



# SAFETY BASICS

H&S HANDBOOK FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

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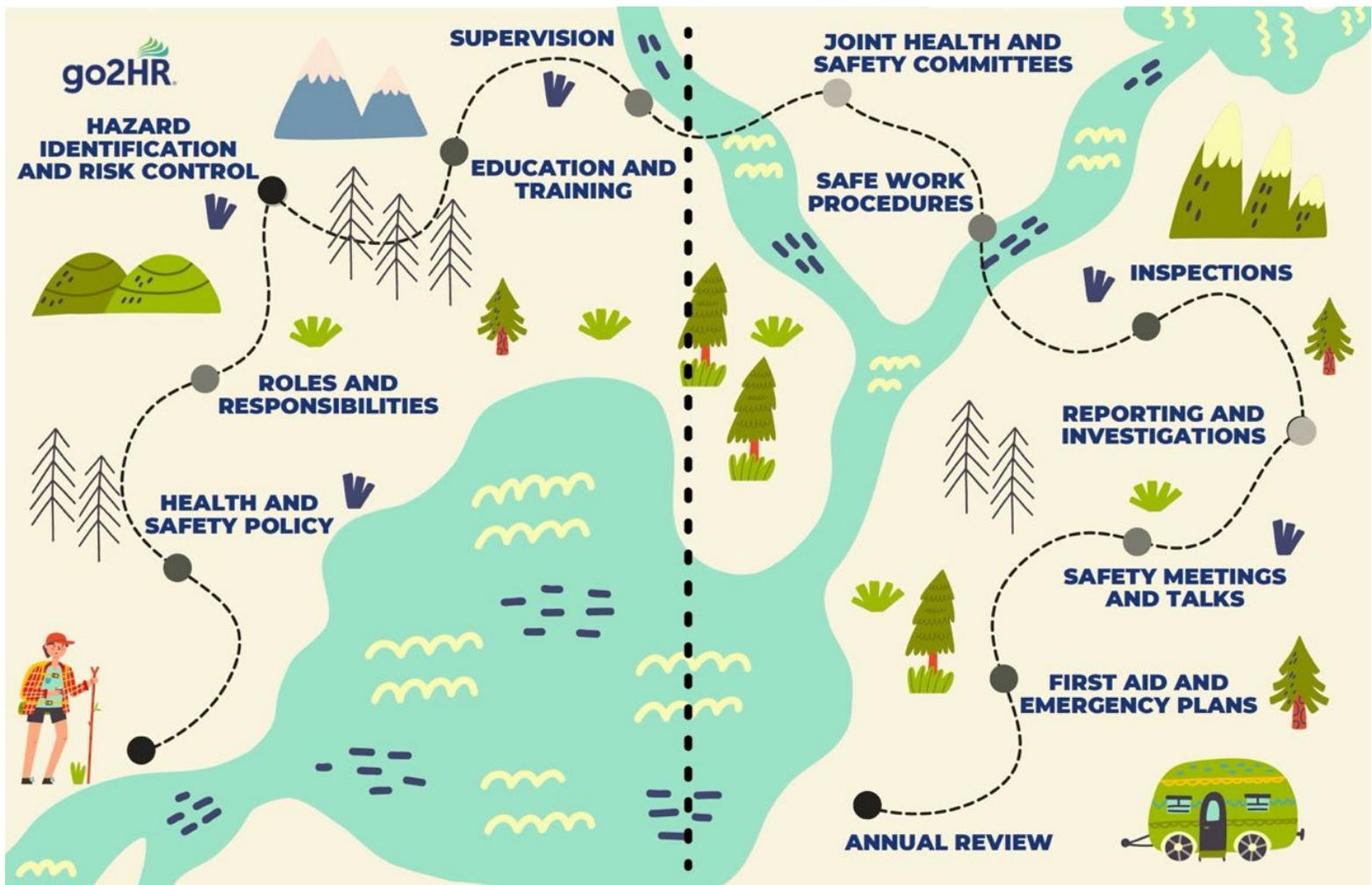
# Introduction

This Safety Basics – Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Program Handbook has been designed for the small businesses of British Columbia (B.C.) working in the hospitality and tourism industry. The purpose is to provide a “**trail map**” to navigate the key elements of an OHS Program. For each element there is a short description, tips for effectiveness, and

helpful tools and resources to get started or continually improve the core elements of your OHS Program.

This handbook is a helpful guide for employers, but it should be noted that this is not an exhaustive list of all health, safety and risk mitigation requirements and obligations.

## OHS Trail Map



# WorkSafeBC and OHS Legislation



Before reviewing the key elements of an OHS Program, it is important to understand the legislative framework that defines these requirements and supports effective workplace health and safety. In B.C., this framework is administered by WorkSafeBC. WorkSafeBC focuses on three (3) core areas: **Health and Safety, Insurance, and Claims.** The organization partners with employers and workers to:

- ➔ Promote the prevention of workplace injuries and illnesses
- ➔ Support rehabilitation and facilitate a safe and timely return to work
- ➔ Provide fair compensation for workers recovering from injury
- ➔ Ensure financial management of the workers' compensation system

While insurance and claims are important for employers to understand – particularly how strong H&S performance can reduce related costs – this handbook focuses on prevention and compliance with the Workers Compensation Act (WCA) and the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation (OHSR). Compliance not only helps keep workers safe on the job but also reduces the risk of regulatory orders, penalties, and increased premiums associated with poor H&S performance.

## Formal (Vs. Informal) OHS Programs

### How do you know if you need a formal or less formal OHS Program?

Every employer in B.C. must have an OHS Program. The type of program will depend on the size of the workforce and the level of risk. In tourism and hospitality, many small businesses naturally develop informal safety practices, such as coaching staff during a shift, checking equipment, or addressing hazards as they come up. However, it is important that employers meet their obligations in developing informal or formal OHS Programs.

