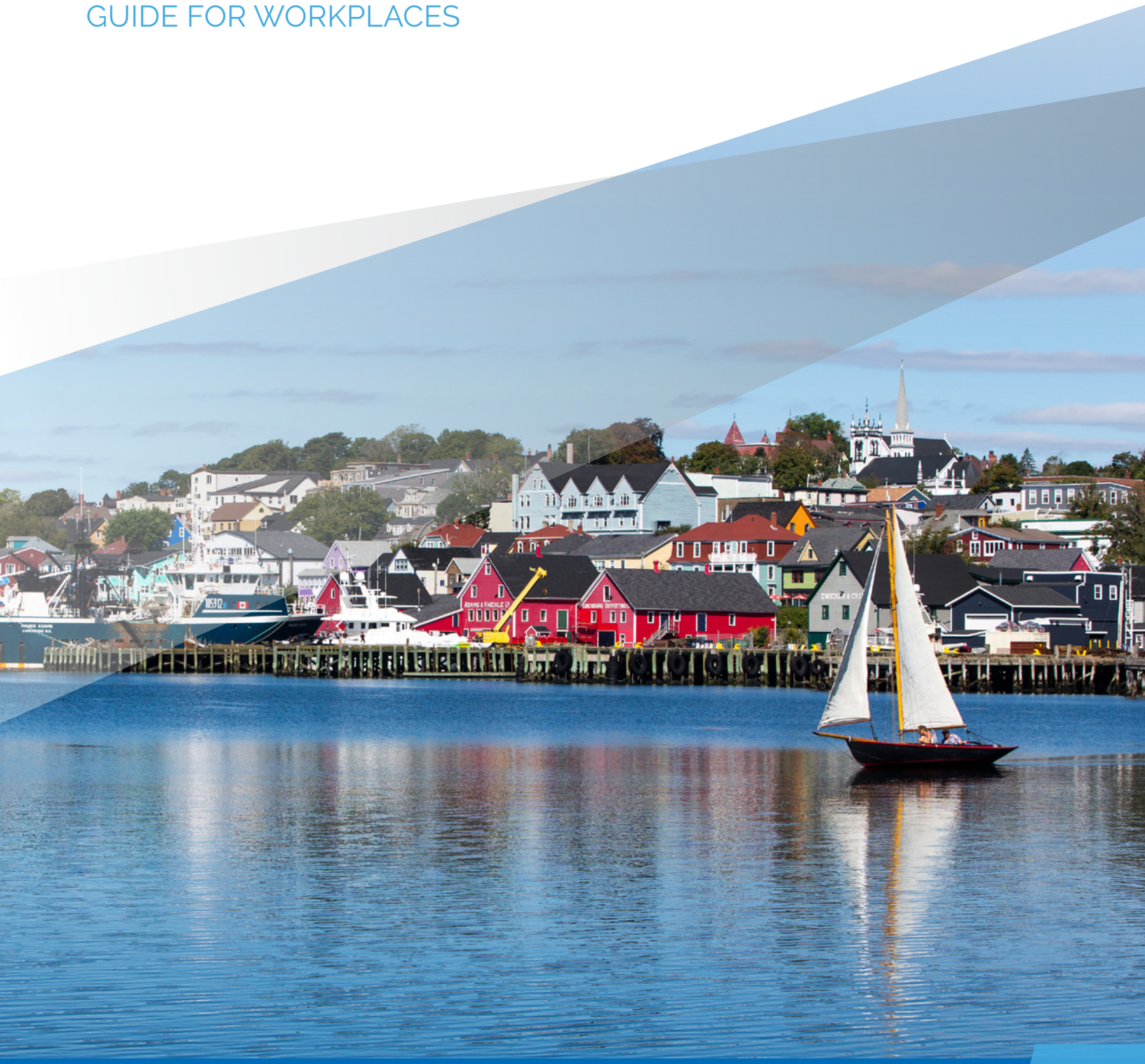
NOVA SCOTIA

Occupational Health and Safety

HEALTH AND SAFETY

GUIDE FOR WORKPLACES



DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR, SKILLS AND IMMIGRATION



This guide provides general information to help employers, supervisors and employees understand workplace health and safety requirements in Nova Scotia.

This guide does not replace the Nova Scotia Occupational Health and Safety Act, its regulations or any other applicable laws. The legislation and regulations should always be consulted to determine the obligations that apply to a workplace.

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Introduction

Health and safety is a legal responsibility for all workplaces in Nova Scotia. Employers are expected to prevent injuries and illnesses, identify and control hazards and maintain a safe, healthy and respectful workplace for everyone.

This guide helps businesses understand and meet the minimum requirements of the Nova Scotia Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act and Regulations. It outlines the responsibilities of employers, supervisors and employees and provides practical information to support workplace health and safety.

How to Use This Guide

This guide is organized into sections covering different topics relevant to workplace health and safety. Each section is identified by a specific colour to make information easier to find and help readers navigate the guide.

Nova SAFE

Nova SAFE is a mobile-friendly resource designed to help Nova Scotian employers, supervisors and employees easily access important safety information. It provides plain-language summaries, helpful definitions and direct links to legislation. When you see the Nova SAFE logo throughout the guide, visit NovaSAFE.ca to find more information.

Accessibility and Workplace Safety

Accessibility is an important part of workplace health and safety and helps create a safer and more inclusive workplace for everyone. All employees should be able to access information, understand risks, ask questions and raise concerns without barriers.

Employers should identify and address accessibility needs when providing safety information and developing policies, procedures, emergency plans, orientation and training. This may include placing health and safety boards at an accessible height, providing appropriate lighting and ensuring emergency equipment can be reached and used when needed. Personal protective equipment should also be appropriate for employees' individual needs and the hazards of the work.

Considering Accessibility Safety in Nova Scotia's Workplaces

Occupational Health and Safety Legislation

Occupational Health and Safety Act

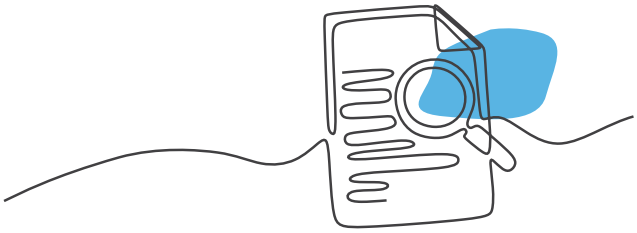
In Nova Scotia, workplace health and safety is regulated by the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act and Regulations. The OHS Act sets out the rights and responsibilities of employers, supervisors, and employees to ensure a healthy, safe, and respectful workplace. It provides the framework for safety policies, procedures, and programs, and outlines the roles of all workplace parties in preventing injuries, illnesses, and hazards. The regulations define the responsibilities of employers and employees, helping to support safe work practices, compliance, and a safe workplace.

Workplace health and safety is important because:

- Legal requirement: Protection from injury and illness is required by law, with serious consequences for non-compliance.
- Financial impact: Injuries or damage can result in significant costs and losses for the business.
- Moral responsibility: Employees have a right to a safe workplace, and employers have a duty to set clear safety expectations.

The Internal Responsibility System (IRS) is the foundation of workplace health and safety in Nova Scotia. Under this system, everyone in the workplace has a role to play in maintaining a safe and healthy work environment, based on their authority and ability. Workplace hazards should be addressed by the person who can control them or brought to the attention of someone with the authority to take corrective action.

For more information, review the Occupational Health and Safety Act



"Health and safety" includes both physical and psychological health and safety.

Precautions and Duties

Employers

- Ensure the health and safety of persons at or near the workplace.
- Provide and maintain equipment, machines, materials, or things that are properly equipped with safety devices.
- Provide information, instruction, training, supervision and facilities necessary for the health or safety of the employees.
- Ensure employees are familiar with any health and safety hazards.
- Ensure that employees are familiar with the proper use of all devices, equipment and clothing required for their protection.
- Ensure that employees are not exposed to health or safety hazards.
- Consult and co-operate with the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOHSC) or Health and Safety Representative.
- Co-operate with OHS Officers when performing their duties.
- Ensure all workplace parties comply with the OHS Act and Regulations.
- Establish an OHS policy and program, where applicable, and a policy respecting the prevention of harassment in the workplace.

Supervisors

- Take every reasonable precaution to protect the health and safety of employees.
- Ensure all protective equipment and devices are used correctly and safely.
- Inform employees about all known or potential health and safety hazards in the workplace.
- Prevent employees from participating in or being subjected to workplace harassment.
- Provide clear, written instructions on measures and procedures to protect employees' health and safety.
- Ensure employees work in compliance with the OHS Act and Regulations.

Employees

- Take every reasonable precaution to protect their own health and safety and the health and safety of others.
- Use safety devices, equipment and clothing as required.
- Maintain respectful behaviour and not engage in workplace harassment.
- Co-operate with the employer and other employees to protect their health and safety.
- Co-operate with OHS Officers when performing their duties.
- Consult and cooperate with the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOHSC) or the Health and Safety Representative.
- Comply with the OHS Act and Regulations.
- Report any condition, device, equipment, machine, or material which may be dangerous, as well as any incidents of workplace harassment.

Employee Rights



The OHS Act provides employees with three basic rights:

RIGHT TO KNOW – Employees have the right to know about health and safety issues affecting their work, including:

- issues that affect your health and safety at work
- health and safety hazards in the workplace
- how to properly use required protective devices, equipment, and clothing
- how to report unsafe conditions or raise health and safety concerns, including workplace harassment
- the workplace's OHS policy or program, if applicable, and the workplace harassment prevention policy
- required training for equipment, processes, and procedures
- reports from OHS inspections, monitoring, and tests
- the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOHSC) or Health and Safety Representative, if applicable

RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE – Employees can take part in health and safety decisions, including:

- participating as a JOHSC member or Health and Safety Representative
- providing input on matters that affect your health and safety
- reporting unsafe conditions or any matter related to your health and safety, including workplace harassment
- contributing to a respectful and safe workplace
- accompanying an OHS Officer during workplace inspections

RIGHT TO REFUSE UNSAFE WORK – Employees have the right to refuse unsafe work when they:

- have reasonable grounds to believe that the work is likely to endanger the health or safety of yourself or any other person at or near the workplace

Refusal Process

- immediately report the issue to a supervisor (the employer)
- if the employer does not remedy the matter to your satisfaction, report it to the JOHSC or Health and Safety Representative
- if the issue is still not remedied; report it to the Occupational Health and Safety Division of the Nova Scotia Department of Labour, Skills and Immigration

Compensation

The employer will continue to pay the employee the same wages/salary and grant the employee the same benefits as would have been received had the employee continued to work while:

- they accompany an OHS officer, the JOHSC or Health and Safety Representative on physical inspection of the workplace
- they may be reassigned to other work

Reprisal

Employees have protections from reprisal under the OHS Act and Regulations.

Reprisal means an action that adversely affects an employee with respect to terms or conditions of employment.

The employer and union cannot take any action against the employee for fulfilling these responsibilities under the OHS Act.

