Visitors and Tours Guideline

1. Purpose / Background

MIT embodies a spirit of outreach and collaboration. As part of that tradition, the Institute routinely hosts various educational opportunities, which involve the greater community and public. The purpose of this guideline is to provide a planning tool for use by Departments, Labs and Centers that may host visitors or conduct tours in areas where potential environmental, health and safety (EHS) hazards may exist. The guideline also outlines a review process required for all visitor/group demonstrations and hands-on activities.

2. Scope

For the purpose of this guideline, the term visitor(s) is defined as:

An individual(s) who is not employed by MIT, and will be visiting the Institute for less than 30 days in order to observe/tour a Department, Laboratory, or Center (DLC) or participate in an activity/program. The term “visitor” specifically applies to those individuals who will be in an environment with which s/he is unfamiliar, and may be unaware of the hazards specific to that area or activity (e.g., a non-researcher visiting a biology laboratory).

2.1. The scope of this guideline does not include:

2.1.1. Visiting scientists, and fellows who follow procedures similar to that of employees, including attending all required training.

2.1.2. Contractors and Vendors. Contractor and Vendor EHS responsibilities are outlined in the document “Environment, Health, and Safety Requirements for Construction, Service, and Maintenance Contractors”, which may be downloaded from http://ehs.mit.edu/site/content/standard-operating-procedures-sops

2.1.3. Visitors entering administrative areas. Administrative areas are excluded due to the lesser hazard presented by a typical office environment.

2.1.4. Programs/projects involving minors that extend beyond one day will generally be covered under the SOP on Projects Involving Minors.

3. Prerequisites

None.
4. Procedures

4.1. When planning for visitors and tours, it is prudent practice to:

4.1.1. Evaluate potential hazards in the area(s) to be visited/toured.
4.1.2. Consider physical, biological, chemical, and radiological hazards.
   - For guidance in evaluating hazards please contact your Department, Lab, or Center’s (DLC’s) EHS Coordinator and review Appendix A: Examples of Hazardous Operations.

4.2. Once an EHS hazard is identified, review the following safety measures and select those that will maximize safety to the visitors while not disrupting research:

4.2.1. Discontinue hazardous operations for the duration of the tour/visit; this may include preparation and cleanup time.
4.2.2. Restrict visitor access to the area of operation.
4.2.3. Attempt to eliminate or reduce the hazard via alternate safeguards (i.e., personal protective equipment or PPE, decontamination).

4.3. Please review safeguarding measures with your EHS Coordinator to determine appropriateness.

4.4. Assess the need for Personal Protective Equipment

4.4.1. MIT-wide and DLC-specific requirements for personal protective equipment and dress code apply to visitors.
4.4.2. Inform visitors of proper dress code prior to the date of visit (e.g., advising closed-toe shoes or long pants for laboratories or construction sites).
4.4.3. Based on the evaluation above, provide visitors with personal protective equipment wherever it is necessary by reason of hazards of processes or environment.

4.5. Determine Group Size

4.5.1. Several factors should be considered in order to determine appropriate group size:
   - Size of the area to be toured
   - Age range of group/participants
   - Type of work in progress at time of visit

4.5.5. Limiting group size reduces the potential for incidents and provides for a more beneficial experience for all.
4.5.6. Determine the appropriate ratio of MIT tour/group leaders to number of participants. Visitors and groups should always be supervised. When the tour group consists of school-age children (up to 18 years of age), the number of tour/group leaders should be increased such that the organizer and host can adequately handle the safety of the individuals (e.g., being able to account for all members of the group in the event of a building evacuation).

4.5.7. Confirm that the appropriate number of MIT tour/group leaders is available for the desired group size and tour schedule.

4.6. Prepare Safety Instructions
4.6.1. The tour/group leader should provide all visitors with instructions on emergency evacuation procedures (description of alarm system(s), exit routes, and where to report once outside the building) and should familiarize themselves with exit routes/assembly points in order to assist in the event of an evacuation.

4.6.2. Additional safety instruction should be provided depending on the details of the visit or activity and hazards identified in the evaluation.