#### Businesses must have a formal OHS program if the workplace has:

- ➔ **20 or more workers and at least one location with moderate or high risk, or**
- ➔ **50 or more workers, regardless of risk level.**

When counting the number of workers, it is important to consider full-time, part-time, and seasonal staff. Employers with less than 20 workers must still have an OHS Program, but it can be less formal. These programs have the same core purpose but are simpler and scaled to the size and risk of the business. Many small hotels, restaurants, and tour operators could fall into this category.

An OHS Program helps to protect workers, minimize risks, and maintain a healthy and safe workplace. It identifies and controls hazards, prevents physical and psychological injuries, and reduces financial losses.

This Safety Basics – OHS Program Handbook provides information to small businesses on the key elements of a formal (and informal) OHS Program. In addition to

this handbook, a good starting point for any employer is the **go2HR OHS Health and Safety Manual template** available at:

<https://www.go2hr.ca/explore-all-resources/health-safety/occupational-health-and-safety-manual>

This resource contains the basic components of an OHS Program that can be added to and customized to establish an OHS Manual that meets the needs of your unique business.

For more information on determining if a formal or informal OHS Program is required for your small business, see WorkSafeBC:

<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/health-safety/create-manage/health-safety-programs>

# Health and Safety Policy

## What is a good starting point when building an OHS Program?

A good starting point for any OHS Program is a clear and well-communicated Health and Safety (H&S) Policy. **Your H&S Policy should include the following components:**

- Company commitment to protecting the physical and psychological health and safety of all workers
- Outline of the objectives of your OHS Program, such as:
  - ❖ Preventing workplace injuries
  - ❖ Promoting psychological and physical well-being
  - ❖ Complying with WorkSafeBC and all applicable legislation
  - ❖ Continuously improving health and safety performance
- Identify the rights and responsibilities of workplace parties
- Ensure the policy is signed and endorsed by senior leadership
- Include the date and commit to an annual review

Having a written H&S Policy is essential, but communicating it effectively is equally important. **Consider the following ways to share and reinforce it:**

Review the policy with your Worker H&S Representative or Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC), particularly during annual reviews

- Post the policy on your H&S Board and internal site (if applicable)
- Introduce the policy during new worker onboarding and orientations
- Provide copies to contractors and include the H&S Policy in service or contractor agreement



### QUICK TIPS

- ❖ Keep it meaningful, clear with plain language and limit to one (1) page, if possible
- ❖ Use your organization's name and terminology that reflects your culture (e.g. "team member" instead of "worker")
- ❖ Be inclusive and provide the policy in the languages commonly spoken in your workplace – if English is not the first language, use translation apps, tools or services
- ❖ Post the policy in high-traffic areas and share it digitally so it can be easily accessed
- ❖ Review the policy regularly to ensure it remains accurate, relevant, and aligned with your organization
- ❖ Use the go2HR OHS Policy template to get started at <https://www.go2hr.ca/explore-all-resources/health-safety/ohs-policy-template>

# Responsibilities and Worker Rights

## Clearly identifying roles and responsibilities helps everyone know what they need to do!

Creating a safe and healthy workplace is a shared responsibility. Everyone (e.g. employers, supervisors, and workers) has an important role in preventing injuries, supporting psychological and physical well-being, and maintaining a strong safety culture. Understanding these roles and responsibilities is the foundation of an OHS Program.

### What Employers Need to Do

Employers set the tone for workplace health and safety. That means actively creating and maintaining a program that addresses both physical and psychological hazards. This includes:

- ✓ Providing health and safety training for all workers
- ✓ Ensuring managers and supervisors are trained and supported
- ✓ Watching for unsafe conditions or behaviours, and correcting them
- ✓ Supplying adequate first aid attendants, equipment and services
- ✓ Reporting work-related physical and psychological injuries or illnesses to WorkSafeBC
- ✓ Formally investigating any incidents that require an Employer Incident Investigation Report (EIIR)
- ✓ Offering modified, suitable work options to support workers recovering from workplace injury or occupational illness

- ✓ Providing psychological support and critical incident response when needed
- ✓ Ensuring contractors and subcontractors have valid WorkSafeBC coverage

### What Supervisors Need to Do

Supervisors help protect the health and safety of their teams. If you're in charge of a group of people or an area of work, your responsibilities include:

- ✓ Addressing unsafe behaviours or work conditions as soon as you see or become aware of them
- ✓ Ensuring workers are trained and/or certified for the tasks they are performing
- ✓ Letting workers know about any hazards they may encounter at work, including physical or psychological hazards
- ✓ Making sure Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is worn and used properly when necessary

See this Handbook for more information on supervisors.



## What Workers Need to Do

Workers have a responsibility to protect themselves and their coworkers by working safely and following procedures provided by the employer, such as:

- ➔ Reporting any unsafe conditions, equipment, or behaviours to their supervisor
- ➔ Using PPE correctly and keeping it in good condition
- ➔ Participating in inspections and investigations
- ➔ Reporting all workplace injuries and illnesses to their supervisor
- ➔ If off work due to injury or illness, working with the employer and healthcare providers to safely return to work in a timely manner

## Workers Have Three (3) H&S Rights

1. The Right to **Know**: Workers have the right to be informed about hazards in their workplace and to receive the training, instruction, and supervision needed to work safely.
2. The Right to **Participate**: Workers have the right to take part in health and safety activities, such as workplace inspections, safety committees, and reporting unsafe conditions.
3. The Right to **Refuse Unsafe Work**. Workers have the right to refuse work they believe presents an undue hazard to themselves or others.

Note: It is against the law for an employer to penalize or retaliate against a worker for exercising any of these rights or for raising a health and safety concern in good faith.



