

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

Safety Shoe Program

Technical Assistance Branch

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**Office of Research Services
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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 possible foot injuries 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 provided for shoes 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 and due to special needs and/or justified.

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. The Shoe mobile sets up on NIH's main campus at Bldg. 13 loading dock platform G. Employees located at facilities such as IRF- Frederick, RML- Montana, BRC-Baltimore, NIEHS-NC will obtain safety shoes from a designated vendor for that area. 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 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 contact their supervisor to request the change or contact Safety Shoe Project Officer located in building 13, room 3K04, telephone: 301-496-3457.

Any employee who works on a shift schedule and who cannot make the shoe truck may go online or select from the vendor's catalogue the type of shoe needed and put information on the NIH-1980 shoe form.

Please note: Do NOT purchase the shoes on-line; you will NOT be reimbursed. Use the information on the website for the shoes that you want and complete the applicable fields on the form.

Once signed by the Supervisor, return signed form to the Safety Office and the Safety Shoe Project Manager will order shoes and have them delivered to the DOHS Office. Once delivered the Employee will be notified as to when and where they can pick up the shoes.

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. Insoles

may be obtained as long as the total of the safety shoe and insole meets the subsidy amount. If the total exceeds the subsidy amount the employee will be responsible for the difference plus any taxes.

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 12 months) and with the approval of their supervisor. If new safety shoes are needed in less than 12 months, the employee must bring his or her old safety shoes and form [NIH-1980](#), completed and signed by the supervisor, to the shoe mobile. **The employee must also indicate the reason that this is a request for a 2nd pair in less than 12 months and attach it to the NIH-1980 request form.**

3.3 Exceptions

The DOHS will pay more than the usual subsidy for safety shoes for the following:

1. Grounds Maintenance
 - a. Eight inch boots
 - b. Eight inch insulated boots
 - c. Tree climbers' boots
 - d. Welders' boots
2. Transportation
 - a. Insulated boots

3.4 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.