4.6.3. The tour/group leader should communicate to the participants those areas to which access is restricted.

4.7. Review and follow any DLC-specific policies regarding Visitors and Tours
4.7.1 Each DLC, unique to its own operations and hazards, may have its own DLC-specific visitor’s policy that includes requirements beyond what is contained in this guideline. Contact the EHS Coordinator to review and comply with such policies.

4.8. Demonstrations and Hands-On Activities
4.8.1. Complete Appendix B: Demonstration and Hands-On Activity Proposal for visits or tours that involve a demonstration or a hands-on activity

4.8.2. Submit the completed Demonstration and Hands-On Activity Proposal to the DLC EHS Coordinator as early as possible, or at least two weeks prior to the event.

5. Roles & Responsibilities
5.1. MIT Host/Responsible Employee:
   The MIT Host/Responsible Employee is the MIT employee designated by the Department Sponsor and Department Host to be primarily responsible for the visitor(s). The MIT Host/Responsible Employee ensures the health and safety of the visitors by: (1) evaluating and abating hazards; (2) supplying personal protective
equipment; (3) providing safety instructions; and, (4) following all the procedures set forth by this guideline.

In the case where the Department Sponsor is different than the Department Host, each department shall designate an MIT Host/Responsible Employee. The two employees will be jointly responsible in fulfilling the requirements of this guideline.

5.2. EHS Coordinator:
5.2.1. The EHS Coordinator of the DLC Host will be the primary EHS contact for the MIT Host/Responsible employee.

5.2.2. The EHS Coordinator will work with the MIT Host in (1) evaluating hazards and the need for personal protective equipment (2) reviewing proposals for tours, demonstrations, and activities, (3) providing safety recommendations as necessary.

5.2.3. The EHS Coordinator will seek assistance and involve his or her MIT EHS Lead Contact as necessary.

5.3. MIT EHS Reviewer:
Employee(s) of the MIT EHS Office (usually the lead contact of the DLC Host) who will work with the EHS Coordinator and the MIT Host/Responsible Employee to ensure visitors’ health and safety by providing technical assistance in all areas of this guideline.

5.4. MIT Visitors:
Are responsible for complying with all instructions provided by their MIT Host.

6. Training
6.1. Training requirements for tour guides
6.1.3. How to obtain emergency contact information for individuals involved in the tour.

6.2. Training requirements for visitors touring/viewing a demonstration
6.2.1. Location-specific emergency evacuation procedures.
6.2.2. If applicable, safety instructions pertaining to any hazards posed by the location/environment or demonstration (e.g., not entering any spaces marked “Laser in Use”).
6.3. **Training requirements for visitors participating in a supervised activity**

6.3.1. Training requirements are as stated in 6.1. Additional training requirements will be determined on a case-by-case basis during the Activity Proposal Review.

6.3.2. The Department Host’s Principal Investigator is ultimately responsible for determining whether visitors are required to undergo additional training, and for ensuring that the activity area is safe for visitors.

7 **Monitoring Requirements**

Where a DLC (e.g., Bates Linear Accelerator, Nuclear Reactor) has determined that exposure monitoring is necessary to comply with a regulatory requirement and/or to ensure that visitor safety is not being compromised, visitors must wear the personal exposure badges or other monitoring devices that are provided at the site. It is the responsibility of the PI (or the MIT Host / Responsible Employee) to communicate to visitors when personal exposure monitoring may be required.

Should an emergency occur in an area where visitors are known to be present, the visitors are expected to comply with emergency, evacuation, and response protocols, which may include not returning to the space until monitoring has been conducted to verify that it is safe for reoccupancy.

8 **Record Management**

The MIT EHS Office and the DLC will retain copies of all submitted demonstration/hands-on activity proposals for the duration of the activity/tour.

9 **References**

9.1 **Standards**

Not applicable.

9.2 **Other SOP/ SOGs**

Project Involving Minors SOP (EHS-0056)

9.3 **Supplementary Documents**

MIT EHS Training Plan for Visitors

### 10. Definitions

**10.1. Department Sponsor:**
The MIT Department sponsoring the visitor(s), tour, or program.

**10.2. Department Host:**
The MIT Department where the proposed tour or activity is physically taking place. In most cases the Department Sponsor is the same as the Department Host, however, in some cases the Sponsor and the Host may be two different departments.