### QUICK TIPS

- ❖ Post information on the main rights and responsibilities of workers, supervisors, and employers in the workplace as a reminder that everyone has a role to play in health and safety. Use the WorkSafeBC poster available online at: <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/resources/health-safety/posters/general-health-and-safety>
- ❖ Ensure that all workplace roles and responsibilities are covered in your OHS Program and communicated to your team. Use the go2HR Roles and Responsibilities template to get started at <https://www.go2hr.ca/explore-all-resources/health-safety/roles-and-responsibilities> or scan the QR code.

# Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment and Control

## What tasks are hazardous, and how can workers stay safe?

Managing physical and psychological workplace hazards does not need to be complicated. It is about being proactive and taking reasonable actions while consulting with workers throughout the process. The hazard identification, risk assessment and control process helps identify hazards and determine what controls are needed to protect worker safety.

## Identifying Hazards

### What is the Difference Between a Hazard and a Risk?

- A **hazard** is anything that could cause physical or psychological injury, illness, or property damage.
- **Risk** is the chance that someone will be harmed by the hazard. You can reduce the risk by controlling the hazards.

### What can cause hazards in the workplace?

Hazards can arise from how work is performed, the equipment and materials used, or the environment. Common sources include:

- Inadequate training or supervision
- Lack of correct equipment or tools, or poor equipment maintenance
- Poor housekeeping or disorganized work areas
- Exposure to hazardous products including biohazards
- Unclear instruction or expectations
- Inappropriate conduct or behaviour

- Fatigue, stress, or emotional strain
- External factors such as severe weather or emergencies

Even routine tasks can present risks if conditions change. Staying alert and maintaining situational awareness helps ensure hazards are identified and controlled before an injury occurs.

### How can you spot hazards before something goes wrong?

Effective hazard identification starts with awareness. Consider:

- Observing how work is performed and identifying unsafe practices
- Consulting with workers about what feels unsafe, confusing, or frustrating
- Conducting regular inspections and hazard assessments
- Monitoring both physical and psychological safety

The more consistently you stay proactive and ask your workers questions, the more you can prevent injuries and continuously improve your OHS Program.

# Assessing Risk

## How do you decide which hazards to deal with first?

Assessing risk is a key part of identifying and controlling hazards. It helps employers understand how hazards could cause harm and what measures are needed to prevent it. Risk assessments consider who may be affected, how often exposure occurs, and how severe the injury could be. Involving supervisors, the Worker H&S Representative or JHSC, and workers who

perform the work, helps to ensure an effective risk assessment. Regularly review and update risk assessments, especially when work, equipment, or materials change. Risk levels are typically determined using probability and severity levels, where the **Risk Rating = Probability × Severity**, reflecting how likely and how serious a potential injury or incident could be.

### Probability Scale (Likelihood of Injury)

Rating	Word	Description
1	Unlikely	Unlikely, hazard is controlled or seldom present.
2	Possible	Is possible but not expected during normal operations.
3	Likely	May occur under normal conditions or if control measures fail.
4	Frequent	Expected to occur regularly or repeatedly during work activities.

### Severity Scale (Consequence of Injury)

Rating	Word	Description
1	Minor	No injury or first aid only, no healthcare or time-loss expected.
2	Moderate	Healthcare treatment (no time-loss expected) with possible modified duties.
3	Serious	Time-loss injury with potential long-term impact.
4	Critical	Life-threatening, permanent disability or fatality.

### Risk Rating = Probability x Severity

	Minor Severity 1	Moderate Severity 2	Serious Severity 3	Critical Severity 4
<b>Unlikely</b> Probability 1	1	2	3	4
<b>Possible</b> Probability 2	2	4	6	8
<b>Likely</b> Probability 3	3	6	9	12
<b>Frequent</b> Probability 4	4	8	12	16

Depending on the level of risk rating, the following actions and additional considerations should be taken to minimize risk to an acceptable level.

**Low (1-3):** Acceptable risk level, no additional controls may be needed. Regular review and monitoring of hazards and controls is required.

**Medium (4-8):** Proceed with caution, review with supervisor to confirm control measures. Regular review and supervision is required.

**High (9-16):** If residual risk is still high, work should not proceed and further control measures are needed to reduce residual risk rating.

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# Controlling Hazards

## What is the best way to control hazards?

Once hazards are identified and assessed, the ones with the highest risks should be addressed first. If a hazard cannot be eliminated, employers must implement

effective control measures to reduce it. The hierarchy of controls provides a thoughtful approach to managing risk, applied in order of effectiveness.



### 1. ELIMINATE

**Remove the hazard altogether**

Examples: Redesign service routes to eliminate trip hazards, or store supplies at waist level to remove the need for ladders.



### 2. SUBSTITUTION

**Replace the hazard with safer equipment, materials, or processes.**

Examples: Substitute toxic cleaners with eco-friendly, low-toxicity alternatives.



### 3. ENGINEERING CONTROLS

**Modify equipment or workspaces to reduce the hazard before it reaches the worker.**

Examples: Install guards on meat slicers, use non-slip flooring or mats, or add barriers and mirrors in service corridors to prevent collisions.



### 4. ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROLS

**Change the way work is performed through training, scheduling, signage, or procedures.**

Examples: Rotate tasks to reduce repetitive strain, provide additional training when working in extreme heat, or establish check-in protocols for workers entering guest rooms alone.



### 5. PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

**Provide and ensure proper use of PPE to minimize exposure to remaining hazards.**

Require gloves and eye protection when using cleaning chemicals, cut-resistant gloves in kitchens, and non-slip footwear for staff working in wet or greasy areas.

# Hierarchy of Controls for Psychological Health and Safety



The general principle of a hierarchy of controls (as used for physical health and safety risks) can be applied to psychosocial (mental health) risks - with a few adaptations. In managing psychosocial risks in your organization, it may be helpful to consider an adapted hierarchy of controls for understanding the different types of controls or interventions you could select.