Posting Requirements

The employer is required by law to post certain items in the workplace. The list of items that must be posted includes, but is not limited to:

- the names and contact information of the current Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOHSC) members or the Health and Safety Representative
- the most recent minutes for all Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOHSC) meetings until the next meeting minutes are posted.
- the most up-to-date version of the Occupational Health and Safety Act
- the current telephone number (1-800-9LABOUR or 902-424-5400) for reporting any occupational health or safety concerns to the Occupational Health and Safety Division of the Nova Scotia Department of Labour, Skills and Immigration
- the workplace's occupational health and safety policy, if the workplace must have one
- any order, compliance notice, notice of appeal, deviation or decision relating to the workplace and employer and any code of practice required by the OHS Act or the regulations.

The following documents do not need to be posted but must be made available at the workplace:

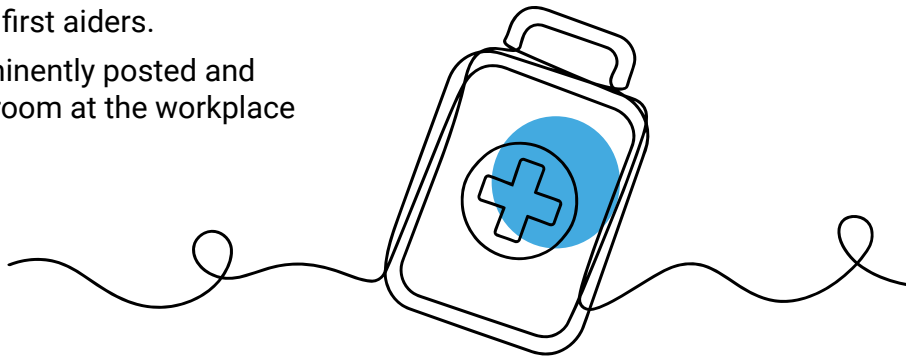
- all regulations related to the workplace and work performed
- information and reports about rights and responsibilities that OHS officers ask to be made available to employees
- a list of all chemical substances in the workplace

In addition to the Act, the following regulations include posting requirements that employers must follow if applicable to their workplace.

First Aid (Workplace Health and Safety Regulations)

The employer must post:

- the location of first aid supplies, and the name and location or phone number of the workplaces' first aiders.
- emergency telephone numbers prominently posted and accessible where there is a first aid room at the workplace



Occupational Safety General Regulations

The employer must post:

- no smoking signs and the names of the gases in the storage areas for portable compressed gas cylinders
- the rated load of a hoist or a revised statement of the hoist's rated load from the manufacturer or an engineer following any repairs or other work that could affect the original rated load
- outside electrical rooms where the components are rated at more than 750 v phase to phase, a sign that clearly states "Danger - High Voltage"
- a currently valid copy of the confined space's certification, outside the entrance to the confined space while employees are in that space

Violence in the Workplace Regulations

The employer must post:

- Prominently post a copy of the workplace violence prevention statement in each workplace location, ensuring it is easily accessible to all employees.

Additional regulations to be posted may apply depending on the industry. Refer to the posting requirements document for more information.

https://novascotia.ca/lae/healthandsafety/docs/ohsa-posting-requirements-en.pdf

Due Diligence

Due diligence demonstrates that reasonable care has been taken to implement proper safety measures before incidents occur. Employers must:

- Identify potential hazards and implement corrective actions
- Document all precautions taken, including:
  - employee orientation, education, and training
  - workplace inspections, hazards identified, and corrective actions
  - incident reports and corrective actions
  - equipment maintenance records and logbooks
  - emergency response plans
  - safe work procedures
  - enforcement of health and safety rules
  - supervisor notes on inspections or safety meetings

Workplace Health and Safety Regulations

The Occupational Health and Safety Act is supported by the Workplace Health and Safety Regulations, which set out specific legal requirements to help prevent workplace injuries and illnesses. The regulations provide detailed rules on topics such as safe work practices, equipment and machinery safety, personal protective equipment, hazard control, and employee training. These requirements help workplaces apply the duties established in the OHS Act and establish clear standards that employers, supervisors, and employees must follow to maintain safe and healthy working conditions.

The Workplace Health and Safety Regulations include requirements related to:

Part 2	→	Occupational Health
Part 3	→	Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System
Part 4	→	First Aid
Part 21	→	Fall Protection
Part 22	→	Work Requiring Rope Access
Part 23	→	Scaffolds and Other Elevated Work-platforms
Part 24	→	Temporary Workplaces on Highways
Part 27	→	Harassment in the Workplace
Part 30	→	Reviews and Appeals
Part 31	→	Administrative Penalties

These requirements establish specific safety standards and practices to help prevent workplace injuries and illnesses.

https://novascotia.ca/just/regulations/regs/ohsworkplace.htm

The regulations set minimum requirements to help prevent workplace injuries and illnesses.

Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS)

Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) is a standardized system that provides information on hazardous products used, handled, or stored in the workplace, so employees can understand the risks and use them safely. Hazardous products are any substance, mixture, or material that meets the specific criteria for physical or health hazards (such as being flammable, toxic, or corrosive).

Some types of products used in the workplace (for example, consumer products) are exempt from WHMIS labelling and Safety Data Sheets (SDS) requirements. However, employees must still be trained on how to safely use these products.

Employer Responsibilities include:

- Know what hazardous products are present in the workplace and how they are used, handled, or stored.
- Inform employees who work with or may be exposed to a hazardous product, of hazard information and safe work procedures.
- Ensure employees are both educated and trained in WHMIS.
  - Education covers general topics, such as information required on labels and SDS. This does not change from one workplace to another, and an employee can use this WHMIS education in any workplace.
  - Training covers worksite and job-specific information on how to safely use the specific hazardous products used in the workplace.
- Ensure up-to-date Safety Data Sheets (SDS) are available to employees for the hazardous products in the workplace, and that employees know how to access the SDS.
- Ensure hazardous products are properly labeled. This can be a supplier label, workplace label or other means of identification depending on the circumstances.

Employee Responsibilities include:

- Participate in WHMIS education and training programs.
- Take precautions to protect their own health and safety, as well as that of employees.
- Participate in identifying and controlling hazards.

Supplier Responsibilities include:

- Provide supplier labels and SDS for all hazardous products supplied to the workplace.

First Aid



First aid refers to the immediate assistance and treatment provided to an employee who is injured or becomes ill at work until the employee can receive professional medical care.

Employer Responsibilities

- Provide and maintain first aid supplies, services, and first aiders at each workplace, at their own expense.
- Make sure the recommended number, type and size of first aid kits are available based on the type of workplace, the number of employees per shift and the surface travel time.
- Cover the cost of an employee's first aid course and the employee's regular wage and benefits while taking the course.
- Keep a copy of valid workplace first aid certificates for each trained first aider.
- Make sure that the minimum number of first aiders are present during working hours.
- Post the location of first aid supplies and contact information for first aiders throughout the workplace.
- Keep a written record of every injured employee who is given first aid at the workplace.
- Provide a safe and timely method of transporting an injured person from the workplace to a medical facility.

Employee Responsibilities

- Report all injuries to the employer as soon as possible.
- Comply with any applicable isolated workplace first aid plan.

A first aider must provide first aid to an injured employee as soon as possible, as they have been trained.

For more information about first aid requirements, review the Workplace First Aid guide.

https://novascotia.ca/lae/healthandsafety/docs/workplace-first-aid-a-guide-for-employers-and-first-aiders.pdf

Harassment in the Workplace

Workplace harassment means a single significant occurrence or a course of repeated occurrences of objectionable or unwelcome conduct, comment, or action in the workplace, including bullying, that, whether intended or not, degrades, intimidates, or threatens.

Workplace harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- harassment or bullying based on any personal characteristic but not limited to a characteristic referred to in the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act
- inappropriate sexual conduct, including sexual solicitation or advances, sexually suggestive remarks or gestures, circulating or sharing inappropriate images, or unwanted physical contact

This definition does not include any action taken by an employer or supervisor relating to the management and direction of an employee or the workplace.

To learn more about preventing harassment in the workplace, visit:

https://preventworkplaceharassment.ca

Violence in the Workplace Regulations

Workplace violence includes threats, attempted violence, or behaviour that could cause physical harm to an employee. It also includes situations where an employee reasonably believes their safety is at risk or they may be injured.

In workplaces covered by the Violence in the Workplace Regulations, employers are responsible for conducting a violence risk assessment and applying best practices to prevent and reduce the impacts of workplace violence. In some cases, workplaces are also required by law to complete a risk assessment and develop a workplace violence prevention plan.

They include, but are not limited to:

- healthcare and related workplaces
- educational settings
- places where correctional or security services are in use
- service sector where money is exchanged or liquor is sold or consumed
- other workplaces where employees interact with the public

A violence risk assessment is a valuable tool for identifying workplace violence risks. When employers and employees work together to identify and reduce these risks, workplaces become safer for everyone. A key part of prevention is challenging the idea that violence is a normal part of work.

To learn more about which workplaces are affected by the regulations, refer to the Violence in the Workplace Regulations.



https://novascotia.ca/just/regulations/regs/ohsviolence.htm

Occupational Safety General Regulations

The Occupational Safety General Regulations are regulations under the Occupational Health and Safety Act that set out essential rules and practices to keep all workplaces in Nova Scotia safe and healthy. They provide a clear framework for preventing accidents, injuries, and occupational illnesses, and cover areas such as:

- Part 3 → Personal Protective Equipment
- Part 4 → Ventilation, Lighting, Sanitation and Accommodation
- Part 5 → Handling and Storage of Material
- Part 6 → Lock-out
- Part 7 → Hoists and Mobile Equipment
- Part 8 → Mechanical Safety
- Part 9 → Tools
- Part 10 → Welding, Cutting, Burning and Soldering
- Part 11 → Electrical Safety
- Part 12 → Confined Space Entry
- Part 13 → Premises and Building Safety, Construction and Demolition
- Part 15 → Surface Mine Workings
- Part 16 → Equipment for Firefighters

For more information, review the Occupational Safety General Regulations.



https://novascotia.ca/just/regulations/regs/ohsgensf.htm

Health and Safety Representative

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In Nova Scotia, workplaces with 5 to 19 employees are required to have a Health and Safety Representative. This representative must be selected from among the employees at the workplace who are not connected with the management of the workplace.

The Health and Safety Representative serves as the link through which employers and employees can communicate and work together on matters relating to health and safety in the workplace.

Role of a Health and Safety Representative

The Health and Safety Representative brings employee concerns to managers and employers on behalf of all employees. The role also includes:

- Cooperating with all workplace parties to identify hazards to health and safety and effective ways to respond to them.
- Cooperating with all workplace parties to ensure compliance with health and safety requirements.
- Handling matters and complaints regarding workplace health and safety and cooperating with the employer to investigate and address them promptly.
- Participating in inspections, inquiries, and investigations concerning workplace health and safety.
- Advising on individual protective devices, equipment, and clothing that best meet employee requirements, in accordance with the Act and regulations.
- Advising the employer regarding any policy or program required by the Act and regulations.
- Recommending improvements to health and safety for all persons at the workplace to the employer, employees, and any other involved parties.



