

**National Institutes of Health
Office of Research Services
Division of Occupational Health and Safety**

Safety Shoe Program

Technical Assistance Branch

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SAFETY SHOE PROGRAM

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Office of Research Services, [Division of Occupational Health and Safety](#) (DOHS), Technical Assistance Branch (TAB), administers the NIH Safety Shoe Program. The DOHS established the Safety Shoe Program to protect NIH employees from injury due to occupational foot hazards.

2.0 POLICY

Any National Institutes of Health employee whose job exposes him or her to a potential foot injury can obtain steel-toed safety shoes through the Safety Shoe Program upon approval of the individual's supervisor. The DOHS subsidizes the cost of safety shoes. The subsidy may vary yearly and is based on the average price of shoes in the range of footwear found suitable by the DOHS to meet the needs of most employees. In most cases, the subsidy will completely cover the cost of appropriate safety shoes. Safety shoes made outside of the United States will not be available for purchase unless authorized by the Project Officer.

3.0 OBTAINING SAFETY SHOES

Safety shoes are purchased through a contractor who, twice monthly, makes available to the NIH a well-stocked shoe mobile on NIH's main campus located at **Building 13** loading dock platform G. The shoe mobile will also service National Institutes Animal Center in Poolseville twice a year. Employees located on the off campus facilities such as Integrated Research Facility (IRF)-Frederick, Rocky Mountain Laboratory (RML) -Montana, Biomedical Research Center (BRC)-Baltimore and National Institutes of Environmental Health & Safety (NIEHS)-NC will obtain safety shoes from designated vendors from that area. All employees requiring safety footwear must bring to the shoe mobile form [NIH 1980](#), Request for Safety Footwear, signed and completed by their supervisor. Only NIH employees with authorized form [NIH 1980](#) may receive shoes from the shoe mobile. The supervisor must indicate on the form in **Section 2** what type of safety shoe the employee requires. No other style safety shoe than that approved by the supervisor will be issued. Employees desiring a different safety shoe should with a justification contact their supervisor to request the change, or contact Safety Shoe Project Officer located in Building 13, Room 3K04, Telephone (301) 496-3457. The safety shoe form can be obtained by going to the [NIH/ORS/DOHS](#) Website. The form from the website must be printed on a color copier or printed on pink paper. The shoe truck driver will only accept the forms on pink paper.

3.1 PRIVATE PURCHASE OF SAFETY SHOES

The private purchase of safety shoes from the shoe mobile will not be allowed. An authorized NIH employee is permitted, however, to obtain more expensive safety shoes from the shoe mobile or designated vendor if the extra cost is paid by that employee and the safety shoes are of the same style (oxford, dress, 6" boot, etc.) as indicated on form [NIH 1980](#). The request for this up-grade must be initiated by the employee and not solicited by shoe mobile personnel. Shoe insoles may be purchased with safety shoes as long as the cost does not exceed the subsidy amount. If the total exceeds the subsidy amount, then the employee will be responsible for the difference plus any tax that may apply.

3.2 FREQUENCY OF OBTAINING SAFETY SHOES

NIH employees are authorized to obtain a new pair of safety shoes when their current safety shoes are no longer serviceable (generally about every 6 months) and with the approval of their supervisor. If new safety shoes are needed in less than 6 months, the employee must bring his or her old safety shoes, justification and the [NIH 1980](#), completed and signed by the supervisor to the Project Officer for final determination.

3.3 Safety Shoes for Medical Issues

Employees requiring special footwear due to medical issues must have their medical issue documented by a private physician and/or by the [Occupational Medical Service](#). Employees with special footwear requirements should notify their supervisor and the Project Officer of the Safety Shoe Program. The Project Officer will instruct the employee on the proper procedures for obtaining the required safety shoes. The usual DOHS subsidy can be exceeded in such cases.