## Physical Hazards

## Psychosocial Hazards

Most Effective

### Eliminate

Remove the sources of harm (eg equipment, substances, or work processes).

### Eliminate

Remove the psychosocial hazard to eliminate the risk of harm from this aspect of work.

### Substitute

Substitute (wholly or partly) the hazard giving rise to the risk with something that gives rise to a lesser risk.

### Re-design

Fundamentally redesign how work is done, including roles, responsibilities, and the work environment.

### Isolate/engineer

Isolate the hazard giving rise to the risk to prevent any person coming into contact with it or use physical control measures including mechanical devices or processes.

### Adjust

Make adjustments to existing practices, substitute tasks with safer alternatives, or increase resources to meet demands.

### Administrative

Using safe methods or work, processes or procedures designed to minimize risk.

### Educate

Train workers to understand work policies, procedures, and expectations.

### PPE

Using safety equipment to protect against harm, PPE acts by reducing exposure to, or contact with, the hazard.

### Promote

Provide opportunities to build resilience to withstand psychological hazards.

Least Effective

Change the work

Change the worker

# Education and Training



## How do employers ensure workers get the right training and certifications to do their jobs safely?

Education and training are important to ensure that workers can perform their jobs safely and properly. This applies to all workers, including new and young workers, returning workers, and those moving into new roles or responsibilities. All workers should be provided with a strong health and safety foundation through orientations and job-specific education and training.

Orientation provides the basics. It is the first chance to introduce new and young

workers to your workplace, safety culture, and expectations. Orientation should take place before any work begins and be specific to the worker's role, experience level, and the specific hazards and conditions of your workplace.

A proper orientation ensures that workers understand how to work safely and know where to find support and resources.

### Orientation should include:

- An overview of the OHS Program and key contacts (e.g. supervisor)
- Worker and employer rights and responsibilities under the Workers Compensation Act (WCA), including how to report unsafe conditions and the right to refuse unsafe work
- Workplace health and safety rules
- Reasonably foreseeable hazards in the workplace, including working alone or in isolation, and violence and harassment, along with how these hazards are controlled
- Required PPE and its correct use
- The location of first aid, how to summon first aid, and how to report workplace injuries or illnesses
- Emergency procedures, including fire exits and muster points
- Instruction and demonstration of assigned work tasks or processes
- WHMIS requirements relevant to the workplace
- Contact information for the Worker H&S Representative or JHSC

Orientations should emphasize the importance of not performing any task unless the worker is trained to complete it safely and has the necessary tools, equipment, and PPE. Workers should be encouraged to ask questions if they are unsure how to perform a task safely or require more information before they start.

Training goes beyond orientation and focuses on how to complete tasks safely and respond to hazards in real working conditions. It should be practical, hands on where possible, and provide opportunities for workers to ask questions and apply what they have learned.

### Training should include:

- ➔ Safe use of tools, machinery, equipment and hazardous products
- ➔ Proper use, care, and maintenance of the PPE required
- ➔ Job or location specific hazards and related control measures
- ➔ Safe work procedures for medium and high-risk tasks
- ➔ Psychological safety, including violence and harassment prevention
- ➔ First aid and emergency response procedures

Training should be refreshed regularly and when work processes, equipment, or personnel change. Keep up to date training

records for each worker, including dates, topics, and attendance, to demonstrate due diligence and ensure all required training and certification remains current.



### QUICK TIPS

- ❖ Confirm certifications for applicable job roles and tasks, such as first aid, security license, forklift operation, food safe, Serving It Right etc.
- ❖ Set clear objectives by defining what workers should know and be able to do after training
- ❖ Use different methods of learning since people learn in different ways, including classroom sessions, on the job instruction, demonstrations, videos, and online modules
- ❖ Keep training interactive and hands on by encouraging participation through demonstrations and questions
- ❖ Use training resources from trusted groups such as WorkSafeBC, go2HR, CCOHS, H&S Consultants, and the Employers' Advisers Office
- ❖ Regularly reinforce training key messages through "Safety Talks", meetings and ongoing supervision

## Resources for Training and Education

### go2HR:

<https://www.go2hr.ca/explore-all-resources/health-safety/orient-train-supervise-workers>

### WorkSafeBC:

<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/health-safety/education-training-certification>

### CCOHS:

<https://www.ccohs.ca/products/courses>

# H&S Bulletin Boards

## Do employers need to post health and safety information?

Employers are required to post specific health and safety information and must ensure that postings are visible, accessible, and kept up to date. These postings support every worker's right to know about safety in the workplace.

### Typical required postings include:

- The Health and Safety Policy
- Violence and Harassment Policies
- WorkSafeBC-required posters, notices, and information
- Emergency procedures and key contact information
- First aid procedures, attendant names, and locations of first aid equipment
- Incident and hazard reporting procedures
- Worker H&S Representative or JHSC name(s) and department(s)
- The last three (3) months of JHSC meeting minutes (if applicable)

The image shows a 'HAZARD REPORT FORM' with the following sections:

- Hazard Observation:** Includes fields for 'Date of Observation', 'Observed by', 'Location of Hazard', and 'Hazard Type' (Physical, Psychological, Chemical, Biological).
- General Description of Hazard:** A field for 'Set to your company'.
- Hazard Resolution (for committee use):** Includes two sections for 'Corrective Action #1' and 'Corrective Action #2', each with fields for 'Assigned to', 'Completed by', and 'Date'. It also has a 'Reviewed by' field and 'Date'.
- Footer:** Fields for 'Company Name' and 'Company Website'.

Employers should review the H&S Bulletin Board regularly to ensure compliance with WorkSafeBC, applicable employment standards, as well as any industry-specific requirements.