Selecting a Health and Safety Representative

A suggested process for choosing a representative:

- Organize a group meeting with all employees.
- Review the role of a health and safety representative.
- Ask employees to choose someone who is not a manager or supervisor.
- Managers and supervisors should leave the room while employees make their choice.
- If a leader does not emerge, employees may submit anonymous written choices, which are collected and counted.
- If the chosen employee declines the role, allow them to step aside and select the next person.
- Ensure the new representative understands their role.

Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOHSC)

A Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOHSC) is required in workplaces with 20 or more regular employees. They consist of employers and employees working together to improve occupational health and safety, proactively identify concerns and hazards, and implement corrective actions.

Workplace parties (employers and employees) are responsible and accountable for decisions regarding occupational health and safety. The committee provides advice and guidance on health and safety issues to workplace parties at all levels.

The Health and Safety Representative or JOHSC play an important role in identifying workplace safety concerns and making recommendations.

For more information, review the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee/ Health and Safety Representative Practical Guide.



https://novascotia.ca/lae/healthandsafety/docs/JOHSC-health-and-safety-representative-guide-en.pdf



Workplace Policies

Health and Safety Policy

A Health and Safety Policy provides a clear statement of an employer's commitment to preventing injuries and illness and promoting a safe workplace. It explains how employers and employees can work together to maintain a safe environment, guides safe work practices, and encourages everyone to take part in protecting health and safety.

For workplaces with five to 19 employees, an OHS policy is required by law. The policy should reflect the specific needs of your business and be clearly understood and followed by all employees.

Employer Commitments

- Provide a safe, healthy and respectful workplace for all employees.
- Integrate health and safety practices in daily work activities and decision making.
- Consult and collaborate with all levels of the organization to effectively implement the OHS Policy.
- Monitor the policy's effectiveness by setting and reviewing OHS objectives and targets.
- Comply with all applicable OHS legislation as a minimum requirement.
- Ensure the policy is documented, communicated, and accessible.

Employer Responsibilities

- Maintain a safe, healthy and respectful workplace to protect the health and safety of everyone.
- Take all reasonable precautions to prevent workplace injury, illness, and harassment.
- Ensure the policy is implemented, followed and that all employees understand their roles and responsibilities.
- Review the policy annually, or more frequently if workplace conditions or legislation change.

Employee Responsibilities

- Follow the health and safety policy.
- Cooperate with health and safety representatives and authorities.
- Report hazards, incidents, injuries, or illnesses promptly.
- Protect their own health and safety by following rules and procedures.

How to Develop a Health and Safety Policy

Employees from across the workplace should be involved in creating the health and safety policy whenever possible. Collaboration with staff ensures the policy reflects actual work practices and supports compliance with health and safety requirements. The policy does not need to be long or detailed, but it should represent the work performed in the workplace and be written clearly so everyone understands and can work safely.

The Health and Safety Policy should:

- State the workplace's commitment to occupational health and safety.
- Explain the reasons for this commitment.
- Include a commitment to cooperate with employees to create a healthy and safe workplace.
- Outline health and safety responsibilities for all employees at every level.

The Health and Safety Policy is a living document. The workplace must update it whenever job functions or business activities change and conduct a full review at least once a year. The policy must be put into practice through action, and all work activities must follow the requirements and procedures outlined in the policy.

Tips for Putting Your Policy into Action

- Sign the policy to show the employer's commitment.
- Use clear, simple language that all employees can understand.
- Review the policy annually in cooperation with employees.
- Ensure every employee sees and understands the policy.

The Health and Safety policy establishes direction and accountability, but it cannot effectively address every workplace risk on its own, as risks can differ across job tasks, work settings, and operational situations.

Preventing Harassment Policy

Employers must establish and implement a written workplace harassment prevention policy. A sample policy was developed to help workplaces meet the requirements of the Harassment in the Workplace Regulations.

Appendix 1.1: Preventing Harassment Policy

For more information about the policy, you can review Harassment in the Workplace Guide for Employers.

https://preventworkplaceharassment.ca/publications/harassment-in-the-workplace-guide-for-employers.pdf

Other Workplace Policies

To protect employees, support supervisors, and meet evolving workplace challenges, organizations benefit greatly from implementing supplementary safety policies that address specific hazards and responsibilities. These policies turn commitment into action, clarify expectations, and help create a strong safety culture.

This section provides an overview of the importance and benefits of several workplace safety policies that complement an OHS policy.

Policy	Benefits
Company Safety Policy A Company Safety Policy expands upon the OHS Policy by outlining how safety is managed day-to-day within the organization.	Defines roles and responsibilities for managers, supervisors, employees, and contractors. Reinforces management's leadership and accountability for safety. Clarifies expectations for compliance with safety procedures, training, and reporting. Supports consistent application of safety rules across all work areas. Serves as a reference point for disciplinary and corrective action processes. A clear Company Safety Policy helps ensure safety is not viewed as a standalone requirement, but as an integrated part of how work is planned and performed.

Policy	Benefits
Workplace Violence Policy Workplace violence and harassment are recognized hazards that can cause serious physical injury, psychological harm, and long-term organizational damage.	Demonstrates zero tolerance for violence, harassment, threats, and bullying.Provides clear definitions and examples of unacceptable behaviour. Establishes procedures for reporting, investigating, and responding to incidents. Encourages early reporting, reducing escalation and harm. Supports a respectful, inclusive, and psychologically safe workplace. In Nova Scotia, managing workplace violence is part of an employer's general duty to protect employee health and safety. A dedicated policy ensures this risk is addressed proactively rather than reactively.
Emergency Preparedness Policy Emergencies such as fires, chemical spills, medical incidents, power outages, or severe weather can occur without warning. A written Emergency Preparedness Policy ensures the organization is ready to respond.	Identifies potential emergency scenarios specific to the workplace. Establishes evacuation procedures, muster points, and emergency roles. Clarifies communication protocols during emergencies. Reduces confusion and panic by ensuring employees know what to do. Helps minimize injuries, property damage, and business interruption. Effective emergency preparedness reinforces employee confidence and demonstrates due diligence in protecting people during high-risk situations.
Ergonomics Policy Musculoskeletal injuries (MSIs) are one of the most common causes of workplace injury in Nova Scotia, often resulting from repetitive motions, poor posture, or improper workstation design.	Promotes early identification and correction of ergonomic hazards. Encourages proper workstation setup and safe manual handling techniques. Reduces risk of sprains, strains, and repetitive strain injuries. Improves employee comfort, productivity, and job satisfaction. Supports long-term health and reduces lost-time injury claims. An Ergonomics Policy shows commitment to preventing injuries before they occur, rather than reacting after employees are hurt.
Drug and Alcohol Policy Impairment from drugs, alcohol, or other substances creates significant safety risks, particularly in safety-sensitive roles.	Establishes clear expectations regarding fitness for work. Defines prohibited behaviours and reporting responsibilities. Supports supervisors in recognizing and responding to impairment. Balances safety requirements with employee dignity and accommodation. Helps prevent incidents caused by poor judgment, slowed reaction time, or reduced awareness A well-structured Drug and Alcohol Policy prioritize safety while also supporting employees through fair, respectful, and legally defensible processes.

How These Policies Work Together

The Occupational Health and Safety Policy sets the vision and commitment and supporting policies cover the following:

- Translate that commitment into practical controls
- Address specific hazards and high-risk situations
- Provide clarity and consistency for employees and supervisors
- Strengthen compliance and due diligence
- Reinforce a strong and proactive safety culture

Together, these policies support workplace safety practices that protect employees, support leaders, and reduce organizational risk.

Appendix 1.2: Other workplaces policies

Company Rules

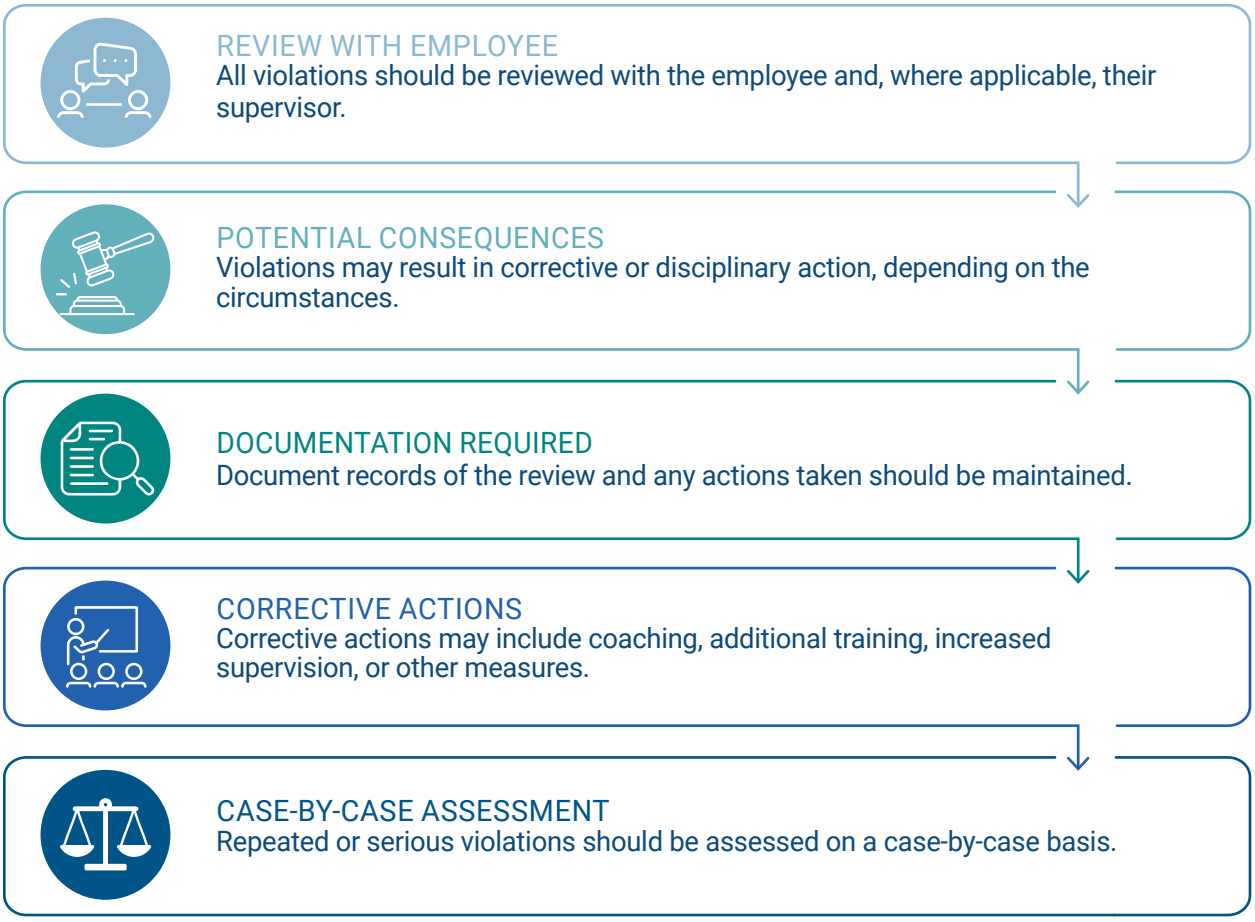
Company rules are guidelines for employees about responsibilities, workplace behavior, and safety. They cover following workplace policies, complying with laws and regulations, and meeting expectations for how work is done and how people interact with each other. These rules help everyone work together in a safe, healthy, and respectful workplace.

