



Workplace Safety Planning Guide

A guide to building your occupational
health and safety program



Workers' Safety
& Compensation Commission

Արհեստագործական
Վերականգնողական
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08/2026



If you would like this information in another official language, call us.

English

Si vous voulez ces informations dans une autre langue officielle, contactez-nous.

French

CᵇdΔΠΓ^bḡΔ^cΛϚLJ&R^cΔδᵇΠC^{-b}/LJΠᵇ,▷ℳ^cΠ^aδ^c▷ᶜḡc^aε^bJΠ^c.

Inuktitut

Hapkua titiqqat pijumagupkit Inuinnaqtun, uvaptinnut hivajarlutit.

Inuinnaqtun

Kīspin ki nitawihitīn ē nīhīyawihk ōma ācimōwin, tipwāsinān.

Cree

Tłıchq̓ yatı k'èè. Dı wegodı newq̓ dè, gots' o gonede.

Tłichq

ʔerihʔi's Dēne Sųlíné yatı t'a huts'elkēr xa beyáyatı theʔa ʔat'e, nuwe ts'ēn yóltı.

Chipewyan

Edi gondi dehghá got'je zhatié k'ée edat'éh enahddhë nide naxets'ë edahíí.

South Slavey

K'áhshó got'íne xədə k'é hederı ɓedɣhtl'é yerınıwé nídé dúle.

North Slavey

Jii gwandak izhii ginjìk vat'atr'ijahch'uu zhit yinoththan jì', diits'àt ginohkhìi.

Gwich'in

Uvanittuaq ilitchurisukupku Inuvialuktun, ququagluta.

Inuvialuktun

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What is the Workers' Safety & Compensation Commission?

The Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission (WSCC) promotes workplace health and safety while providing no fault insurance to employers, and care for injured workers.

Workers' compensation provides workers with wage replacement benefits and the services they need for an early and safe return to work. Employers fund the system and

share the cost of workplace injuries by contributing to the Workers' Protection Fund.

All employers are legally required to maintain a safe workplace by meeting the standards set out in the Safety Act and Occupational Health and Safety Regulations (OHS Regulations).

What is a Health and Safety Program?

An Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) program is made up of plans, procedures, reporting tools, and recordkeeping. Once a company has one in place, it ensures operations are carried out in the most safe, healthy way possible.

While workplace health and safety planning is vital for keeping yourself and your workers safe, it is also simply good business practice for efficiency and reducing claims costs.

You know your workplace best!

Every workplace has different needs for safety planning – there is no “one size fits all” approach.

No matter what form it takes, your OHS program should create and maintain a recorded action plan for how you will:

- Define safety responsibilities.
- Identify and control hazards.
- Orient and train workers.
- Investigate workplace incidents, injuries, and unsafe work refusals.
- Monitor health and safety issues and activities in your business.

What should be in your OHS program?

There are certain items all workplace safety programs are required to have by law, including documenting inspections, safe work procedures, and hazard assessments.

What you need for the rest of your safety program is determined by the number of employees at your workplace (under or over 20 employees), and the risk level associated with typical jobs workers will be doing. This is why it's important to understand the hazards workers may be

exposed to at your workplace, as it will influence how you set up your safety program.

This guide outlines the key components of an effective OHS program, what is required to be compliant with health and safety regulations, and sample templates and resources to help you build your own program.

Workplace Safety: Roles and Responsibilities

While health and safety in the workplace is everyone's responsibility, some roles have legal responsibilities attached to them. Below is a summary of these responsibilities.

Employer: It is your responsibility to establish and maintain an effective OHS program. By doing the following, you will meet your regulatory responsibilities:

- Designate an OHS Representative (under 20 employees), or establish a Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (over 20 employees).
- Provide workers with the information and training necessary to safely complete their work tasks.
- If you hire contractors, they must be informed of your OHS program, and actively participate in it. Note that contractors may have their own health and safety procedures that they must also follow (i.e., heavy equipment operators).
- Provide a minimum of 30 days notice to the WSCC of **any high hazard work**.
- Immediately notify the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission (WSCC) if there is a significant accident at your workplace.

Supervisor: Supervisors must be aware of and communicate all hazards and their controls to workers, and train workers on safe work procedures. More specifically, supervisors must:

- Complete required training for supervisors – the Supervisor OHS Familiarization course. Find WSCC-approved courses and providers on our website (wscc.nt.ca or wscc.nu.ca).
- Ensure the health and safety of all workers that are under your direct supervision.
 - Collaborate with workers to identify work hazards and appropriate controls for them.
 - Supply workers with the correct PPE to safely do their job.
 - Ensure workers know their rights and are encouraged to exercise them:
 - **The right to know** about workplace hazards and how to handle them.
 - **The right to participate** in health and safety processes and solutions at work.
 - **The right to refuse** unsafe work believed to be dangerous to themselves or co-workers without fear of punishment.
- Investigate unsafe work refusals, and any reports of unsafe conditions – take immediate corrective action.

