

Medical Clearance to Work with Lasers

Effective January 21st, 2015, the Non-ionizing Radiation Safety Committee (NIRSC) has mandated that any UW student, faculty, or staff member requesting access to a 3B or 4 Lasers receive a Medical Clearance through the University Health Services-Occupational Medicine Program (UHS-OM).

This policy is intended to protect the eye health of campus Laser Operators (LO) and to confirm that the individual and the university have met the medical requirements of ANSI Standard Z136.1-2014 governing the safe use of lasers.

NIRSC and UHS-OM have designed this program to satisfy the requirements of the ANSI Standard Z136.1-2014 in the most cost-effective and time-efficient way possible. Laser operators will complete a screening form to identify pre-existing health issues which may place them at an increased risk of eye damage due to their work with lasers in conjunction with a brief eye exam at the UHS-OM clinic. If no problematic conditions are identified the individual can receive the Medical Clearance without further assessment. If there are potentially problematic conditions identified a more comprehensive exam will be conducted by an ophthalmologist at the Davis Duehr Dean clinic. This exam will include ocular history, visual acuity, intraocular pressure, and a dilated fundus photography.

The following are the steps to complete medical clearance to work with lasers:

- 1) Go to <http://www.uhs.wisc.edu/> and log into your MyUHS account.\
- 2) Select the "Messages" tab and create a new message.
Student access in Messages > Send new message>I am a student>I am a student taking a class or working in a job that requires UHS OCCUPATIONAL MEDICINE SERVICES (eg. Respirator or Animal Contact questionnaires and forms)>OM Laster Operator Questionnaire
Employee access in Messages > Send new message>I am a UW Employee, Affiliate or Contract Worker>OM Laster Operator Questionnaire
- 3) Complete the "OM Laser Operator Questionnaire" and click submit.
- 4) An Occupational Medicine Nurse will review your questionnaire and contact you via phone call to make a baseline screening appointment.
- 5) At UHS, an Occupational Medicine Nurse will perform a baseline exam with you. This exam will begin with a review of the Laser Operator Screening Form. Then, you will be tested for visual acuity of your near and far vision. The nurse will also check for Macular Degeneration and color blindness. These exams are required as a baseline screening and after any laser-related injuries.
- 6) If your examination results are normal, then you will be cleared to work with lasers and no further action is needed. The UHS Occupational Medicine Clinic will send your laser medical clearance to you, your supervisor or safety coordinator and the Office of Radiation Safety (ORS). The ORS will maintain a record of all individuals completing the Medical Clearance for Laser 3b

or 4 work. A follow-up examination is only required in the case of an injury or if you would choose to have a follow-up exam upon conclusion of your Laser work.

- 7) If your examination results are abnormal, the UHS Occupational Medicine Nurse will contact Davis-Duehr-Dean Healthcare Clinics to schedule a "UW Laser exam" for you. Please bring your "UW Laser Operator Screening Form" results to this appointment.
- 8) After your appointment at Davis-Duehr-Dean Healthcare Clinics, the provider will send your results to the UHS Occupational Medicine Clinic. Billing for your appointment at Davis-Duehr-Dean Healthcare Clinics will be sent to UHS. At this time there is no charge to you or your department.
- 9) After receiving your results from Davis-Duehr-Dean Healthcare Clinics, the Occupational Medicine Clinic will be clear you to work with lasers and no further action is needed. The UHS Occupational Medicine Clinic will send your laser medical clearance to you, your supervisor or safety coordinator and the UW Radiation Safety Officer. A follow-up examination is only required in the case of an injury or if you would choose to have a follow-up exam upon conclusion of your Laser work.

Additional Helpful Information

The principal investigator, supervisor or safety coordinator can contact the UW Environmental Health and Safety- Radiation Safety (EHS-RS) group at 265-5000 for advice and/or assistance in procurement of other Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Laser Safety trainings. An EHS-RS staff member can then assist the group in completing a PPE assessment and make recommendations as to which PPE would be most beneficial to control workplace hazards.