Examples of company rules include:

- Fighting, horseplay, practical jokes or any attempts to interfere with an employee are prohibited.
- Theft, vandalism or any other misuse or abuse of company property is prohibited.
- All unsafe acts or conditions including “near miss” incidents, are to be reported to appropriate supervisor, this includes damage to property or injury to anyone around the workplace (including members of the public).
- Possession or consumption of alcohol or drugs on company premises is prohibited. Employees should not be impaired at work.
- Employees will arrive prepared to work, which includes dressing appropriately, sufficiently rested and on time.
- Management should be notified of any absences prior to the beginning of scheduled shifts.
- All employees should work in accordance with company safe work procedures.
- All management and employees shall remove any damaged equipment from service immediately.
- All employees are responsible for keeping the workplace clean and orderly.

Disciplinary Actions

Employees are required to comply with the Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations, as well as company health and safety policies, procedures, and safe work practices. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action, which includes:



Occupational Health and Safety Program

Nova SAFE

An occupational health and safety program helps employers and their employees meet their responsibilities as defined in the OHS Act and Regulations.

For companies with 20 or more employees, it is a legal requirement. An effective health and safety program will reduce incidents and losses, while helping employers and employees perform and demonstrate due diligence.

All businesses, whether small or large, should have a Health and Safety policy. While small businesses (5 to 19 employees) are not required to have an OHS program, it is considered good practice for companies of any size to establish one.

Workplace Safety Inspections

Workplace inspections are a core part of a safety management system. They help identify hazards, correct unsafe conditions, prevent injury and illness, and support due diligence as required under the Nova Scotia Occupational Health and Safety Act.

Inspections also promote safe work habits and show employees that health and safety is taken seriously.

Who Should Participate

All workplace parties are expected to participate in workplace inspections, including:

- Employers
- Supervisors
- Managers
- Maintenance personnel
- Health and Safety Representatives or Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOHSC) members, where applicable
- Employees

Everyone has a responsibility to report hazards and participate in keeping the workplace safe.

Types of Workplace Inspections

Workplace inspections help identify hazards, prevent harm, and reinforce safe work practices. Inspections may be formal or informal, and both are required to effectively manage workplace hazards.



Formal Inspections

Formal inspections are planned, scheduled, and systematic examinations of the workplace or specific work areas. They are conducted to proactively identify unsafe conditions and unsafe acts.

Scope
Formal inspections may include:
- Work areas
- Machinery, tools, and equipment
- Materials and substances
- Work practices and procedures
- Environmental conditions

Task Analysis
Task analysis involves breaking a job into steps to identify hazards and controls at each stage. Employees should always be involved, as they understand the job best .

Steps:
- Select the task to be analyzed
- Identify each step of the task
- Identify and rank hazards at each step
- Determine how to eliminate or control the hazards
- Develop or update a safe work procedure

Inspection Checklists
A workplace inspection checklist must be used.

Checklists help:
- Clarify inspection responsibilities
- Ensure consistency
- Record hazards and observations
- Support follow up and corrective action

Important: Checklists are tools. Inspectors must remain alert to hazards that may not appear on the checklist.

Informal Inspections

Informal inspections are ongoing observations made during normal work activities. They focus on awareness of hazards and existing controls.

Key Characteristics
- Can be done at any time
- No checklist is required
- Anyone can perform them

Observation and Reporting
Everyone in the workplace can help identify hazards by:
- Being aware of their surroundings
- Listening to employee concerns and acting on them immediately
- Learning from visitor observations
- Reporting known or suspected hazards and near misses right away

Reporting is encouraged and valued. All reported concerns must be assessed and addressed.

Expectations
- Employees are expected to conduct informal inspections as part of their daily duties
- Employees are encouraged to promptly report hazards to a supervisor or employer

Informal inspections support early hazard identification and reinforce a shared safety culture.

Both formal and informal inspections are essential. Documentation helps track inspection results and must include the following:

- A written record must be kept
- Identified hazards must be documented
- Corrective actions must be tracked until completed

Appendix 3: Workplace Inspection Checklist

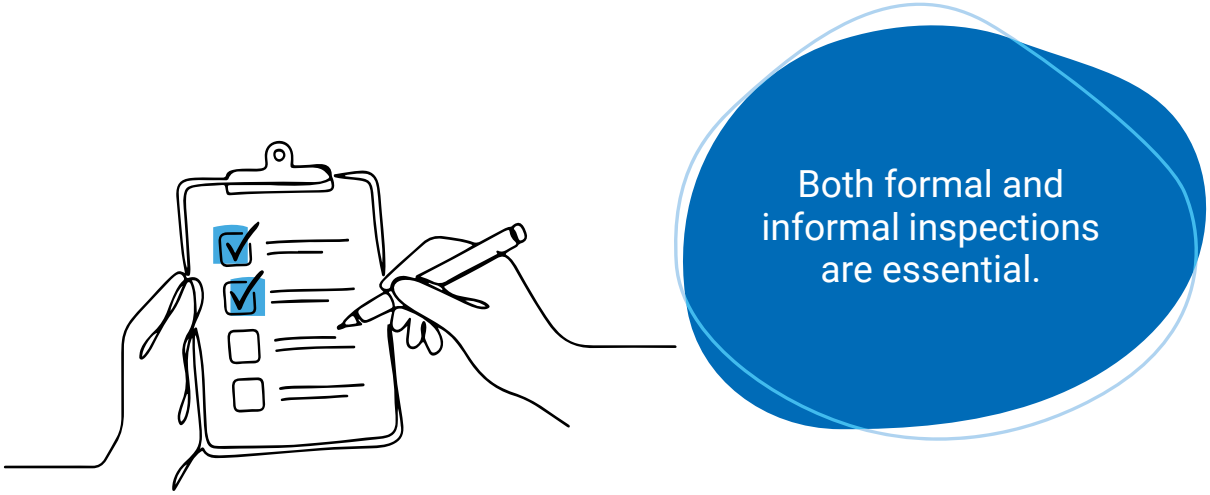
Frequency of Inspections

Frequency of inspections refers to how often workplace inspections are conducted to ensure hazards are identified and addressed on a regular basis.

- Informal inspections should occur continuously throughout the workday
- Equipment and tools should be visually checked daily to ensure they are in safe working condition
- Formal inspection schedules must be followed as part of an OHS Program, where applicable.

Continuous Improvement

Regular workplace inspections, both formal and informal, support continuous improvement and help demonstrate due diligence under the OHS Act. Inspection findings should be reviewed to identify trends and prevent recurrence of hazards.



Inspections by an Occupational Health and Safety Officer

Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Officers support safe, healthy and respectful workplaces across Nova Scotia by verifying and enforcing compliance with the OHS Act and Regulations.

How OHS Officers Support Workplace Safety

- Protects employee rights under the OHS Act and Regulations and encourages cooperation between employers, supervisors and employees.
- Educates employers on identifying, assessing, and controlling workplace hazards.
- Helps assess risks and recommends safe work practices.

Roles and Duties of an OHS Officer

- Provide information and guidance on workplace health and safety requirements.
- Monitor compliance through inspections and investigations.
- Review workplace policies, procedures, records, supervision and training.
- Advise employers on systems that prevent workplace injury, illness and harassment.
- Promote health and safety practices that are accessible, inclusive, respectful and consistently applied in the workplace.

Powers of an OHS Officer

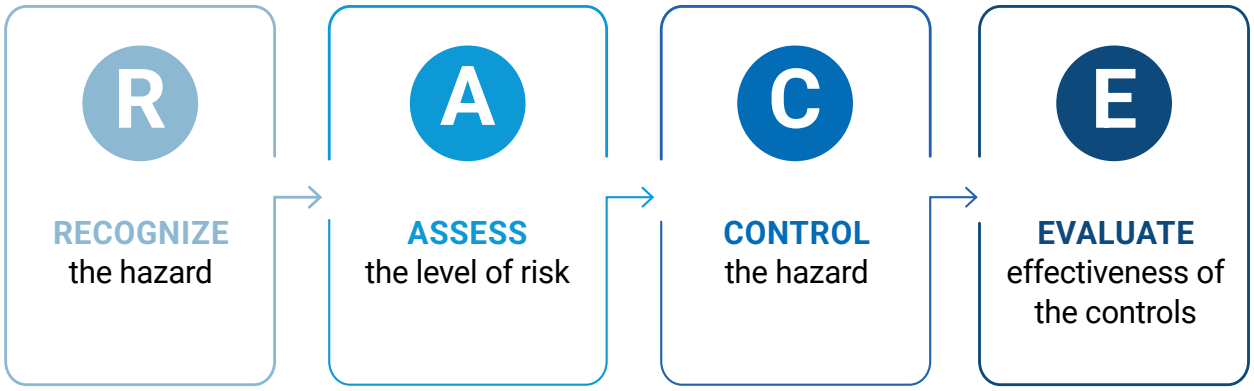
- Enter and inspect a workplace at a reasonable time.
- Request and copy workplace records, plans and other relevant documents.
- Conduct inspections, investigations, inquiries, tests and sampling to ensure compliance with the OHS Act and Regulations.
- Take photographs or recordings of the workplace and any activity taking place in the workplace.
- Interview workplace parties and ask questions related to workplace health and safety.
- Bring in technical experts to assist with inspections or testing.
- Invite JOHSC members or Health and Safety Representatives to participate in workplace inspections.
- Issue compliance orders, stop-work orders or administrative penalties when safety requirements are not met.

OHS Officer Workplace Visits

Hazard Recognition, Assessment, Control, and Evaluation (RACE)

Every workplace has hazards, regardless of the type of work being performed. If hazards are not recognized and addressed, they can lead to injury, illness, property damage, environmental harm, or disruption to workplace operations.

RACE is a practical process that workplaces can use to manage hazards:



The process helps employers and employees identify hazards, prioritize risks, select appropriate controls, and confirm that those controls continue to protect everyone in the workplace.

Recognize The Hazards

What is a Hazard

A hazard is anything with the potential to cause harm to people, property, or the environment. Hazards generally fall into two broad categories: health hazards and safety hazards.



Health Hazards	Safety Hazards
May endanger an employee's physical health. They may take time to show an impact.	Could cause bodily injury or property damage. They often have an immediate impact.
Examples of Health Hazards:	**Examples of safety hazards:**
Chemical: Includes any form of chemical, such as compressed gases, solvents, and lead	**Machine:** Includes hazards from moving parts like rotating shafts, belts, pulleys, blades, and saws
Physical: Includes noise, vibration, heat, cold, and radiation	**Energy:** Includes pneumatic or hydraulic pressure, steam, heat, and electricity
Ergonomic: Includes design of the workplace and jobs that involve repetition, force, and posture	**Material Handling:** Includes manual and mechanical handling—lifting, lift trucks, conveyors
Biological: Includes organisms or toxic substances produced by living things that can cause illnesses or disease in humans, such as bacteria, viruses, fungi, parasites, and insects	**Work Practices:** Working unsafely, as a result of either safe work practices not being in place or failure to follow them
Psychosocial: Includes high work demand, lack of control over work, harassment, bullying violence	

Identifying Hazards

Hazard identification is the first step in controlling risk. Hazards should be recognized before new work begins and whenever equipment, materials, processes, staffing, or workplace conditions change.