Workers: Workers play a vital role in workplace safety. They are often the first to notice hazards and may have practical ideas to control them. Workers must:

- Work with supervisors to identify hazards and the appropriate controls for them.
- Know and follow all safety rules and work procedures, including wearing required personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Correct (if it's safe to do) and immediately report any incidents or new hazards to their supervisor.
- Seek medical attention if you are injured, and report your injury to your employer and to the WSCC.

Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission (WSCC): The WSCC provides health and safety information to employers, workers, and the public, and works directly with employers to improve their health and safety programs.

WSCC Safety Officers conduct worksite inspections to make sure employers are following the health and safety standards set by the Safety Acts, including having an up-to-date Safety Program. Safety Officers may issue directions to correct an unsafe situation, or a stop work order if there is immediate danger. They respond to concerns about unsafe workplaces and investigate serious work-related incidents.

If a workplace injury or illness occurs, the WSCC assists workers through the claims process, including helping to book medical appointments for the injured worker. The WSCC also helps health care providers and employers with their roles in the claims and Return to Work process.

Worker Participation

All employers must designate either an OHS Representative or establish a Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOHSC). These roles and functions help the employer address health and safety concerns, develop training and procedures, and monitor worksite safety initiatives.

Workplaces with 1-19 Employees: OHS Representative

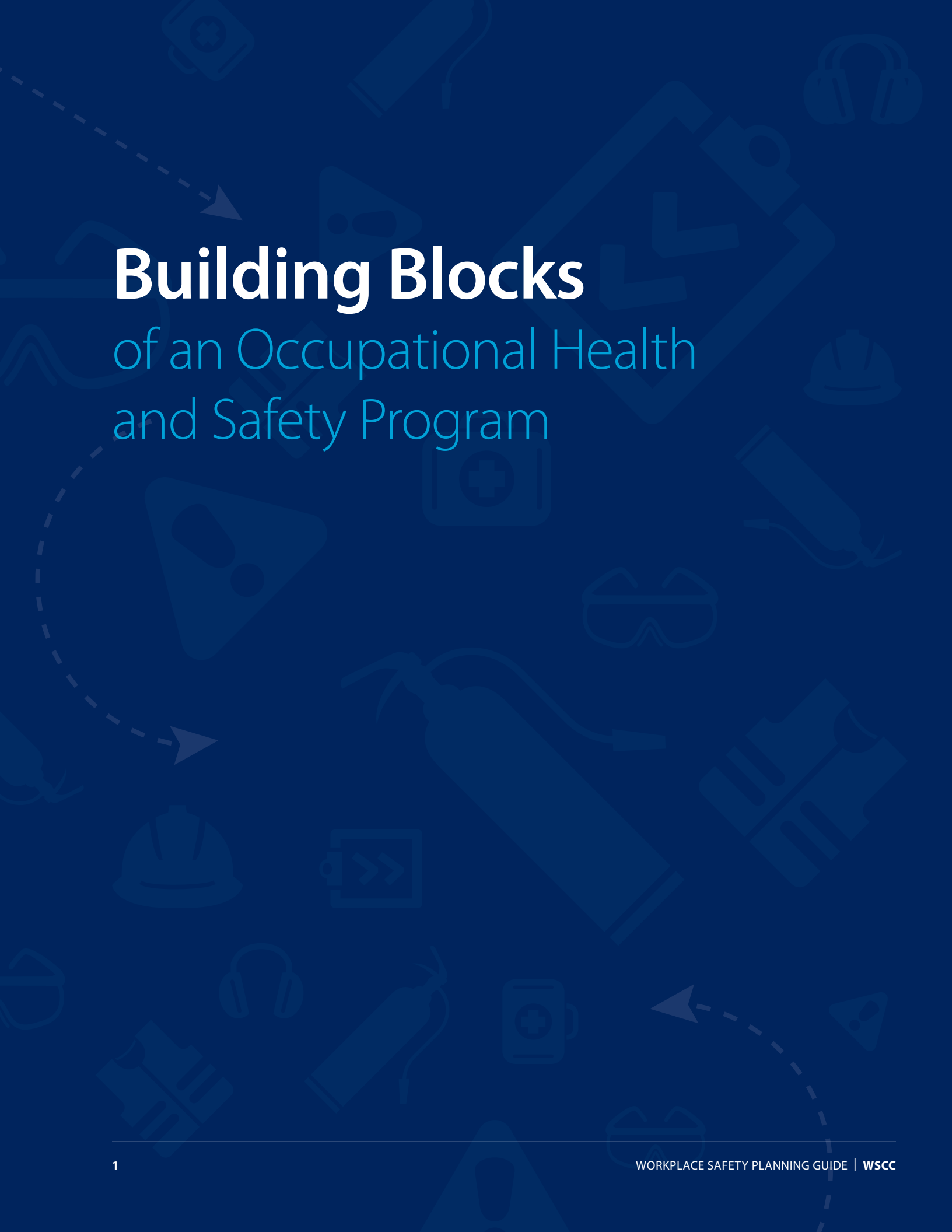
An OHS Representative can be designated by the employer or decided on by fellow employees. Their role is to act as a liaison between workers and the employer on health and safety matters. Their duties include:

- Participate in identifying and controlling health and safety hazards.
- Promote the health and safety of all workers.
- Perform any other duties related to health and safety as required.