**10.3. MIT Visitor:**
An individual(s) who is not employed by MIT, and will be visiting the Institute for less than 30 days in order to observe/tour a Department, Laboratory, or Center (DLC) or participate in an activity/program. The term “visitor” specifically applies to those individuals who will be in an environment they are unfamiliar with, and may be unaware of the hazards specific to that area or activity (e.g. a non-researcher in a laboratory).
Appendix A- Examples of hazardous operations

(Please note that this is not an exhaustive list of hazardous operations and is only intended as a preliminary guide. Please contact your EHS Coordinator with any questions)

Chemicals
- Operations involving large volumes of hazardous chemicals (corrosive, flammable, toxic, volatile chemicals), including compressed gases
- Operations involving particularly hazardous chemicals as defined in the DLC’s chemical hygiene plan

Radiation
- Work with radioactive materials
- Work with class 3b and above lasers
- Work with certain magnets
- Work with radiation-producing machines such as accelerators or X-ray machines

Physical
- High Voltage equipment/operations
- Touring elevated surfaces (e.g., roof)
- Areas with potentially confined spaces
- Forklifts or other moving vehicles
- Areas where construction/renovation activity is underway
- Machine shops

Biological
- Only biological labs rated BL1 and BL2 may be visited/toured; visits or tours of labs designated BL2+ or higher are prohibited.
- Work with BL2 agents
- Work involving animals
Appendix B: Demonstration and Activity Proposal Review

Instructions:
1. The MIT Host/Responsible Employee should complete Section 1 of the form and return it to the EHS Coordinator of the MIT Host at least two weeks prior to the event.
2. After being reviewed, the form will be returned to the MIT Host/Responsible Employee in order for EHS recommendations to be implemented prior to the event.
3. Once recommendations have been completed, fill out the last section of the form and return it to the MIT EHS Coordinator.
4. EHS Coordinators please send a hard copy to the MIT EHS Office, attn: Event Safety for central filing.

Section 1: Description of Event (to be completed by MIT Host/Responsible Employee)

Your Name: ________________________             Date: _____________________
Work Phone: _________________     Mail Stop: ________________________
Email Address: _______________________

1. Name of MIT DLC Host (Department where activity/tour will take place):
_____________________________________________________________________

2. Name of MIT DLC Sponsor (if different from Host):
_____________________________________________________________________

3. Area to be toured/location of activity (building and room numbers):
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

4. Name of Group Visiting:
_____________________________________________________________________

5. Date of Visit(s):
_____________________________________________________________________

6. Group size/Number of participants____________________________________________

7. Are all participants over 18 years of age?       Yes       No

8. If the answer was NO to question # 7, what is the age range of participants?
_____________________________________________________________________
9. Please describe the proposed demonstration/hands-on activity
(Include detailed information, i.e., materials, volumes, and the number of staff you will have assisting the group. Attach additional papers/documentation as necessary)

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

10. List potential hazards identified and the proposed safeguards for each

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
11. Hazard-specific safety instructions to be provided to visitors:

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

Section 2: EHS Review (to be completed by EHS personnel)

EHS Recommendations (attach additional sheets if necessary):

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

List any additional training requirements for visitors:

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

An official hardcopy of this document exists in the EHS Office or on the EHS website. See Legal Disclaimer at: http://ehs.mit.edu/site/content/legal-disclaimer
EHS Coordinator:

____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________
(Name)    (Signature)  Date: _________

EHS Reviewer:

____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________
(Name)    (Signature)  Date: _________

Additional Personnel involved:

Title: __________________

____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________
(Name)    (Signature)  Date: _________

Title: __________________

____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________
(Name)    (Signature)  Date: _________

Section 3: Recommendation Implemented (to be completed by MIT Host)

Date Recommendations Completed: ______________

MIT Host/Responsible Employee Signature: _________________________________

Additional Comments:

____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________