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# Electric Staple Gun Trigger Discipline and Safe Operation

## 1.0 Objective & Intent

This SOP establishes mandatory trigger discipline and safe handling protocols for all electric staple guns used in cabinet and millwork manufacturing. The primary objective is to eliminate the risk of accidental discharge, which can cause severe puncture wounds, eye injuries, and lacerations to the operator and nearby personnel. This procedure aligns with WorkSafeBC OHS Regulation Part 12 (Tools, Machinery and Equipment) and the manufacturer's safety guidelines.

## 2.0 Operational Scope

This procedure applies to all employees, including cabinet assemblers, millwork finishers, maintenance technicians, and supervisors, who operate or are in the vicinity of electric staple guns. It covers all electric staple gun models used in the facility, including corded and cordless variants. This SOP is enforceable in all production areas, assembly stations, and on-site installation locations.

## 3.0 Hazard Identification & Mandatory PPE

- Accidental Discharge: Trigger pulled unintentionally due to improper grip, holstering, or handling, causing staple to fire into body parts or bystanders.
- Ricochet: Staple deflecting off hard surfaces or metal fasteners, striking the operator or nearby workers.
- Jaw or Feed Mechanism Malfunction: Jammed staple causing sudden release of energy or flying debris when clearing.
- Electrical Shock: Damaged power cord or wet conditions leading to electrocution risk.
- Repetitive Strain Injury: Prolonged trigger use without ergonomic breaks causing hand and wrist fatigue.
- CSA-Approved Safety Glasses with side shields (mandatory at all times when tool is connected or battery inserted)
- Cut-Resistant Gloves (ANSI A4 level or higher) to protect against staple punctures
- Hearing Protection (earplugs or earmuffs) if noise levels exceed 85 dBA during operation
- Steel-Toed Safety Boots (CSA Grade 1) to protect feet from dropped tools or staples
- Long-Sleeve Work Shirt to reduce skin exposure to accidental discharges

## 4.0 Required Safety Equipment & Tools

- Electric Staple Gun (manufacturer-approved, with functional trigger guard and safety contact tip)
- Lockout/Tagout (LOTO) Kit with personal lock and hasp for maintenance or clearing jams
- Staple Removal Tool or flathead screwdriver for clearing jams
- Approved staples (correct gauge and length per manufacturer specifications)
- Workstation with non-slip surface and adequate lighting
- First Aid Kit with eye wash station nearby
- Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) protected power outlet for corded tools

## 5.0 Step-by-Step Safety Procedure

1. Inspect the electric staple gun before each use. Verify the trigger guard is intact, the safety contact tip moves freely and returns to the forward position, the power cord (if corded) is free of cuts or exposed wires, and the battery (if cordless) is securely latched. Do not use if any defect is found.
2. Ensure the work area is clear of other personnel and obstructions. Establish a minimum 3-metre safety zone around the operator. Communicate with nearby workers using a verbal warning such as 'Stapling in progress' before beginning.
3. Load staples only when the tool is disconnected from the power source (unplug corded tools, remove battery from cordless tools). Point the tool away from your body and others during loading. Confirm the staple strip is seated correctly and the magazine is closed securely.
4. Maintain a firm, two-handed grip on the tool at all times during operation. Keep your trigger finger outside the trigger guard and resting on the tool body until you are ready to fire. Never carry the tool with your finger on the trigger.
5. Position the tool so the safety contact tip is firmly pressed against the workpiece before engaging the trigger. Fire the staple only when the tool is perpendicular to the surface and your free hand is clear of the firing path. Do not fire into free air or at any surface that could cause a ricochet.
6. Release the trigger immediately after each staple is fired. Remove your finger from the trigger guard and return it to the resting position on the tool body. Do not 'ride' the trigger or keep it depressed between firings.
7. If a staple jams, immediately disconnect the tool from its power source (unplug or remove battery). Use the LOTO kit to lock out the tool if it is part of a shared workstation. Clear the jam using the staple removal tool or screwdriver, keeping the tool pointed away from your body. Never use your fingers to clear a jam.
8. When pausing work for more than 30 seconds, set the tool down on a stable, non-slip surface with the muzzle pointed away from high-traffic areas. When moving between workstations, carry the tool by the handle with the muzzle pointed downward and away from your body. For cordless tools, remove the battery during extended breaks.
9. At the end of the shift or when the tool is no longer needed, disconnect the power source (unplug corded tools, remove battery from cordless tools). Empty the magazine of unused staples and store the tool in a designated locked cabinet or tool crib. Report any malfunctions or damage to the supervisor immediately.
10. Complete the daily tool inspection log and report any incidents, near misses, or unsafe conditions to the safety officer. Participate in monthly trigger discipline refresher training as required by the facility safety program.

**Regulatory Disclaimer:** This document is a generic safety template provided for educational and informational purposes only. It does not constitute professional engineering, legal, or regulatory compliance advice. The end-user assumes all liability for validating all safety protocols against specific machinery manufacturer manuals and local occupational health and safety regulations (e.g., WorkSafeBC, CSA standards) before deployment.