Workplaces with 20 or More Employees: Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committee (JOHSC)

The JOHSC collaboratively addresses health and safety issues by holding regular meetings, participating in hazard assessments, investigating incidents, conducting workplace inspections, and making recommendations to improve workplace health and safety. Their duties include, but are not limited to:

- Participate in identifying and controlling health and safety hazards.
- Investigate unsafe work refusals.
- Promote the health and safety of workers.
- Perform any other duties specified in this Safety Act or OHS Regulations.
- Maintain documentation, such as: committee meeting minutes, hazard assessments, investigation reports, and investigations.



Building Blocks

of an Occupational Health
and Safety Program

Commitment to Health and Safety – OHS Policy Statement

A commitment to health and safety reflects your business's commitment to keeping workers safe at the worksite. It explains that everyone on site will follow safe work practices and procedures and comply with safety legislation. This statement is part of an OHS policy.

Your OHS Policy Statement should include:

- That your business is committed to protecting and maintaining the health and safety of workers;
- An overview of the OHS responsibilities of the owner, supervisors, workers, suppliers, contractors, and visitors; and
- An outline of how health and safety will be communicated and implemented in your workplace.

Required Documentation

- **Work Sites with Over 20 Employees:**
 - A written statement that includes health and safety roles and responsibilities that is posted in a visible location and signed and dated by the employer.

Available Resources

- Sample Occupational Health and Safety Policy

Regulation Reference

- **OHS Regulations:** Section 21, Part 2

Sample Occupational Health and Safety Policy

Business name and commitment to health and safety.

Review responsibilities at your workplace.

When you complete the policy, print and sign it, then post it in the workplace where workers can access it.

[YOUR COMPANY NAME] Safety Policy

[Your Company Name] is committed to a healthy and safe work environment for our employees, contractors, and customers/visitors. We believe workplace injuries and illnesses are preventable and work toward eliminating them entirely.

All employees are responsible and accountable for health and safety. Working safely according to occupational health and safety (OHS) policies, and safe work procedures is part of every job. Our goal is that everyone at *[Your Company Name]* always follows safe work practices to prevent injury and illness.

As the owner and supervisor of *[your company name]* I will ensure:

- hazards are identified and hazard controls are put in place;
- employees have proper equipment and training to perform work safely; and
- our health and safety program is regularly reviewed and up to date.

Workers of *[your company name]* will:

- follow safe work procedures;
- ensure everyone is working safely; and
- report any unsafe work or conditions to their supervisor or manager.

Contractors working for *[your company name]* will:

- comply with the Safety Act and the OHS Regulations; and
- actively participate in our health and safety program as required.

As the owner of *[Your Company Name]* it is my responsibility to manage health and safety, but workers at every level must be familiar with the Safety Act and the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations that relate to our work. I trust that all employees will join me in working to maintain the health and safety of our workplace.

Owner/President, *[Your Company Name]*

Supervisor, *[Your Company Name]*

Date _____

Date _____

The safety information in this policy does not precede OHS legislation.
This policy will be reviewed annually, or whenever there are operational changes.

Worker Orientation and OHS Training

Worker Orientation

Workers that are new to your workplace or returning after a long absence, who have changed where they work, or changed the tasks they complete must all receive a safety orientation. The orientation must include a review of:

- Emergency procedures that everyone needs to follow in the event of a fire or other emergency,
- Location of fire alarms, evacuation plan, fire escapes, and muster point(s)
- Where the first aid station and other first aid equipment (e.g., eye wash) is
- Any restricted areas of the worksite
- Precautions workers must take to protect themselves from exposure to hazardous substances.
- Review their health and safety responsibilities as workers, as well as all safety policies, and programs your workplace may have.

Training

All workplaces will require specific OHS training to meet their legislative requirements.

SUPERVISORS: Supervisors must take a WSCC-approved Supervisor OHS Familiarization Course.

This course provides managers and supervisors with the information they need to understand their responsibilities, to prevent workplace injuries and illnesses, and to develop a safety culture in the workplace. See the WSCC's website to locate approved course provider list.

FIRST AID: First aid training requirements depend upon the number of workers and the type of work they are doing. Refer to [Part Five: First Aid in the OHS Regulations](#) to identify what first aid equipment, supplies, and attendants your worksite requires.