Hazards can be identified by:

- Conducting planned workplace inspections
- Analyzing job tasks and work processes
- Observing work activities and conditions
- Reviewing incident, near miss, and inspection records
- Encouraging employees, contractors, and visitors to report hazards

Hazard identification is the first step in controlling risk.

Consider All Workplace Factors

The PEMEP (People, Equipment, Material, Environment, Process) method can help workplaces consider different sources of hazards:

People	Are employees trained and competent as required? Are safe work practices being followed? Are employees using required Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)?
Equipment	Is equipment in good working condition? Are guards, switches, and emergency stop in place and functioning? Has defective equipment been removed from service?
Materials	Are materials and substances properly labeled and stored? Are hazardous products handled in accordance with safety requirements?
Work Environment	Are there hazards related to lighting, noise, housekeeping, weather, or ventilation? Does the environment increase the risk of injury or illness?
Processes and Procedures	Are safe job procedures in place? Are employees following established procedures? Are shortcuts or unsafe practices occurring?

Assess the Level of Risk

Once a hazard has been recognized, the risk must be assessed. A hazard assessment helps determine how likely the hazard is to cause harm, how serious that harm could be, and which hazards should be addressed first.

Key benefits of hazard assessments:

- Create hazard awareness
- Identify who may be harmed
- Evaluate existing controls
- Determine the need for safe work procedures
- Prevent injuries and illnesses
- Improve communication about hazards

The hazard assessment determines the risk level by considering:

- **Severity:** How serious the harm could be (from minor injury to fatality)
- **Likelihood:** How likely the hazard is to occur

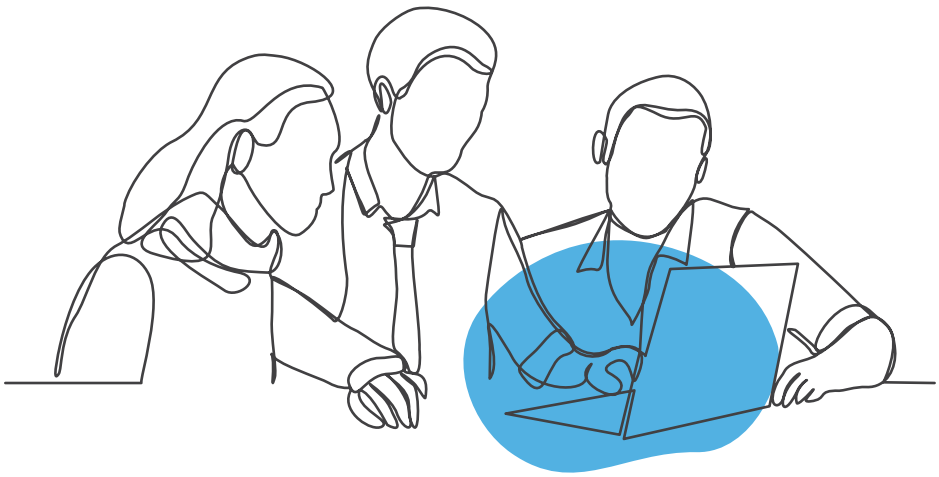
Hazards should be prioritized so that those with the highest risk are addressed first.

	LIKELIHOOD			
SEVERITY	**Unlikely**	**Possible**	**Likely**	**Certain**
Low	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
Medium	**2**	**4**	**6**	**8**
High	**3**	**6**	**9**	**12**
Fatale	**4**	**8**	**12**	**16**

Hazard assessments should be completed by a competent person using reliable sources, such as legislation, workplace procedures, safety data sheets, inspection reports, and employee knowledge. Some hazards may require specialized testing or technical advice, and findings should be documented.

The goal is to identify, document, and control all hazards related to the task or process. Risk ranking helps identify which hazards are most serious by considering likelihood and severity. It helps prioritize control measures, allocate resources efficiently, and focus on addressing the most significant hazards first. Although not a legal requirement, it is a good practice for employers to use risk ranking to manage hazards effectively.

Appendix 2: Hazard Assessment



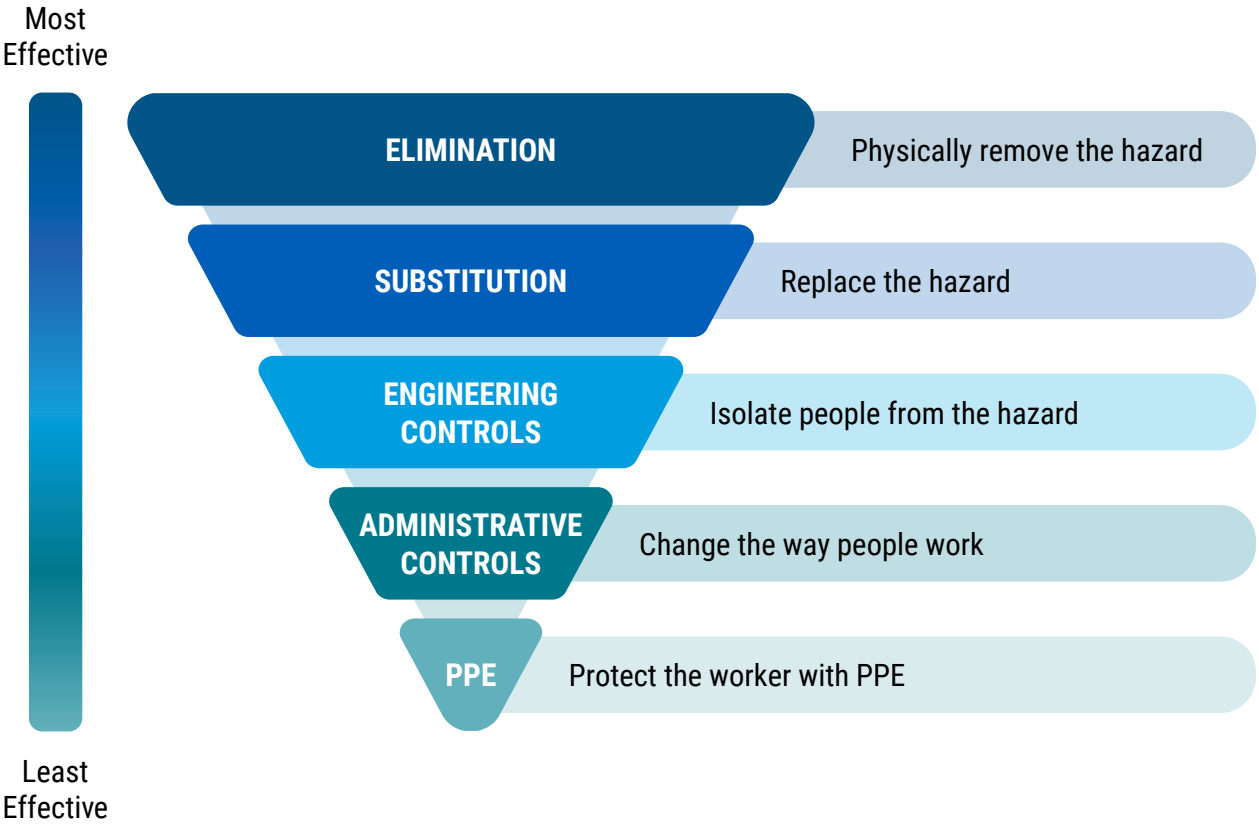
Control the Hazards

The selection and implementation of appropriate controls are based on the risk level determined through the hazard assessment. The goal is to eliminate the hazard whenever possible. When elimination is not reasonably achievable, the risk should be reduced using the most effective controls available.

In some situations, a hazard cannot be controlled using a single type of control method. If the hazard cannot be eliminated, a combination of controls may be required. For example, winter driving for work may be controlled by avoiding travel during extreme weather (elimination), considering other transportation options such as public transit (substitution), using winter tires (engineering control) and providing driver training (administrative control).

Hierarchy of Controls

The hierarchy of controls helps workplaces select the most effective methods for eliminating or reducing hazards. Controls at the top of the hierarchy are generally more effective because they remove or reduce the hazard at its source, while controls lower in the hierarchy rely more on employee actions.



Controls	Examples
Elimination Completely remove the hazard. This is the best option whenever possible.	**Examples:** • Removing trip hazards • Disposing of unnecessary chemicals
Substitution Replace the hazard with something safer.	**Examples:** • Using less toxic substances • Using smaller containers to reduce lifting risks • Replacing ladders with scaffolding
Engineering Controls Isolate people from the hazard using physical measures.	**Examples:** • Machine guards and barriers • Local exhaust ventilation • Safety switches • Hoists, trolleys, or enclosed systems
Administrative Controls Change how work is performed.	**Examples:** • Safe work procedures • Training and supervision • Job rotation or scheduling changes • Warning signs and labels
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) PPE is the last line of defense and should be used only when other controls are not practical or while better controls are being implemented. Requirements for PPE: • Correct type for the hazard • Proper fit and comfort • Employee training on use, care, and limitations • Clean, well maintained storage	**Examples:** Gloves, safety footwear, eye and hearing protection, high visibility clothing, protective headwear, and fall arrest equipment.

Employees provide valuable insight into the work and can help identify practical and effective hazard controls. Their feedback should be encouraged and considered when reviewing controls, especially if new hazards or risks are identified.

Evaluate the Effectiveness of Controls

The RACE process does not end when controls are implemented. Controls must be evaluated to determine whether they are working as intended.

Evaluation helps confirm that the controls:

- have been fully implemented
- have eliminated or reduced the risk
- are being used correctly
- remain effective over time
- comply with applicable requirements
- have not created new hazards

Methods of Evaluation

The effectiveness of controls may be evaluated through:

- employee feedback
- observation of work activities
- follow-up inspections
- exposure monitoring or testing
- review of incidents and near misses
- review of equipment performance
- comparison of conditions before and after implementation
- verification that procedures are being followed

Where possible, the method for evaluating a control should be determined before the control is implemented. This establishes what will be measured and what will be considered an acceptable result.

RACE is a continuous process rather than a one-time exercise. Workplace conditions change, equipment deteriorates, new materials are introduced, and work practices evolve. Regular inspections, employee participation, hazard reporting, documentation, and follow-up help ensure that hazards continue to be effectively managed.

It must be reviewed:

- When tasks or equipment change
- After incidents or near misses
- When new hazards are identified
- As part of regular inspections and assessments

Maintaining a safe workplace requires ongoing attention, communication, and continuous improvement of hazard controls.

Incident and Near Miss Investigation Procedure

Nova SAFE

The purpose of incident and near miss investigations is to prevent future injuries and damage by identifying what happened, why it happened, and how it can be prevented from happening again. Investigations focus on fact finding, not fault finding.