# Supervisors

## How can supervisors help keep everyone safe at work?

A **supervisor** is anyone who instructs, directs, and controls workers as they carry out their work tasks. This includes restaurant managers, shift supervisors, department leads, chefs, or anyone responsible for directing work activities.

Supervisors are in a position to be impactful leaders in safety. They are often the first to identify new hazards, notice gaps in understanding, or recognize opportunities to improve. Effective supervisors are consistent in promoting both physical and psychological safety, and play a key role in implementing the OHS Program.

Clear and consistent communication is key to effective supervision. Supervisors ensure workers understand how risks are managed in their workplace from handling cleaning chemicals, to operating equipment safely, to managing outdoor operations in changing conditions. Supervisors must also confirm workers are properly trained and/or certified, and

maintain accurate safety records to demonstrate due diligence. Open communication helps identify concerns early so corrective actions can be taken before incidents occur.

Supervisors play an important role in psychological safety and can help prevent harm to the psychological health of workers under their supervision by ensuring 2-way and consistent communication and building healthy relationships that foster trust and make workers feel comfortable voicing concerns or reporting safety issues.

Supervisors can promote psychological safety by leading by example, checking in regularly on workers' well-being, and including psychological safety information in "Safety Talks". Providing clear direction, respecting boundaries, and addressing inappropriate behaviours or conduct early, all help reduce stress, prevent burnout, and support a positive and respectful environment.

### Some routine safety-related actions of supervisors include:

- Providing workers with training before they complete new tasks
- Verifying workers' performance meets safety expectations
- Correcting improper and unsafe work activities and conditions
- Identifying hazards and taking steps to ensure workers stay safe
- Reinforcing safe and proper work, including PPE use
- Completing safety inspections and incident investigations, as applicable
- Ensuring safety documentation and records are properly completed

# Worker H&S Representatives and Joint H&S Committees (JHSC)

## When are Worker H&S Representatives or Joint Health and Safety Committees (JHSCs) required?

An effective Worker H&S Representative or Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) provides value to your OHS Program by strengthening communication, identifying hazards proactively, and supporting a culture of safety and collaboration.

- ❖ **Workplaces with more than 9 but fewer than 20 workers, must have a Worker H&S Representative.** This includes any workplace where there are 10 or more workers employed at the workplace for longer than a month.
- ❖ **Workplaces with 20 or more workers** (including full-time, part-time, and seasonal staff) **must establish a JHSC.**

This applies to all types of hospitality and tourism operations including hotels, resorts, restaurants, ski hills, attractions, and casinos. Whether your workforce is seasonal or year-round, involving workers in safety discussions leads to better awareness, practical solutions, and stronger teamwork across all departments.



# Duties and Functions

## What do Worker H&S Representatives and JHSC members do?

Worker H&S Representatives and JHSCs play an important role in supporting a safe and healthy workplace. In workplaces where a JHSC is not required but a Worker H&S Representative is, the representative carries out similar duties as practicable.

### **The main duties of a Worker H&S Representative (as practicable) and JHSC members include:**

- Identifying psychologically or physically unsafe conditions and recommending corrective actions
- Reviewing and addressing worker H&S concerns
- Consulting with applicable parties on H&S at the workplace
- Making recommendations to improve health and safety programs, policies, and education
- Reviewing proposed workplace changes that may affect workers
- Ensuring that regular inspections and incident investigations are carried out as required
- Participating in inspections, investigations, and inquiries as required by WorkSafeBC

**Worker H&S Representatives and JHSC members must be paid for time spent attending meetings and performing their duties.**

## Training and Education

### Do Workers H&S Representatives and JHSC members need any training?

Worker H&S Representatives are required to complete four (4) hours of training and instruction. WorkSafeBC offers **The Worker Health and Safety Representative Fundamentals online course (link below)** which addresses this training requirement for Worker H&S Representatives in workplaces that do not meet the requirement for a JHSC.

For workplaces that do require a JHSC, JHSC members are required to complete

eight (8) hours of mandatory JHSC training within six (6) months of joining the committee. **WorkSafeBC also offers guidance and resources for completing this training available at:**

<https://www.worksafefbc.com/en/health-safety/education-training-certification/joint-health-safety-committee-member>

In addition to the mandatory training within six (6) months, Worker H&S Representatives and JHSCs are entitled to up to eight (8) hours leave per year to attend OHS training as part of ongoing education.



- ❖ The Worker H&S Representative or JHSC is a key part of your OHS Program, ensure they have the resources and support needed
- ❖ Use available tools and templates, WorkSafeBC and go2HR offer templates for Rules of Procedure, meeting agendas, inspection checklists, and minutes
- ❖ Build skills and encourage discussions, WorkSafeBC “Spot the Hazard” activities are available online and are a great icebreaker to start meetings and help to build hazard identification skills
- ❖ Build trust by encouraging open and respectful discussion and collaboration between workers, supervisors, and management
- ❖ Maintain professionalism and confidentiality, and remind members to protect privacy and avoid using names when discussing incidents or safety concerns
- ❖ Arrange a virtual or in-person drop-in session with go2HR for free, expert-led guidance to strengthen your committee’s engagement and effectiveness

## Additional Activities for an Effective JHSC

In addition to the duties and functions of the JHSC, it is important for employers to be aware of additional key activities to ensure effectiveness and comply with WorkSafeBC requirements. These include but are not limited to:

- ➔ Post JHSC member names, photos, and job titles, along with the last three (3) months of meeting minutes
- ➔ Have a written Rules of Procedure or a Terms of Reference that outline how the committee functions, makes decisions, and carries out its duties
- ➔ Each meeting should have a prepared agenda to keep discussions focused, and minutes recorded to document decisions and actions
- ➔ Each year, the JHSC must complete an **Evaluation of Effectiveness** to confirm that the committee is fulfilling its responsibilities and being effective at the workplace

## Resources for Effective JHSCs

### WorkSafeBC:

<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/health-safety/create-manage/joint-health-safety-committees>

### go2HR:

<https://www.go2hr.ca/explore-all-resources/health-safety/create-support-a-joint-health-safety-committee>

### go2HR:

<https://www.go2hr.ca/explore-all-resources/health-safety/jhsc-tip-sheet-meetings-2>

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# Safe Work Procedures

## What tasks and jobs need safe work procedures?

Safe Work Procedures (SWPs) are step-by-step written instructions that explain how to perform tasks safely and correctly. They help ensure consistency, reduce the risk of injury, and support worker training. Each procedure outlines the hazards associated with a task, the controls and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) required, and the correct methods to complete the work safely and properly.