HAZARDOUS PRODUCTS: Employers must provide training to workers who work with, or could be exposed to, hazardous products. This worksite-specific training must include:

- Correctly reading hazardous product labels, including safety data sheets.
- How to safely use, handle, store, and dispose of each hazardous product at the worksite.
- Procedures that workers need to follow if a hazardous product is released or spilled at the worksite.
- Procedures that workers need to follow in the case of a worksite emergency that involves hazardous products at the worksite.

Workers can learn general information about labels, safety data sheets, and handling hazardous products by taking a Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) online course. However, employers must still provide training about specific hazardous products used at their work site.

Required Documentation

- **All Work Sites**
 - Training Records: Training certificates that indicate when the training was completed, and if a recertification or refresher is required.

Available Resources

- Sample Employee Training Record Template
- Worker Orientation Checklist

Regulatory Reference

OHS Regulations: Sections 12 (c), 16(c), 18, 54 – 67, and 322 – 338

Sample Employee Training Record

Employee Name:		
Job Title:	Date of Hire:	
Name of Course/Training Program	Date Completed	Date of Expiry

Worker Orientation Checklist

Worker Name:	Postition:
Trainer/Supervisor:	Date:

1. General Orientation

- ☐ Full tour of the work site (entrances, exits, facilities, lunch areas, etc.)
- ☐ Aware of who their supervisor is and how to contact them
- ☐ Understands their rights (Right to Know, Right to Participate, Right to Refuse Unsafe Work)
- ☐ Informed about the company's Health and Safety Policy
- ☐ Understands how to report hazards, unsafe conditions, or near misses
- ☐ Knows the name(s) of the Health and Safety Committee or Representative
- ☐ Understands the nature of their role and their main job duties

2. Emergency Preparedness

- ☐ Reviewed work site emergency procedures (fire/evacuation, medical emergency, spills, etc.)
- ☐ Shown emergency exits, muster points, and evacuation routes
- ☐ Shown how to contact emergency services
- ☐ Understands what to do in the event of an incident or injury
- ☐ Identified alarm systems and functions

3. First Aid

- ☐ Shown the location of first aid kits, first aid stations, and equipment (eye wash station, for example)
- ☐ Informed of who the designated workplace first aiders are
- ☐ Knows where the first aid logbook and injury report forms are kept
- ☐ Understands the incident reporting process

4. Restricted or Controlled Areas

- ☐ Shown all restricted areas (e.g., electrical rooms, confined spaces, mechanical areas)
- ☐ Knows which areas require personal protective equipment (PPE) to be worn, and has been fit-tested for required PPE
- ☐ Knows about site visitor or contractor control procedures, if applicable

5. Hazardous Substances

- ☐ Reviewed Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS)
- ☐ Instructed on safe handling, storage, and disposal of hazardous substances
- ☐ Shown where Safety Data Sheets (SDS) are located
- ☐ Reviewed required PPE and how to use it properly
- ☐ Knows how to label containers and recognize hazard symbols

6. Worksite Procedures, Plans, and Policies

- ☐ Reviewed company's Safe Work Practices and Procedures relevant to their job tasks
- ☐ Reviewed site-specific policies (examples: drug/alcohol use, fit for duty, workplace harassment)
- ☐ Informed of lockout/tagout, confined space, and fall protection procedures (if applicable)
- ☐ Knows where to find Occupational Health and Safety documents, policies, and forms

Worker Acknowledgement:

I have received orientation and understand the safety requirements, policies, and procedures related to my work and this work site.

Worker Signature:

Date:

Trainer/Supervisor Signature:

Date:

Hazard Recognition: Assessment and Control

A **hazard assessment** is the process that supervisors and workers use to identify and control workplace hazards. Workers and supervisors should assess hazards together before beginning a new task, working at a new job site, or if the work environment changes for any reason (e.g. seasonal change, new equipment, new procedures).

- **Hazard:** A situation, thing, or condition that may cause an injury, illness, or damage to equipment.
- **Hazard Control:** The action workers and employers take to eliminate or reduce the chance that a hazard will cause harm in the workplace.

Steps of a Hazard Assessment

1. **Identify Hazards:** You can identify hazards by conducting walk-through inspections of the worksite, reviewing previous incident reports, talking with workers, conducting hazard assessments, and reviewing work processes.
2. **Control Hazards:** After you have identified the hazards, discuss the best ways to eliminate the hazard or reduce these risks with your work team. This could involve different strategies depending on the nature of the hazard.
3. **Follow-up Action:** Determine the next steps after you implement hazard controls. You may:
 - Continue with the task if the hazards are controlled.
 - Modify the work environment and reassess the risks.
 - Change how the task is performed and reassess the risks.
 - Stop the job and inform the supervisor that hazards cannot be managed.
4. **Sign-off:** Workers and the supervisor should sign the assessment to confirm that everyone agrees with the identified hazards and controls.

Required Documentation

- **Work Sites with Over 20 Employees**
 - **Hazard Assessment Reports:** Employers must document the results of hazard assessments conducted in the workplace. These reports should outline the hazards identified, and the control measures that will mitigate risks.