What Must Be Investigated

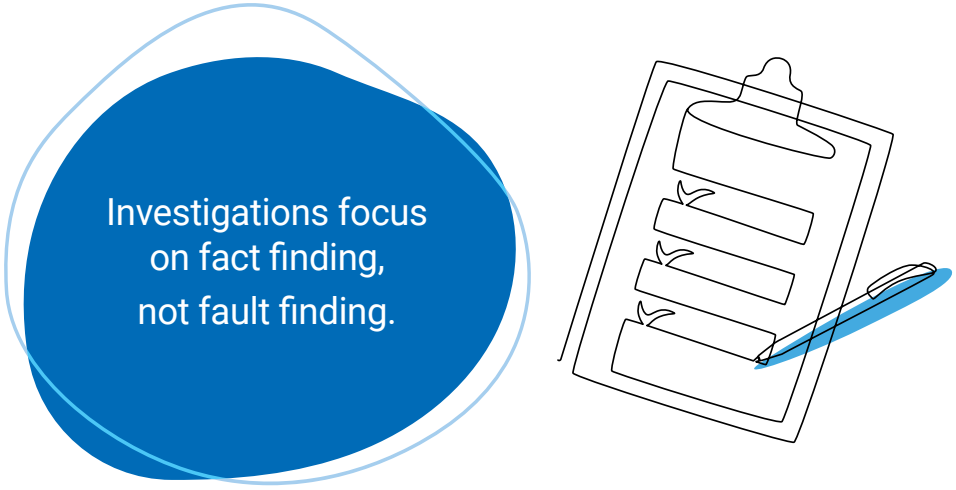
The following types of workplace incidents and events must be investigated:

- All workplace incidents, including injuries and property damage
- All near misses, even when no one is injured
- Serious incidents, including those involving critical injury or fatality

Near misses must be investigated because they often signal hazards that could lead to serious injuries in the future.

Investigation Timing

It is important to perform an investigation as soon as reasonably possible after the incident or near miss. Early investigation helps preserve evidence and ensures accurate information is collected.



Serious Incident Reporting Requirements

External Reporting

If an incident involves a serious injury or fatality, the following organizations must be contacted:

Department of Labour, Skills and Immigration (LSI)

By law, the employer must contact LSI within 24 hours if the incident involves any of the following:

- Fire or flood
- Loss of consciousness
- Fracture of the skull, spine, pelvis, arm, leg, ankle, wrist, or major part of the hand or foot
- Loss or amputation of any limb, finger, or toe
- Third degree burns
- Asphyxiation or poisoning
- Injury requiring hospital admission
- Loss of sight in one or both eyes
- Injury that endangers life
- Accidental explosion
- Major structural failure or collapse
- Release of a hazardous substance
- Fall from a location requiring fall protection, whether injured or not
- Fatality

Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia (WCB Nova Scotia)

All workers injuries must be reported to WCB within 5 business days. Late reporting may result in financial penalties.

Police

The police must be contacted when required, including in the event of a fatality.



Requirements to Accident Reporting - Working Safe in Nova Scotia

Preserving the Incident Scene

It is important to remember not to disturb the scene when performing an investigation. The only time it is acceptable to disturb an incident scene is to:

- Provide first aid to an injured person
- Prevent further injury from occurring
- Protect property

Preserving the incident scene means keeping the area unchanged after an incident so it can be properly investigated by securing the area using barriers or tape to protect evidence.

Roles and Competency

Incident investigations must be completed effectively and in a consistent manner to help prevent similar incidents and future injuries.

- Incident investigations should be conducted by individuals with appropriate knowledge and skills
- Training in incident investigation is strongly recommended
- Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee members or Health and Safety Representatives should be involved where applicable

Incident Investigation Process

The incident investigation process is a structured approach used to review and understand an incident to identify causes and prevent recurrence. The steps of the process are outlined on the following page.

Appendix 4.1: Incident Report

Appendix 4.2: Investigation Report



1 Emergency Response	Ensure the safety of all employees and anyone else who may be at risk Identify hazards that could affect responders or others Provide first aid if it is safe to do so Call emergency services if needed
2 Secure the Scene and Identify Witnesses	Secure the area once it is safe Identify potential witnesses who: • Saw the incident • Was nearby before, during, or after the incident Record witness names and contact information promptly
3 Survey and Document the Scene	Assess the area as soon as possible, especially outdoors Take photographs or videos Look for physical evidence such as: • Slip marks • Impact damage • Equipment position Confirm and compare witness statements Identify inconsistencies or contributing factors
4 Collect Information	Use an incident report form to collect the following: Names of injured or involved employees Description and severity of injuries Date, time, and location of the incident Weather conditions (if applicable) Detailed description of what happened Equipment, tools, materials, or machinery involved Who the incident was reported to Names and contact details of witnesses
5 Analyze Causes	Review all collected information Identify root causes, not just immediate causes Remember: • Most incidents have more than one cause • Focus on the root causes of the incident, including system failures, hazards, and processes, rather than blame
6 Determine Corrective Actions	Identify actions needed to: • Eliminate hazards • Control risks • Prevent recurrence Recommendations must be: • Practical • Clearly assigned • Approved and implemented by those with authority
7 Follow Up	Verify that corrective actions have been completed Confirm that controls are effective Update procedures or training as needed

Investigating Near Misses

A near miss is an unplanned event that did not result in injury, illness, or damage, but had the potential to do so. These events should be reviewed to help prevent future incidents.

Near misses should be investigated in the same way as more serious incidents, and what happened should be documented. They don't require the same reporting procedures as more serious incidents, but they still warrant some degree of investigation. Depending on their severity, the investigation may range from:

- A quick assessment and immediate fix
- A complete investigation with interviews

The same principles should be applied to every case, with thorough, complete, and accurate reporting. Near misses do not require external reporting but should be documented in a formal record, reviewed to identify trends or hazards and addressed through corrective actions to prevent recurrence

Employees are encouraged to report near misses and provide input on ways to prevent near misses from becoming more serious incidents.

Key Principles to Remember

- Investigations are about prevention, not blame
- Be thorough, accurate, and objective
- Protect evidence and witness information
- Always follow up to ensure improvements work



Corrective Actions

Corrective actions are the steps taken to eliminate the causes of hazards, incidents, near misses, and non-compliance with health and safety requirements. Effective corrective action is a key component of an occupational health and safety program and demonstrates due diligence.

Corrective actions must effectively eliminate or reduce the risk by following the hierarchy of controls whenever possible. The organization needs to assign a responsible person and set a clear and appropriate due date for each action to:

- Identify appropriate corrective actions, such as implementing control methods, issuing work orders, purchasing required items, or providing training.
- Implement all corrective measures and inform employees about any changes to procedures, equipment, or expectations.
- Track the progress of each action, document all steps taken and evidence of completion and effectiveness, and ensure that tasks are completed by the established due dates.
- Verify that each corrective action has been completed and confirm that it effectively controls the identified hazard, including conducting follow-up inspections, collecting employee feedback, and monitoring incident trends over time.

The organization must maintain accurate records of all corrective actions, including the issues identified, the steps taken, and verification results. These records are reviewed periodically by management, and relevant lessons learned are shared with employees and, where applicable, the JOHSC or Health and Safety Representative.

Regular review of corrective actions helps identify recurring issues and trends, which can be used to improve training, procedures, and overall safety practices. This supports continuous improvement and helps prevent future incidents, promoting a safe and healthy workplace.



Workplace Safety Tools and Resources

To support safe and consistent work practices, organizations can rely on a range of practical tools and resources. These include safe work practices, safe job procedures, and workplace forms. Together, they help identify hazards, guide employees in performing tasks safely, ensure proper documentation, and support compliance with workplace safety regulations.

Safe Work Practices

Safe work practices are practical steps employees can follow to carry out everyday tasks safely. They help recognize hazards, take appropriate precautions, and follow established safety rules. These practices support a safe, healthy, and respectful workplace by helping employees reduce risks to protect themselves and others.

Examples of Safe Work Practices include:

- Motor vehicle operation
- Use of hand tools
- Manual material handling
- Ladder safety
- Office ergonomics

Appendix 5.1: Safe Work Practices

Safe Job Procedures

Safe job procedures are documented, step-by-step instructions for performing specific tasks. They identify potential hazards and outline the precautions required to reduce risks. These procedures guide employees in completing tasks correctly, helping reduce the likelihood of injuries, incidents, or property damage while supporting compliance with workplace safety requirements.

Examples of Safe Job Procedures include:

- Working alone with money
- Violence in the workplace
- Ergonomics

Appendix 5.2: Safe Job Procedures

Emergency Preparedness

Employers should plan and prepare for emergencies to ensure an effective response when an incident occurs.

A written emergency plan should be developed and provided to all individuals who may be required to respond to an emergency in the workplace. This helps prevent confusion regarding roles and responsibilities in the event of an emergency.

The emergency plan should include a list of possible emergencies and procedures for responding to each emergency. Here are some examples:

- Fires or floods
- Injury/medical emergency
- Power outages
- Hazardous material spills
- Natural disasters and severe weather
- Public health (epidemics, etc.)
- Workplace violence
- Cyberattacks

Planning for Emergencies

- Possible emergencies should be identified, and the potential consequences of each emergency should be considered, including situations that may occur at remote work sites.
- Emergency response procedures should be established, including procedures for declaring an emergency, evacuating employees, calling emergency personnel, initiating rescues, and tending to casualties.
- Duties and responsibilities for carrying out the emergency plan should be assigned, and the training required to perform these duties should be identified.
- The personnel, equipment, and other resources required to deal with each emergency should be identified, taking into account the workplace location, existing resources, and the nature of potential emergencies.



Workplace Health and Safety Forms

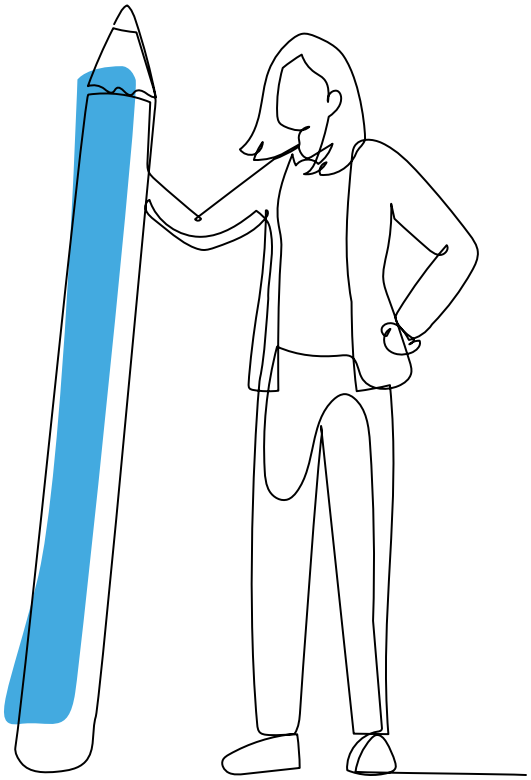
Workplace health and safety forms support consistent practices, clear communication, and effective health and safety management. They help ensure important information is documented, risks are identified and addressed, and records are maintained to support follow-up, compliance, and continuous improvement.