When developing or updating SWPs, consult with your Worker H&S Representative or JHSC, as well as workers and supervisors experienced with the task. Their feedback helps ensure procedures are accurate and easy to follow. Once finalized, train all affected workers on the procedure and document the training provided.

Not every task requires a detailed written safe work procedure. Consider WorkSafeBC requirements, hazard and risk level, worker experience, work frequency, potential injury.



### QUICK TIPS

- ❖ Use go2HR's template Safe Work Procedures as a starting point for common hospitality and tourism tasks
- ❖ Observe the task as it is performed to ensure accuracy, and include visuals where possible to support understanding
- ❖ Write in clear, simple language and avoid technical jargon or uncommon acronyms
- ❖ Provide translations in the languages commonly spoken in your workplace – use translation tools and apps if needed to ensure everyone understands the procedures
- ❖ Apply version control by dating each procedure and keeping the most current versions easy to reference
- ❖ Review and update SWPs regularly and when there are significant changes in the workplace

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# H&S Inspections

## How can you spot hazards before something goes wrong?

Regular workplace inspections are an important part of identifying both physical and psychological hazards and assessing risks on an ongoing basis. They provide a “snapshot” of current conditions and activities, to help control hazards and prevent injuries. Inspections are also a valuable way to involve your team, gather input from workers, and continually improve your OHS Program.

### A proper inspection will include the following actions:

- Look for physical and psychological hazards in the workplace
- Observe how tasks are being performed and assess associated risks
- Correct serious hazards or unsafe work practices immediately
- Record findings, assign corrective actions, and communicate updates
- Follow up to confirm that corrective actions are effective

After an inspection, correct serious hazards immediately. For other identified hazards, assign a responsible person with due date, and monitor progress until resolved and shown effective. Worker H&S Representatives and JHSCs should review inspection reports and evaluate the effectiveness of the inspection program.

The frequency and type of inspection will depend on the nature of your work, regulatory requirements, and manufacturer recommendations for equipment.



- ❖ Conduct inspections in pairs or groups whenever possible, and involve Worker H&S Representatives, JHSC members, supervisors, and workers familiar with the tasks and areas being inspected
- ❖ Before starting an inspection, review previous inspection reports and confirm that outstanding corrective actions have been completed
- ❖ Follow an inspection checklist to stay organized and thorough, templates are available from WorkSafeBC, go2HR, and other resources – or customize your own to suit your workplace
- ❖ Ensure those conducting inspections are trained to recognize both physical and psychological hazards
- ❖ Watch how tasks are performed and confirm that workers are following safe work procedures and maintaining situational awareness
- ❖ Ensure the correct Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is available, properly worn, clean, and maintained
- ❖ Talk with workers during inspections and ask questions about safety and their work

### Resources for H&S Inspections

#### go2HR:

<https://www.go2hr.ca/explore-all-resources/health-safety/inspect-your-workplace>

#### WorkSafeBC:

<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/resources/health-safety/books-guides/safety-inspections-workbook>

#### CCOHS:

<https://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/prevention/effectiv.html>

# H&S Reporting

## What should workers do if they see something unsafe or are involved in an incident or near miss?



A clear and accessible reporting process is a key element of every OHS Program. Workers must know how to report both hazards and incidents, and employers must ensure this process is reinforced through training, orientations, visual reminders, and regular reminders during “Safety Talks”.

Encouraging prompt hazard and incident reporting helps build a proactive safety culture where workers feel empowered to speak up and take action to protect themselves and others.

**Hazard:** A hazard is anything that could cause physical or psychological injury, illness, or property damage.

**Health and Safety (H&S) Incident:** A H&S incident is any occurrence, condition, or situation that arises in the course of work which results in, or could have resulted in, injury, illness, or damage.

**Near Miss:** A near miss is an event or situation that could have caused serious injury, illness, or damage – but did not. Near misses indicate that an uncontrolled hazard exists, and while no harm occurred this time, future incidents may happen unless corrective actions are taken.

When an incident occurs, it is important to gather information right away and directly from those involved. This ensures unsafe acts or conditions can be corrected quickly, required reports such as Employer Incident Investigation Reports (EIIR) or WorkSafeBC

claim (Form 7) reporting are completed, and appropriate support is provided to workers involved. Accurate and timely reporting helps maintain records for due diligence, and track trends and opportunities for improvement over time.

Employers are required to notify WorkSafeBC through the Prevention Information Line at 1-888-621-SAFE (7233) when certain incidents occur, such as a worker seriously injured or killed on the job. See this Handbook for more on immediate reporting and notification requirements to WorkSafeBC.



### QUICK TIPS

- ❖ Ensure reporting procedures for hazards and incidents are clearly explained during training and posted on H&S Bulletin Boards
- ❖ Use go2HR reporting templates for hazard and incident report forms
- ❖ Consider digital reporting tools, e.g. simple online forms can be created through existing platforms like Microsoft or Google
- ❖ Encourage workers to suggest corrective actions or hazard controls, as their knowledge helps identify solutions and prevent recurrence
- ❖ Review reports regularly, focusing on trends, contributing factors, and corrective actions while maintaining privacy and confidentiality



# Incident Investigations

## What should you do to understand the cause of an incident and correct it?

Incident investigations are an important part of keeping your workplace safe. After any incident that caused injury requiring medical treatment, or had the potential to do so (e.g. near miss or property damage), it is important to investigate to determine what happened, why it happened, and how to prevent it from happening again in the future. In the tourism and hospitality industry, environments are often fast paced and public facing, having a clear approach to workplace investigations helps reduce future risks, protects everyone, and strengthens your safety culture.

