

PART ONE
SECTION 6
CASH HANDLING

(Revised October 1998)

6 CASH HANDLING

6.1 CASH HANDLING

The issue of cash handling at the University is quite important in terms so of personal safety, management procedures and the implication on physical spatial design. In order to review these and other items, a special task force on cash handling was formed and it submitted its final report in August 1994. This report deals with fairly sensitive issues regarding policy and procedures, therefore it is not attached in the appendix.

The report does deal with physical space and storage issues and the specific recommendation dealing with these items are listed below.

D. Physical Space and Storage Issues

Of the questionnaire respondents who identified personal safety concerns 33% associated those concerns with the storage facilities of cash; 19% associated those concerns with the physical space and storage facilities in their office or building. It is important that the physical space and storage facilities in the cash handling areas appropriately reflect the security requirements of this activity. Particular attention should be paid to areas of the campus where there is a large accumulation of cash or where cash transactions take place in the public setting.

Recommendation D.1

That each campus identify high risk areas in respect of cash collection to ensure that the physical space and storage facilities are appropriate.

Many of the questionnaires identified concerns from staff about their exposure during cash collection and deposit preparation activities. In some areas these activities are carried out when the person is alone in the office or in the evening hours when there are few other staff in the area. In some areas cash collection takes place in public areas or in areas where people are walking through to reach another area. Sometimes cash is left sitting exposed on a desk while the staff member helps someone at a counter.

Recommendation D.2

That access to cash handling and storage areas be physically restricted to authorized personnel. Deposit preparation areas should be physically and visually restricted. Physical arrangements should ensure that students or the general public do not have access to the immediate or surrounding area.

Improvements in the physical facilities may range from simple items, such as the installation of screens to block sight lines to a desk, to more costly renovations, for example to redirect traffic flow. During a period of budget constraints, physical improvements to the workplace are often not given a high priority in the competition for budget dollars. The Task Force feels that improvements in the physical facilities of cash handling areas are not frivolous and must continue to be made for the safety and the security of the University cash assets.

Recommendation D.3

That a fund be established on each campus and designated for assisting departments in renovation areas to meet the physical and safety standards for cash handling.

The questionnaire requested information on the amount of money stored overnight and whether or not it was locked. 61% of the responding depositors indicated that, on average, they stored \$500 or less; 39% stored greater than \$500 (during peak periods this increase to 47%). Although 89% stated that they lock their cash receipts at night, the Task Force was concerned about the 11% who did not lock their cash at night, and particular, there were four respondents in the 'large depositor' category who did not lock up at night. The members felt that there was a dual responsibility in this matter; that the department should provide proper facilities for the storage of money and the staff members must established good cash handling procedures for locking up all cash at night.

Recommendation D.4

That in all areas handling cash there should be a location for secure, locked storage of cash. Areas accumulating large amounts (greater than \$1,000 in coins and bills) between deposits should have access to a safe or vault.

Review of the facilities in cash handling areas must be an on-going operation and should become part of the regular process of the University. People tend to think of buildings or sections of building in terms of their primary use (eg. library, academic offices etc.). It must be remembered that cash handling of some kind occurs in virtually every office of the University and the facilities required for these activities must be taken into consideration when designing, renovating or reviewing physical spaces.

Recommendation D.5

That the Campus Safety Audit procedure be amended to include review of any area of the campuses in which cash is collected, counted or stored.

Recommendation D.6

That the University of Toronto Design Standards be amended to include standards for design of all areas in which cash transactions occur or may occur in future, and that all capital projects (new buildings, major renovations) be reviewed at the design and drawing stage for adequacy and appropriateness in cash handling areas.

The final recommendation of the Task Force in this section is to ensure that staff are aware of the avenues available to assist them in addressing their concerns about the physical facilities of their workplace.

Recommendation D.7

That staff members who deem their work area inadequate for safe cash handling activities should, according to normal procedures, report deficiencies to their supervisor. If the situation is not resolved to their satisfaction, they may report deficiencies to the appropriate office for review:

St. George campus Facilities & Services Property

Scarborough campus Advisory Committee on Campus Safety and Security

Erindale campus Advisory Committee on Personal Safety

END OF REPORT

As noted in the preceding 2 pages, the Task Force makes 9 specific recommendations regarding physical space and storage issues. It notes that the University Design Standards be amended to include Standards for design of all areas in which cash transactions occur.

The following are more detail standards for areas in which cash transactions occur.

- In areas where collection of money will take place some method of achieving separation between the staff and public must be provided such as a counter.
- A line of sight and the possibility of eye contact must be provided and maintained between the area of cash handling and surrounding offices.
- The location where the cash is counted, stored and sorted should not be visible to the general public.
- Wherever money is handled, provision should be made for proper storage of money and receipts in safe or drop box.
- In cases where the receipts will be picked up by armed guards, the method and the route they will take must be considered and provided for. The route the guards would take should be short, specific and should not go through high volume, high activity areas such as cafeterias etc.