Examples of Workplace Health and Safety Forms include:

- New Employee Orientation Checklist
- Workstation Evaluation Report
- Violence Incident Report
- Workplace Violence Risk Assessment
- Fire Safety Checklist
- Musculoskeletal Disorder Report

Appendix 5.3: Workplace Health and Safety Forms

Workplace health and safety forms support consistent practices, clear communication, and effective health and safety management.



Supporting Ongoing Health and Safety

Communication

Sharing health and safety information helps keep employees and supervisors informed about workplace expectations, responsibilities, policies and procedures. Managers and supervisors can support ongoing communication by keeping employees informed and encouraging open discussion. Employees should have opportunities to ask questions, raise concerns and provide feedback.

Employee Orientation

Orientation helps employees understand their role in maintaining a safe, healthy and respectful workplace. Employees who are new to the organization or starting a new role should receive an orientation covering emergency procedures, first aid resources, restricted areas and workplace hazards. They should also learn and apply the health and safety policies, programs and procedures relevant to their work.

Training

Employees must receive the training and supervision needed to do their work safely. Training should cover relevant OHS requirements, workplace hazards and safe work practices and procedures.

Supervisors must receive the training provided to employees, along with additional training on their responsibilities under OHS legislation and their role in emergency procedures.

Training should be communicated clearly and adapted to meet employees' language, literacy, workplace experience and cultural perspectives.

Training should be updated when employees take on a new role or when new equipment, materials, processes, hazards or work procedures are introduced. Additional training should also be provided when existing knowledge, skills or safety performance require improvement.

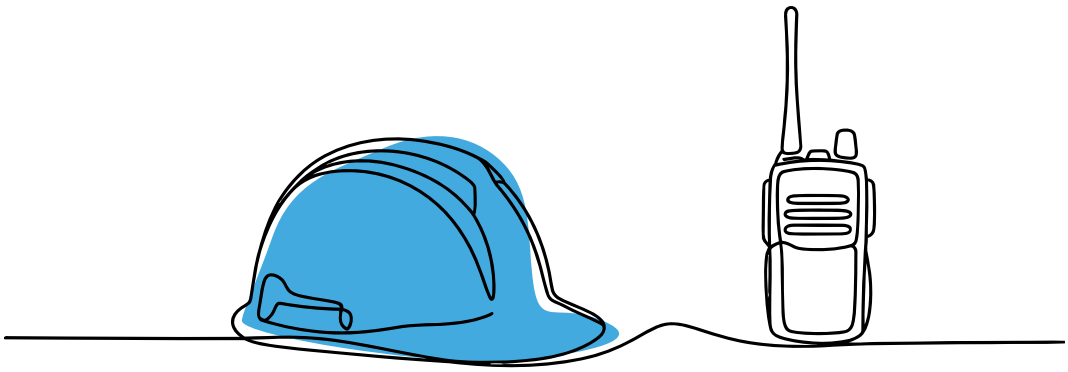
New and Vulnerable Workers

Employees may be more vulnerable to workplace injury when they are new to a workplace, role or type of work. Limited work experience, language or communication barriers and unfamiliarity with workplace safety requirements can also increase the risk.

Employers can help reduce these risks by providing thorough orientation and training on workplace health and safety. They must also provide appropriate supervision, ensure workplace requirements.

Learn more about new and vulnerable worker safety by taking the course on SkillsonlineNS.

New and Vulnerable Worker Safety



Have a question? Get in touch.

Call **1-800-9LABOUR (1-800-952-2687)** or email **SafetyBranch@novascotia.ca** if you see something unsafe or have questions about safety at work or in a public place in relation to technical equipment.

Resources

Websites

Safety Branch
safetybranch.ca

Nova Scotia Occupational Health and Safety
novascotia.ca/ohs

Nova SAFE
novasafe.ca

Preventing Harassment in the Workplace
preventworkplaceharassment.ca

Nova Scotia Safety Data
nssafetydata.ca

Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia (WCB Nova Scotia)
wcb.ns.ca

Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS)
ccohs.ca

Health and Safety Training

Free courses for Nova Scotians
ccohs.ca/catalog/courses_list_nova.php

SkillsonlineNS
skillsonlinens.ca

Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS)
ccohs.ca/products/courses

Forms and templates

Sample Forms and Policy Templates are available online
https://novascotia.ca/lae/healthandsafety/forms.asp

Appendix 1

Workplace Health and Safety policies

1.1 Preventing Harassment policy

The Preventing Harassment Policy must include

Statement:

- Every employee is entitled to a harassment free workplace
- Every employee has an obligation not to engage in harassment
- Employees are encouraged to report workplace harassment
- Employers will not disclose information related to the incident except when required by law, necessary for the purpose of the investigation and necessary for purposes of taking corrective action
- The employer will not reprimand or seek reprisal against employee who has made a
- workplace harassment complaint in good faith
- The employer's workplace harassment prevention policy is not intended to discourage,
- prevent or preclude a complainant from exercising other legal rights pursuant to any other law

Employer Commitment:

- The employer will ensure within reason that no employee will be subjected to workplace
- harassment
- The employer will investigate all workplace harassment complaints
- The employer will take fair and appropriate corrective action

Procedures:

- For reporting workplace harassment to the employer or supervisor
- How to recognize, prevent and respond to workplace harassment
- For making a workplace harassment complaint to a person other than the employer or
- supervisor, if the employer or supervisor is a subject of the complaint
- For investigating a complaint of workplace harassment
- For informing the complainant and subject of the complaint of the result of the investigation or any corrective action that has been or will be taken as a result

Policy Review:

- An employer must review the workplace harassment policy at least once every 3 years and update it, if necessary.
- Welcoming input from employees
- Seeking feedback from JOHSC/health and safety representatives, managers, staff, etc.
- Adjusting policies and procedures as and when needed

Training:

- An employer must ensure their employees are trained on their preventing harassment policy

1.2 Other workplace policies

Company Safety Policy

(Please fill in the blank lines with your company name)

_____ is committed to providing healthy and safe working environment for all employees under our employment. _____ is committed to implementing this safety program to all company activities and tasks.

_____ is responsible for the health and safety for all employees while they are at work and will make every effort to provide a safe and healthy work environment.

_____ will eliminate hazards whenever possible. Where possible, _____ will eliminate the need for personal protective equipment. If that is not possible, _____ will ensure employees have access to and use appropriate personal protective equipment, devices, and materials required to safely perform tasks.

_____ recognizes the employees' duty to identify hazards in the workplace. will provide tools to help employees identify hazards and will work with employees to develop ways to mitigate those hazards in the workplace. _____ will work with employees to identify hazards and will offer suggestions or ideas to improve health and safety at our workplace.

Managers and supervisors will be trained and held responsible for ensuring that:

- Employees under their supervision follow all _____ policies.
- Employees use safe work practices and procedures and receive adequate training to protect their health and safety.
- Equipment and facilities are safe.

Managers and supervisors will work with health and safety representatives and all employees to create a healthy and safe workplace. They will extend this cooperation to others, such as contractors, owners, inspectors, and all others at or near the workplace.

Each employee will review and follow all _____ policies. Employees shall cooperate with health and safety representatives and others exercising authority under applicable laws.

Each employee has the responsibility to protect their own health and safety and the health and safety of those at or near the workplace. This is done by following all _____ applicable laws and by following the policies, procedures, rules and instructions in the workplace. Every employee has the responsibility to report any hazardous conditions, incidents, injuries, or illnesses related to the workplace to their supervisor as soon as possible.

To ensure that this policy continues to meet the needs of the company, _____ will review the policy with employees and safety representatives each year.

Please provide a written response no later than (insert date) as per Section 34(1) of the NS OHS Act list above.

Owner Signature: _____ *Date:* _____

Workplace Violence Policy

(Please fill in the blank lines with your company name)

_____ is committed to creating a safe and healthy workplace for all employees and members of the public at our workplace.

_____ has developed this company wide policy to identify and address violence in the workplace and to protect both employees and patrons from violence in our workplace. Using this policy, the employees will be able to take quick and effective action against any incident that may occur. At any forms of harassment, physical violence or threat of physical violence is strictly prohibited. Any of these threats are to be taken seriously and reported to management immediately.

_____ recognizes the potential for threats or acts of violence against staff from customers at our establishment. This policy has made every effort to identify potential threats and procedures have been developed to mitigate the risks to staff.

_____ will ensure that all staff are aware of potential hazards and are trained in the appropriate actions to take for protection from acts or threats of violence. Employees must follow procedures and immediately report all incidents of violence.

Owner Signature: _____ *Date:* _____

Drug and Alcohol Policy

(Please fill in the blank lines with your company name)

Employees under the influence of drugs or alcohol while at work pose a potential threat to both them and their employees. While at work no employee should possess, purchase, sell, or use illegal or legal substances that may impair judgement. If an employee is on any prescription medication that may impact their ability to perform their job, they should inform their supervisor immediately. Substance abuse is a disability and should any employee require substance abuse assistance, they must inform their human resources manager in writing. HR will work with the employee to get them the help they need. Seeking help is not grounds for dismissal.

Owner Signature: _____ *Date:* _____

Emergency Preparedness Policy

(Please fill in the blank lines with your company name)

_____ is committed to providing fire protection in the event of a fire. The purpose of this policy is to ensure _____ will have an up to date and efficient fire response plan.

The workplace fire response plan will contain the location of emergency exits, fire alarms and fire extinguishers. It will also outline the responsibilities of the employees in the event of a fire. All staff will review the plan annually as well as perform planned fire drills to demonstrate their understanding of the fire response plan.

_____ will provide fire extinguishers and have them tested every twelve months or as specified in OHS regulations. Employees will work with the local fire department and follow their direction in the event of a fire.

Supervisors shall contact senior management to inform them of the fire if they are not on location.

Owner Signature: _____ *Date:* _____

Ergonomics Policy

(Please fill in the blank lines with your company name)

_____ is committed to creating a safe and healthy work environment for all its employees. The development of the ergonomics program is to improve the health of all employees by minimizing ergonomic stressors faced in the workplace. The objective of this policy is to reduce musculoskeletal disorders by eliminating or reducing employee exposure. Having proper ergonomics in the workplace reduces the risk of strains, sprains and other related musculoskeletal injuries. If an employee experiences any signs or symptoms of musculoskeletal disorders, the employee is to report their symptoms to their supervisor and fill out an ergonomics report.