Available Resources

- Hazard Assessment Sample Template

Regulatory Reference

- **OHS Regulations:** Sections 12, 13, 16 (1)(b)

Example Hazard Assessment Template

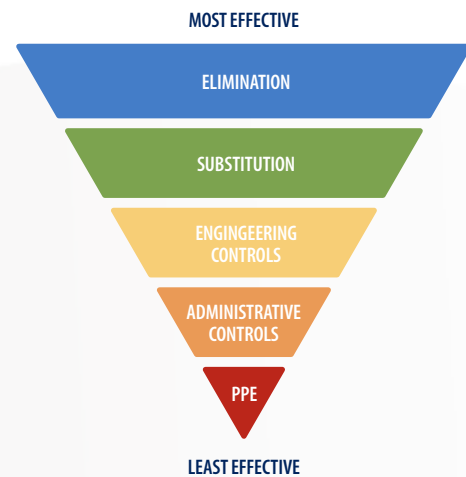
Date			Worksite	
Task/Job				
Step 1: Identify the Hazard Write down anything you spot that may be dangerous, or situations that could cause harm to someone.		Step 2: Control the Hazard Talk about the best way(s) to remove or reduce the chance of harm. (see next page for how to control hazards)		
Step 3: Confirm Assessment		Are all hazards controlled? ☐ Yes. Share the information with your team. ☐ No. Contact your supervisor to discuss the task.		
Step 4: Workers and Supervisor sign the assessment Supervisor and all workers involved in the assessment should sign and date below.				
Supervisor Name		Signature		Date
Worker Name(s)		Signature(s)		Date

Controlling Hazards – Hierarchy of Controls

The hierarchy of controls is a step-by-step method to eliminate or reduce hazards in the workplace.

Always start at the top of the inverted pyramid.

These are the best, most effective methods for controlling hazards and supervisors and workers should consider them first.



Eliminate the Hazard	Eliminating or removing a hazard is the most effective control. Simply remove the hazard, unsafe task, condition, equipment, or chemical from the worksite.
Substitute for Something Safer	Switch a dangerous work method, substance, tool, or piece of equipment for a safer option. Examples: Assign a worker who has been trained instead of an untrained worker, use water-based paint instead of solvent-based paint, or switch to safety goggles instead of safety glasses.
Engineer a Control	Engineering controls are methods built into the design of a worksite, equipment, or process to minimize, eliminate, or contain the hazard. An engineering control will prevent the hazard from contacting the worker. Examples: Build guards, barriers to prevent access to dangerous conditions, install mechanical lifting devices, paint with a brush instead of spray painting, or increase ventilation for certain jobs.
Administrative Controls	These controls will provide an acceptable way to work around a hazard by ensuring workers conduct jobs and tasks in a way that minimizes the hazard's impact on workers or equipment. Administrative controls are usually implemented with other control measures. Examples: Providing training for using and inspecting PPE, or safe operating procedures for equipment.
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	PPE is a critical part of a health and safety program and refers to anything workers wear to help protect them from a hazard. Workers must wear PPE correctly to limit their exposure to the hazard. Examples of PPE: Safety goggles for eye protection, gloves for reducing vibration, ear plugs for loud environments, or steel-toed boots in construction areas.

Emergency Response Planning

Site-specific emergency response planning is vital to ensure every person in the workplace understands what they must do in case of an emergency.

In general, everyone at your workplace must know:

- How to contact local emergency services: fire department, RCMP, ambulance.
- What steps to take in an emergency, including who sounds the alarm, designated evacuation routes, and where muster points are located.
- Where the emergency equipment is located and who is trained to use it.
- How to report emergencies and who to report to.

FIRE SAFETY PLAN: Every worksite must have and post a fire safety plan. This informs every person in the workplace what they must do in case of an emergency, including:

- The emergency procedures everyone must follow in case of a fire, and how to
 - Sound the fire alarm,
 - Notify the fire department, and
 - Evacuate, including any special provisions for workers with disabilities.
- The quantities, locations and storage methods of flammable substances present at the work site.
- How to control fire hazards.

Employers **must** hold a fire drill at least once each year and have a record of the date and time it occurred.

Required Documentation

- **Work Sites with Over 20 Employees**
 - A written, posted Emergency Response Plan including fire safety procedures.
- **Work Sites with Under 20 Employees**
 - A written fire safety plan that includes:
 - An evacuation plan with muster points.
 - A list of flammable substances at the work site.
 - Records of fire drills.
 - A list of workers who may need special assistance when evacuating.