### WorkSafeBC requires an Employer Incident Investigation Report (EIIR) to be completed in the event of:

- ➔ Serious injury to a worker or a worker's death
- ➔ Injury requiring medical treatment
- ➔ Minor injury, or no injury, but had the potential for serious injury
- ➔ Major structural failure or collapse
- ➔ Major release of hazardous substances or dangerous incident involving explosive materials
- ➔ Other incidents in accordance with WorkSafeBC requiring investigation

An EIIR requires a preliminary and full investigation. The purpose of a preliminary investigation is to make the area safe so work can resume. A full investigation aims to understand what happened, including the sequence of events, the immediate and underlying causes, and what needs to be done to prevent it from happening again. These findings support continuous

improvement of the OHS Program. WorkSafeBC sets specific timelines for both preliminary and full investigations, and employers must ensure these timelines are followed.



### QUICK TIPS

- ❖ Act quickly, begin the investigation as soon as it is safe to do so
- ❖ Involve workers, supervisors, and Worker H&S Representatives (or JHSC members) who understand the work and location
- ❖ Focus on identifying system issues and contributing factors rather than assigning blame
- ❖ Record observations, witness statements, photos, and corrective actions as part of documentation
- ❖ Track completion of all corrective actions and confirm their effectiveness
- ❖ Review whether existing safe work procedures or training need to be updated as a result of the investigation
- ❖ Communicate follow-up actions and improvements to workers to show accountability and encourage future reporting
- ❖ Go to: <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/health-safety/create-manage/incident-investigations/conducting-employer-investigation>

# Important Additional Information For Employers

## What other information should employers know in the event of a serious incident?

Employers must also be aware of incidents that require immediate reporting to WorkSafeBC and the Employer's Report of Injury or Occupational Disease (Form 7).

### Immediate Reporting to WorkSafeBC

Employers must immediately notify WorkSafeBC through the Prevention Information Line at 1-888-621-SAFE (7233) if any of the following occur in the workplace:

- A worker is seriously injured or killed on the job
- A major structural failure or collapse occurs
- A major release of a hazardous substance takes place
- A fire, explosion, or other dangerous incident occurs that could have caused serious injury

A serious injury is one that is life-threatening or could cause permanent harm, such as major fractures, amputations, or severe burns.

For emergencies, employers must call 911 first, then contact WorkSafeBC once it is safe to do so.

## Employer's Report of Injury or Occupational Disease (Form 7)

Any workplace injury or illness that requires medical treatment beyond first aid or results in lost work time must be reported to WorkSafeBC within 72 hours using the Form 7 – Employer's Report of Injury or Occupational Disease.

The fastest way to submit is through WorkSafeBC's online reporting tool. When completing the report, include the worker and employer contact information, incident details, work schedule, rate of pay, and any time lost. Where possible, suggest modified duties to support a safe and timely return to work. If the worker has already submitted their report, some details will automatically populate in the employer's form.

Stay in regular contact with the injured worker and offer modified work whenever possible to help them return safely and maintain their skills in the workplace.

Employers should consult WorkSafeBC, go2HR and Employers' Advisers Office for more information and resources for claims management. Go to <https://www.go2hr.ca/health-safety/claims-management>

# Safety Meetings

## How often should your team be meeting to talk about health and safety?

In addition to JHSC meetings, regular management or departmental meetings focused on health and safety are a key element of an effective OHS Program. These meetings help track health and safety activities, review incident trends, and strengthen a culture of shared responsibility. Including safety discussions into department, management, and company-wide meetings ensures ongoing attention, communication, and accountability to both physical and psychological well-being in the workplace.

### Management health and safety meetings can be used to:

- Review existing policies, procedures, and programs
- Discuss feedback or recommendations from workers and address questions or concerns
- Share information on workplace injury prevention and opportunities for continuous improvement
- Track action items, assign responsibilities, and monitor progress



Any decisions or actions from these meetings should be clearly communicated to supervisors and workers in a timely manner. It is important to document health and safety in the meeting minutes to track discussions and show due diligence.

### QUICK TIPS

- ❖ Schedule meetings for health and safety with the frequency based on the associated risk – alternatively, include “Health and Safety” as a standing agenda item at the start of the meeting
- ❖ Keep discussions engaging by using “Spot the Hazard” activities, starting with a “Safety Share”, reviewing a procedure or recent inspection, or discussing current trends
- ❖ Assign and follow up on action items at the next meeting, as applicable
- ❖ Highlight improvements or positive H&S performance to recognize efforts and reinforce actions
- ❖ Go to <https://www.go2hr.ca/explore-all-resources/health-safety/hold-safety-meetings>

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# Safety Talks

## How can you build regular safety conversations that keep everyone informed and engaged?

go2HR uses the term “Safety Talk”, which is like a Pre-Shift Briefing, Safety Huddle, or Toolbox Talk. In fast-paced, guest-facing environments such as tourism and hospitality, these short, regular check-ins help keep teams engaged, informed, and proactive.

Whether your business is seasonal or year-round, Safety Talks create a strong foundation for prevention without adding significant time or workload. Safety Talks should address both physical and psychological safety.

These meetings are typically led by a supervisor or JHSC member and should be mandatory for all workers.

