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# Hearing Conservation Program

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## Hearing Conservation Program

### **I. Purpose**

The University of Northern Colorado Hearing Conservation Program (HCP) is designed for the conservation and protection of the hearing abilities of University personnel who are exposed to occupational noise during work related duties. Federal regulation criteria recommends that occupational noise exposure at an average of 85 decibels (dBA),

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- Assist in the identification and recommendation for hearing protection devices to be made available to employees.
- Schedule and audit the audiometric testing program.
- Periodically audit the use of hearing protection.
- Assist in the development of administrative and/or engineering controls.
- Maintain and calibrate noise sampling equipment.
- Maintain training records.

E. Human Resources

- Maintain medical records for employees.
- Provide medical follow up appointments, if needed.

**III. Program Directives**

The regulatory standard provides for employee protection against the effects of noise when employees are exposed above *Permissible Noise Exposures (PNE)*. Personal noise exposures are a function of the noise level and the duration of exposure. An equivalent exposure may be of shorter duration but at a higher noise level, i.e., 95 dBA at 4 hours or 100 dBA at two hours.

Listed below are the regulatory permissible noise exposures for specific exposure times.

Duration (hr)	Sound level (dBA)
8	90
6	92
4	95
3	

Phase I consists of monitoring areas that have the potential to be at or above the threshold of 85 dBA or have already been identified as such. Phase II consists of getting those employees who have been identified in for baseline audiometric testing and subsequent annual testing thereafter to ensure hearing loss is not occurring or is halted. Phase III encompasses training with an emphasis on control methods, more specifically Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in the form of hearing protection.

#### A. Noise Exposure Monitoring

The goal of the Hearing Conservation Program is to reduce employee exposure to occupational noise that meets or exceeds the regulatory standard. EHS will monitor and evaluate potentially loud operations and equipment. In areas where the noise level exceeds the REL of 85 dBA TWA, EHS will conduct a personal noise exposure sampling and a sound level survey of the work area.







#### D. Training

The training program requires participation for all employees who meet or exceed the recommended exposure level. The training will be held on an annual basis for all employees who qualify for the HCP.

The training will provide employees with the following information:

- The effects of noise on hearing
- Hazardous noise sources at the worksite
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