Available Resources

- Emergency Response Plan Template Example

Regulatory Reference

- **OHS Regulations:** Section 394

Example Emergency Response Plan

EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS		
Fire:		Police:
Ambulance:		Property Owner:
Other: (e.g. poison control)		Other: (e.g. building security)
Work Site Address:		
Work Site Contact Person:		
Emergency Type (Fire, chemical exposure, bomb threat, etc.)		
Alarm Type (Fire alarm, whistle, email notification, etc.)		
Procedure Type (Evacuation, shelter in place)		
Procedure List the steps everyone at the work site must follow. If necessary, assign the steps, such as who sounds the alarm.	1.	
	2.	
	3.	
	4.	
	5.	
	6.	
	7.	
	8.	
	9.	
	10.	
Emergency Response Roles	Role (i.e., First-aider, muster point captain, escort for workers with mobility issues)	Name
Any other considerations (i.e., flammable or explosive products on site)		
Attach a floor plan of the work site that shows where to find:	• Emergency alarms • Firefighting equipment (extinguishers, fire blanket, etc) • First Aid Kits and AEDs (automatic defibrillators)	• Evacuation Routes and Muster Points • Location of Flammable/Explosive Products

Work Site Inspections

Performing regular inspections of your work site is a proactive way to determine if any unsafe work procedures or working conditions exist before an incident happens.

Inspections are a standard part of maintaining workplace health and safety, occur on a regular basis, and are performed by a specific person or position. Each inspection should include the following:

- An examination of facilities, procedures and logbooks (maintenance logs, vehicle pre-trip logs).
- A written report to the employer.

Required Documentation

- **All Work Sites**
 - Inspection Reports from the designated inspector, OHS Representative, or JOHS Committee

Available Resources

- Sample Inspection Report

Regulatory Reference

- **OHS Regulations:** Sections 21(2)(f) 27, 49

Sample Inspection Report

WEEKLY/ MONTHLY/ BIMONTHLY INSPECTION			
Completed by:		Site:	
Accompanied by:		Date:	Last Inspection:
Items/Topics Inspected	Comments	Area	Actions Taken/ Recommended Actions
Housekeeping			
Storage			
PPE			
Ladders			
Guardrails			
Scaffolds			
Fire protection			
Electrical			
Stairs			
Public protection			
Lighting			
Machine guards			
Material handling			
Ventilation			
Elevators			
Floor/roof openings			

Incident Investigating and Reporting

If an incident happens at your workplace, it is important to investigate what caused it. The investigation will help you take corrective actions to prevent a similar incident from happening again.

After an incident happens, workers need to report it to the employer. The employer may need to report the incident to the WSCC.

What is an “Incident”? When it comes to Occupational Health and Safety, an incident is something that happened during work or because of a work task, which resulted in, or could have resulted in, any of the following:

- an injury
- an illness
- dangerous occurrence
- a death
- significant damage to equipment or worksite building

If an incident happens, workers who were involved or witnessed it must immediately report the incident to their supervisor – even if no one is injured. Reporting and investigating “near miss” incidents helps to improve safety planning and can help prevent future incidents.

NOTE: If the incident has caused serious bodily injury, a dangerous occurrence, or a fatality, you must report it to the WSCC as soon as possible. Call toll-free: 1-800-661-0792.

- **Accident causing serious bodily injury:** An incident at a work site that causes or could be expected to cause the death of an individual or requires an individual to be admitted to a hospital as an in-patient for a period of 24 hours or more.
- **Dangerous occurrence:** Any incident that does not result in but could have resulted in an accident that causes serious bodily injury (example: structural collapse, contact with electricity).

Incident Investigations

An investigation should begin as soon as possible after an incident has occurred. This is an opportunity for the investigation team to observe the conditions as they were at the time, prevent disturbance of evidence, and reach out to witnesses.

- The goal of the investigation is not to find fault or place blame.
- The investigation should identify what factors caused the incident and help identify controls to put in place so that a similar incident does not happen again.

Incident Investigation Reports

Incident reports are vital tools that help employers and supervisors track the incidents that occur at their workplace. Completing incident reports provides information about the incident (photos and descriptions) and contact information for the worker(s) involved in the incident.

Required Documentation

- **Incident resulting in an injury or illness:**
 - **Worker's Report of Injury:** When the injured worker is able, they must complete a **Worker's Report of Injury** (www.wsccl.nt.ca/claim-services/claim-workers/report-injury).
 - **Employer's Report of Incident:** Employer must submit an **Employer's Report of Incident** to the WSCC within three business days of the incident on *WSCC Connect* (<http://connect.wsccl.nt.ca>).
- **Accidents Causing Serious Bodily Injury or Dangerous Occurrences:**
 - **Verbal report:** Employers must call and report these types of incidents to the WSCC as soon as possible after confirming that the incident scene is safe and medical help is on the way. The employer or supervisor must call WSCC's toll-free Incident & Injury Reporting Line at 1-800-661-0792.
 - **Written report:** Employers must submit an **Employer's Report of Incident** to the WSCC within three business days on *WSCC Connect* (<http://connect.wsccl.nt.ca>).
 - **Incident Investigation:** The employer will coordinate an incident investigation. After the investigation, the employer will write an Incident Investigation Report.

