accidents from chemicals resulting in injuries to people, and damage to the environment and the institution infrastructure and property. Similar to the biosafety guidelines, the chemical safety guidelines apply to all handlers of chemicals. Chemical safety guidelines document can be accessed by follow the link <https://thsti.in/ethsti/pdf/THSTI-CHEM.pdf>

Purpose and scope:

- I. Describe practices for safe handling of different chemicals and their usage, careful disposal and/or waste management without impacting the working and natural environment
- II. Provide guidelines on:
 - a. chemical hygiene
 - b. chemical management in laboratories
 - c. risk assessments of different chemicals
 - d. safe disposal methods to ensure zero discharge