The goal of a “Safety Talk” is to keep communication open and ongoing so everyone feels informed and involved in workplace safety by:

- Keeping workers aware of current or potential hazards
- Reinforcing safe work practices and expectations
- Encouraging workers to raise concerns, questions, and suggest improvements
- Demonstrating that physical and psychological safety are part of daily operations

Short, frequent discussions can be more effective than long meetings held infrequently. Find a schedule that fits your business and keeps your team connected to safety every day. go2HR offers a library of Safety Talks in addition to a blank template if you want to create your own.

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# First Aid and Emergency Response

## What do you need to have in place to ensure adequate first aid at work?

Employers are responsible for ensuring that injured workers receive prompt and appropriate first aid treatment and, if necessary, are transported to medical care without delay.

To determine your workplace’s first aid needs, complete a **First Aid Assessment** using the WorkSafeBC First Aid Assessment Tool. Go to

<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/resources/health-safety/forms/first-aid-assessment-worksheet>

This assessment helps identify the minimum requirements for equipment, facilities, and trained and certified attendants based on the specific risks and factors of your worksite. Once your first aid assessment is complete, review the findings, implement first aid measures, and ensure trained and certified attendants, equipment, and facilities are in place. Review and update your assessment annually or when there are significant changes to operations or staffing levels. Involve the Worker H&S Representative or JHSCs in the assessment process.

Note that WorkSafeBC's first aid assessment focuses on workers, not guests or patrons. Employers in the hospitality and tourism industries should also consider the needs of guests and visitors, consulting applicable legislation and subject matter experts to determine on-site medical resources and liability considerations.

## Additional First Aid and Emergency Response Requirements

In addition to completing a first aid assessment and ensuring that minimum equipment, supplies, facilities, and attendants are in place, **employers must also maintain a first aid program which includes the following:**

- ✓ Keep first aid certification current and establish a system to track expiry dates and ensure attendants renew
- ✓ Inspect first aid kits and equipment regularly and confirm that supplies are fully stocked, in good condition, and within expiry dates
- ✓ Develop and post first aid procedures. Procedures should clearly outline:
  - ➔ Available first aid equipment, supplies, facilities, and attendants
  - ➔ The location of first aid and how to summon assistance
  - ➔ Transportation to medical aid and the nearest hospital
- ✓ Maintain accurate first aid records and protect confidentiality
- ✓ Conduct first aid drills annually or when there are significant changes to operations or the workplace
- ✓ Ensure your first aid program supports responses to physical injuries as well as psychological incidents, such as trauma or anxiety following a challenging or traumatic event

## Resources for First Aid and Emergencies

### WorkSafeBC First Aid Assessment:

<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/resources/health-safety/forms/first-aid-assessment-worksheet>

### WorkSafeBC First Aid Requirements:

<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/health-safety/create-manage/first-aid-requirements>

### go2HR First Aid Support:

<https://www.go2hr.ca/explore-all-resources/health-safety/provide-first-aid>

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# Emergency Planning

## What should an emergency plan cover, and how do you communicate it to workers?

Employers are responsible for planning for emergencies that could affect the safety of workers or require an evacuation or rescue. In the hospitality and tourism industry, where operations often include public spaces and guests, effective emergency planning helps protect both workers and guests, minimize property damage, and support a coordinated response.

### Elements of an Emergency Plan

Emergency plans should be specific to your workplace and outline how to respond to different types of emergencies. It should clearly describe how workers will respond. An effective emergency plan should include:

- ✓ Emergency contacts for internal and external responders
- ✓ Evacuation routes and procedures, including muster points, shelters and accessibility considerations
- ✓ Location of emergency equipment and supplies
- ✓ Procedures for equipment shutdown or securing hazardous materials or temporary structures
- ✓ Roles and responsibilities of designated personnel
- ✓ Communication and notification procedures for alerting workers and guests about an emergency
- ✓ Coordination with local emergency responders
- ✓ Involvement of Worker H&S Representatives and JHSCs in planning

All workers must be trained in emergency response procedures. Training should be included in orientation for new workers and refreshed regularly. Conduct emergency drills to build confidence and test the effectiveness of your plan at least once a year, or whenever workplace conditions change. Go to:

<https://www.worksafefbc.com/en/health-safety/create-manage/emergency-planning-response>

# Records and Review

## Do you know which OHS records you must keep, and for how long?

Maintaining accurate and up-to-date records is important for identifying hazards, tracking improvements, and preventing future incidents. Proper documentation demonstrates due diligence, supports compliance with WorkSafeBC, and provides valuable insight for training and continuous improvement. Employers should maintain records for:

- Orientations, training and certifications (e.g. WHMIS, food safety, Serving It Right, violence and harassment etc.)
- Workplace inspections and corrective actions taken
- Incident and injury investigations, including follow-up and corrective actions
- “Safety Talks” as well as other safety meetings and discussions
- Worker H&S Representative or JHSC meetings and recommendations
- Bullying and harassment reports and investigations
- First aid treatments, as well as occupational illness and injury reports

- Emergency response plans, drills, and improvements made
- Safety communication and enforcement or disciplinary actions
- Maintenance and inspection logs

Regularly reviewing records and analyzing trends helps identify recurring issues, measure performance, and strengthens your overall safety culture.

## How often should the OHS Program be reviewed and updated?

Employers must regularly review their OHS Program to ensure it remains current, effective, and compliant. At least once each year, review your program and consult with the Worker H&S Representative or JHSC to identify opportunities for improvement. Look for trends or changes in operations, equipment, or staffing that may introduce new hazards or require updated procedures.

Staying informed about WorkSafeBC requirements helps ensure continued compliance and a proactive approach to health and safety management.

## Resources for Your OHS Program

### WorkSafeBC:

<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/health-safety/create-manage/health-safety-programs>

### go2HR Safety Basics:

<https://www.go2hr.ca/health-safety/safety-basics>

### go2HR Safety Records:

<https://www.go2hr.ca/explore-all-resources/health-safety/record-keeping>