Available Resources

- Sample Incident Investigation & Incident Report

Regulatory Reference

- **OHS Regulations:** Sections 8, 9, 28, 29, 30

Sample Incident Investigation & Incident Report

INCIDENT INVESTIGATION (To be completed by Supervisor or Investigation Team)			
Supervisor Name or Investigation Team Members' Names:			
Provide additional scene details. • Attach photos • Use diagrams		☐ Interview transcripts are attached. ☐ More information attached	
What might have contributed to the incident? (i.e., lack of training, environment, lack of housekeeping, etc.)		☐ More information attached.	
What steps should be taken so this does not happen again?		☐ More information attached.	
If this incident resulted in an <i>accident causing serious bodily injury or dangerous occurrence</i> , it must be reported to the WSCC Chief Safety Officer (1-800-661-0792) as soon as reasonably possible. Has this been done?			☐ N/A ☐ Yes ☐ No
Corrective Actions and/or Recommendations	Person or Party Responsible	Due Date	✓ when complete
Comments: ☐ More information attached			

INCIDENT REPORT (To be completed by Employee and/or Supervisor)

Date of Event:		Where did it happen? (address, building, floor, room number if applicable)	
Time of Event:			
Employee(s) involved:		Contact Info:	
Incident resulted in (check all that apply): ☐ No injury or property damage ☐ Property loss or damage ☐ Injury (complete a WSCC Worker Report of Injury)		☐ Vehicle accident ☐ Other:	
In your own words, describe what happened:			
Who was involved?			
Witness(es) name(s) and contact information (if applicable):		Incident was also reported to: ☐ RCMP ☐ Other:	
What may have contributed to the incident?			
What happened after the incident?	☐ Remained at work ☐ First Aid was administered ☐ Other: ☐ Missed work ☐ Medical treatment was required		
Does the Safety Program need to be updated? If yes, what is the update?			
Reported by:	Supervisor:		
Date Submitted:			
Keep this report for your records.			

Refusing Unsafe Work

All workers have the right to refuse work if they believe it could be dangerous to themselves or others. Workers cannot be disciplined or penalized for exercising this legally protected right.

If a worker feels that they cannot safely complete a task, or if they're unsure how to safely complete a task, **it is essential that they do not attempt that task until they feel safe to do so.**

As an Employer, you have a legal responsibility to take the concern seriously and respond right away.

These situations are often resolved collaboratively by assisting the Worker, providing training, or taking simple corrective actions. However, if after efforts to resolve the situation, the Worker still does not feel safe completing the task, the Worker must follow the steps of an official work refusal process. This involves:

- Bringing their concern to their Supervisor, Safety Representative, or Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOHSC).
- Working together to control the hazard the Worker identified as unsafe.
- Documenting the steps that were taken to control the hazard.

If after completing your workplace's official work refusal process the Worker still believes there is a safety concern, they can then report the unsafe situation through WSCC's **Report Unsafe Work page** on *WSCC Connect* (<https://connect.wscc.nt.ca/OH-S-e-Services/Unsafe-Work>).

What is Unsafe Work?

Unsafe work, as defined in the OHS Regulations and Safety Acts, is a situation that exposes a worker to "unusual danger". Often, this means unsafe work is a job-related risk that:

- Is outside of the Worker's regular work tasks, or
- Is related to work conditions that are so extreme or unsafe that workers could not continue to safely perform their job.

Basics of the Unsafe Work Refusal Process

- Employers and Supervisors must ensure that Workers understand their right to refuse unsafe work and the correct steps to follow to do so (refer to "Workplace Safety Roles and Responsibilities" on page vi of this Guide, and the steps outlined below).
- Ensure your workers understand how to report unsafe work to you.
- The work refusal process is intended to prevent injuries and identify workplace hazards.

Steps Employers must follow when a Worker reports unsafe work

Employers must understand the proper steps to follow for handling a report of unsafe work, and must communicate this to Workers. If a Worker has reason to believe a task that they have been assigned is unsafe, they must:

- **Step 1:** Stop work and report to their Supervisor.
- **Step 2:** An investigation begins immediately with the Worker, their Supervisor, and another worker.

- **Step 3:** The Worker chooses a witness to accompany the investigation.
 - Workers have the right to have a union representative, OHS team member, or a co-worker of their choosing present with them during the investigation.
- **Step 4:** The Supervisor must notify the Worker of the investigation results, and any steps taken to correct the danger.
 - Examples of correction steps could include:
 - updating work procedures
 - providing new training
 - having a safety talk to discuss the issue
 - moving a job to a different day or locations
- **Step 5:** If the Worker deems it is now safe to proceed with their work, they sign off on the corrective steps taken and return to work; or,
- **Step 6:** If the Worker believes the danger still exists, they must notify the WSCC to investigate further.

Contacting the WSCC is the last step in the escalation process for formal work refusals.
 Unsafe work refusals are often resolved by following the first six steps listed above.

Required Documentation

- If a Worker refuses unsafe work, **document Steps 1-6 from above**, including dates, descriptions of any corrective actions taken, and the agreement with the Worker that it has been resolved.
- If Steps 1-6 do not resolve the situation, contact the WSCC for assistance. A WSCC Safety Officer will request your documented efforts to remedy the situation.

Available Resources

- Unsafe Work Refusal Investigation Template

Regulatory Reference

- **OHS Regulations:** Sections 21, 2(i)
- **Safety Acts:** Section 13 (1-4)

Unsafe Work Refusal Investigation Template

Worker Name:		
Worker Role/Title:		
Name of Supervisor:		
Worksite Location:		
Date & Time of Work Refusal:		
Is this the first time you have identified this unsafe condition? ☐ Yes ☐ No (explain)		
INVESTIGATION TEAM MEMBERS		
Name	Position/Title	
WORKER'S STATEMENT		
Description of the Hazard (Describe the tool, equipment, or condition you believe is hazardous.)		
Reason for Refusal (Explain how this hazard makes your task unusually dangerous.)		

EMPLOYER/SUPERVISOR INVESTIGATION FINDINGS

- Hazard Assessment Checklist
 - ☐ Equipment/machinery malfunctioning?
 - ☐ Lack of required PPE or safety gear?
 - ☐ Insufficient worker training?
 - ☐ Environmental hazard (e.g., toxic fumes, extreme temperature, structural instability)?
- Investigation Notes (What did you discuss, test, or inspect during the site review?)
- Validity of Refusal
 - ☐ Valid (Unsafe condition/undue hazard identified)
 - ☐ Invalid (No unusual danger found)

Corrective Actions (List the specific steps you will take or have taken to eliminate the hazard before the worker returns to their task.)

OUTCOME & SIGNATURES

Worker Assessment:

- ☐ I agree that the hazard has been corrected and am returning to work.
- ☐ I still believe unusual danger exists. I will reach out to the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee to review this investigation.
- ☐ If the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee agrees the hazard was corrected, but I still believe there is danger, I will submit a Report of Unsafe Work to the WSCC for further investigation.

Worker Signature:

Date:

Supervisor or Employer Signature:

Date:

JOHSC Member or OHS Representative Signature:

Date:

Safe and Timely Return to Work

It is important to consider and plan for what you will do if an accident happens at your workplace that results in a worker being injured or off work for recovery. Research shows that helping injured workers get back to work as soon and as safely as possible increases their recovery outcomes. This, in turn, helps your workplace retain experienced, valued workers.

Remember: A worker may return to work before they are able to perform full duties by providing other suitable work.

A Return to Work program:

- Identifies the roles of the injured worker, employer, healthcare providers, and the WSCC in supporting the worker returning to work.
- States the procedure the employer will follow to assist injured or ill workers in getting back to work.
- How to identify work an injured or ill worker can safely perform while recovering.
 - This may involve working modified duties or fewer hours during recovery.

No matter what your Return to Work program looks like, regular, supportive communication with injured workers is very important throughout their recovery journey.

Documentation

- Return to Work programs and policy
- Individual Return to Work Plans for injured or ill workers

For more information on Return to Work planning, see our website at [wsc.nt.ca](https://www.wsc.nt.ca) or [wsc.nu.ca](https://www.wsc.nu.ca).

OHS Program Checklist

The OHS Regulations require that employers have a procedure to review and revise their OHS Programs at least once every three years. If the work environment or job tasks change, you may need to review your program more frequently.

PROGRAM COMPONENT	YES	NO
1. Do you have an OHS Policy? (<i>OHS Policy Statement</i>)		
2. Do you, your supervisors, workers, and contractors you hire know and understand their OHS responsibilities? (<i>Workplace Safety: Roles and Responsibilities</i>)		
3. Have you identified hazards at your workplace? (<i>Hazard Recognition: Assessment & Control</i>)		
4. Have you put hazard controls into place? (<i>Hazard Recognition: Assessment & Control</i>)		
5. Do your workers have the training and supervision to perform their jobs safely? (Have your supervisors taken Supervisor OHS Familiarization Training?) (<i>Worker Orientation & OHS Training</i>)		
6. If you have hazardous products at the work site, do workers know how to safely use, handle, and store them? (<i>Worker Orientation & OHS Training</i>)		
7. Do you regularly check, service, and maintain all workplace equipment and tools? (<i>Work Site Inspections</i>)		
8. Do you have:		
• Emergency procedures? (<i>Emergency Response Planning</i>)		
• First aid kits?		
• An injury reporting procedure?		
9. Do you have incident investigation and unsafe work refusal procedures in place? (<i>Incident Investigating & Reporting, Unsafe Work Refusal Process</i>)		
10. Do you maintain records and review your program regularly or at least every three years? (<i>OHS Policy Statement</i>)		
11. Do you have a safe and timely Return to Work program? (<i>Safe and Timely Return to Work</i>)		

WSCC | **wsc.nt.ca 1.800.661.0792**
wsc.nu.ca 1.877.404.4407