Owner Signature: _____ *Date:* _____

Appendix 2

Hazards Identification and Control

Organization: _____ Date: _____

Location: _____ Assessor: _____

Task	Hazards	Controls	PPE Required

Corrections required:	Notes:

Assessor Signature: _____

Appendix 3

Workplace Inspection Checklist

GUIDELINES

- Workplace inspections are to be completed by a team of a manager representative from the management group, an employee representative from the workplace, a member of their respective JOHSC/Health and Safety Representative (if available).
- This workplace inspection form is fillable. You can print a hard copy of the inspection form and write on manually during the inspection. Before submitting for review, all information MUST be entered in the fillable form and signed by all participants using digital signatures.
- Signed copies are to be sent via email to _____

Address: _____

Date of Inspection: _____

Manager Representative: _____

Employee Representative: _____

JOHSC/Health and Safety
Representative *(if applicable)*: _____

All hazards identified during inspections will be reviewed with the JOHSC/Health and Safety Representative. Corrective actions will be responded to accordingly and reported to

_____

PART I. INSPECTION CHECKLIST

PLEASE CHECK ON THE FOLLOWING ITEMS FOR ANY ISSUES/HAZARDS	YES	NO	N/A	NOTES/COMMENTS
Floors, Aisles and Stairways. Are the aisle ways and passageways clear and unobstructed?	☐	☐	☐	
If there are stairways, are the stair treads and handrails in good condition?	☐	☐	☐	
Electrical Equipment. Are cables, electric cords, and power bars free of damage/dust and located out of walkways?	☐	☐	☐	
Controlled Products. Is there an inventory of all controlled products used at the workplace, including up to date material safety data sheets for each?	☐	☐	☐	
First Aid. First aid kits and AED (where applicable) are in an employee accessible area and clearly marked?	☐	☐	☐	
Is there a list of first aid responders (AED-trained, where applicable) posted?	☐	☐	☐	
Bulletin Board. Is there an OHS bulletin board in this office (where JOHSC meeting minutes, the OHS Act, and internal programs, etc. are posted)?	☐	☐	☐	
Housekeeping and Storage. Are file boxes stacked less than 5 high and in good stable condition?	☐	☐	☐	
Faulty desks, chairs, or other damaged equipment are taken out of service?	☐	☐	☐	
Emergency Preparedness. Does the building have a fire safety plan?	☐	☐	☐	
Are the emergency doors/exits clear and properly marked?	☐	☐	☐	
Are the fire evacuation procedures communicated adequately?	☐	☐	☐	
Are the names of floor emergency wardens posted?	☐	☐	☐	
Do sprinkler heads have a 0.5-meter clearance?				
Are the portable fire extinguishers properly mounted and inspected? Date of inspection:	☐	☐	☐	
Was there a fire drill within the last 12 months? Date of last fire drill:	☐	☐	☐	

PART II. CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

IMPORTANT NOTES

- Please list all action items identified during the inspection, including items addressed during the inspection. You may also indicate the level of urgency of the corrective action required.
- You may include items not completed from previous inspections noting that it is outstanding.
- Please attach additional pages if needed.

IDENTIFIED ISSUES/HAZARDS	EXACT LOCATION	CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED	RESPONSIBLE PERSON
1.			
2.			
3			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			

Manager Signature:

Employee Signature:

JOHSC/Health and Safety Representative Signature:

Appendix 4: Incident and Investigation Reports

NOVA SCOTIA Incident Report

Incident Findings This section to be completed by the supervisor.

Contributing Factors What conditions contributed to the incident?

Unsafe equipment	Improper position/posture	Failure to lockout
Insufficient training	Operating without authority	Hazardous environment
Failure to use PPE	Not or improperly guarded	Infraction or unsafe practice
Inadequate illumination	Insufficient care	

❑ Other (explain): _____

Explanation of contributing factors

Details of property damage (if any)

To your knowledge, has the employee had a previous similar injury or has this similar hazard been reported before? ❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ N/A

Corrective Measures Actions taken to prevent a reoccurrence (more than one item may apply)

Request job safety analysis	Check with manufacturer	Reassignment of person
Improve work procedure	Install safety guard/device	Review PPE
Repair or replace equipment	Perform housekeeping	Constructive discipline
On-the-job training	Re-training of person(s)	

Other (explain): _____

Explanation of corrective measures

Signatures This section to be completed by employee and supervisor.

Date _____ Signature of employee reporting incident _____

Date _____ Signature of supervisor _____

Investigation Report

Investigation Report

Company:	Date:	Time:
Supervisor:	Incident Reported By:	Investigated By:

Injury

Person injured:	Phone Number:	Experience:
Date of Birth:	Address:	Type of Injury:
Location of Injury:	Source of the Injury:	Treatment Required:

Description of the Incident:

Corrective Actions

Actions Taken:	Person Performing Actions:	Due Date:
Employee Performing Actions Print Name:	Employee Performing Actions Signature:	Date:
Manager Print Name:	ManagerSignature:	Date:

Follow up Date:

Appendix 5: Workplace Safety Tools and Resources

5.1 Safe Work Practices

Driving a Motor Vehicle - Potential Safety Hazards	
• Ergonomic hazards, posture. • Material handling hazards. • Energy hazards. • Chemical hazards, gas fumes.	
Safe Work Practices (Do's)	**Safe Work Practices (Don'ts)**
• Read and follow the manufacturer's operation manual and warning label. • Wear your seatbelt. • Wear sunglasses when driving into direct sunlight. • Follow the rules of the road. • When passing ensure it is safe to do so and pass promptly. • Slow down near neighborhoods and playgrounds. • Check local weather and road conditions before you begin driving. • Allow for extra travelling time or consider delaying a trip if there are poor weather conditions. • Use defensive driving techniques. • Be aware of road construction. • Tell someone where you are going, the route you are taking and when you expect to arrive at your destination. • Plan and be realistic about travel times. • Take breaks as required to stretch and refocus. • Only drive when you are alert and sober. • Cellular phone: When you are driving, it is recommended to pull over in a safe area to take a call or let the caller leave a message on the voice mail. • Keep radio volume low enough to hear emergency vehicles. • Keep vehicle in good operating condition and ensure it is serviced regularly. • Report any motor vehicle accidents that occur during company time to your supervisor immediately. • Have an emergency kit in the vehicle.	• Do not drive if you feel drowsy or unwell • Do not use cruise control in poor weather conditions. • Do not exceed the posted speed limit. • In poor road conditions reduce your speed accordingly. • Do not smoke while in the vehicle. • Do not pickup hitchhikers or transport other persons that are not related through employment. • Do not make sudden lane changes. • Do not warm up a vehicle in a closed garage. • Do not multi-task while driving. Pay attention and do not engage in distracting activities such as eating food, putting on make-up and texting. .

Hand Tools Potential Health and Safety Hazards

- Ergonomic hazards (force, repetitive movements, posture).
- Physical hazards (noise, lighting).
- Energy hazards (electricity or pneumatic pressure).
- Machine hazards (moving parts, sharp blades, pinch points).
- Chemical hazards (dust).

Safe Work Practices (Do's)

- Select the right tool for the job.
- Read and follow the manufacturer's instructions and warning labels.
- Wear appropriate PPE for the hazards to which you may be exposed to when doing the required task.
- Use good quality hand tools.
- Maintain tools in good working condition.
- Inspect tools for defects before use.
- Know how to safely use hand tools and identify when they need repair.
- Ask for help or clarification if you have never used a tool before or if you believe something may be broken on the tool.
- Ensure that the handle fits tightly into the head of the tool.
  Replace or repair defective tools.
- Replace cracked or broken handles on files, hammers or screwdrivers.
- Replace worn jaws on wrenches, pipe tools and pliers.
- Keep the work environment clean and tidy.
- Keep cutting tools sharp and cover the edges with a suitable covering to protect the tool and to prevent injuries from unintended contact.
- Ensure there is adequate lighting in the work area.
- Always concentrate on what you are doing.

Safe Work Practices (Don'ts)

- Do not use any broken or unsafe equipment, attach a warning tag, take it out of service and advise your supervisor.
- Do not use any hand tool for the jobs they are not intended to do.

.

Manual Material Handling - Potential Health and Safety Hazards

- Ergonomic hazards; force (lifting and pushing/pulling) and posture (bending, reaching and twisting).
- Physical hazards; lighting.
- Work practice hazards; following established safe work practices and procedures, and general housekeeping practices
- Energy hazards; electricity or pneumatic pressure.

Safe Work Practices (Do's)	Safe Work Practices (Don'ts)
• Wear appropriate personal protective equipment such as work gloves when handling objects with sharp edges and safety footwear when handling heavy objects. • Ensure there is adequate clearance for safe lifting/material handling. • Ensure storage areas are kept tidy, well organized and free of clutter. • Use a hand truck, cart, dolly, wheelbarrow, etc. to move heavy, awkward or bulky objects. Ask for assistance. • Know how to safely handle controlled WHMIS products. • Reduce repetition as much as possible by pacing your work and by varying tasks. • Use a stepladder or step stool to reach high places. • Wherever possible use an elevator to move supplies and equipment between floors. • Ask for assistance and/or use a two-wheeled hand truck dolly to move heavy, awkward or bulky items up or down stairs if an elevator is not available. • Use proper lifting techniques when lifting materials.	• Do not lift or carry items by the packing straps or cords. • Do not use a box, desk or chair to reach high objects. • Do not lift a load if you are not sure that you can handle it safely. . .

Ladder - Potential Health and Safety Hazards

- Ergonomic hazards; force and posture.
- Machine hazards; pinch points
- Energy hazards; electricity or pneumatic pressure.
- Work practice hazards; following established safe work practices and procedures, and general housekeeping practices.

Safe Work Practices (Do's)

- Read and follow the manufacturer's instructions and warning labels.
- Wear appropriate personal protective equipment such as safety footwear (with heels and slip-resistant soles) and safety glasses.
- Manufactured portable ladders must be CSA grade 1 or grade 2 ladders.
- Only one person is permitted to be on a ladder at any time.
- Ensure that all electrical equipment that will be used during ladder work is in good working condition and is properly grounded.
- Keep ladders away from electrical wires.
- Ensure that the work area is clear of debris.
- Ensure there is adequate lighting in the work area.
- If you become dizzy on a ladder you should drape your arms over a rung and rest your head against the ladder. Climb down slowly.
- If working from a ladder 3 meters or more above a safe surface or any distance above an unsafe surface, fall protection should be used if reasonable to do so.

Safe Work Practices (Don'ts)

- Do not use a ladder if you feel drowsy or unwell.
- Do not overreach while on a ladder. Move the ladder when needed.
- Do not use a ladder as a brace or support for a work platform or plank.
- Do not use a ladder on slippery surfaces without securing the ladder's feet.
- Do not use a ladder on soft ground; the legs could sink into the ground.
- Do not place a ladder on a box, cart or other unstable surfaces.
- Do not carry objects in your hands while climbing or descending a ladder. Hoist materials or use a tool belt.
- Do not paint a wooden ladder.
- Do not place a ladder against a flexible or moveable surface.
- Do not allow anyone to stand under a ladder.
- Do not try to straighten or attempt to use a bent or bowed ladder.
- Do not straddle the space between a ladder and another object/surface.
- Do not use a ladder in a passageway, doorway, driveway or other location where a person or vehicle could hit it. Set up suitable barriers or lock doors.
- Do not work or climb higher than the fourth rung from the top of a ladder.
- Do not leave ladders unattended.
- Do not extend the top section of a ladder from above or by "bouncing" on it.
- Do not use grade 3 ladders.

Office Ergonomics - Potential Health and Safety Hazards

- Physical hazards (air quality, lighting).
- Ergonomic hazards (repetitive movements, posture, force).

Safe Work Practices (Do's)	Safe Work Practices (Don'ts)
• Work in a neutral body posture without excessive bending, reaching, twisting or slouching. • Work with your wrists and hands in a neutral position. • Position work so it is easy to see and reach. • Ensure your computer workstation is properly setup and adjusted (refer to Workstation Evaluation Report form). • Change your body position frequently by varying your tasks and taking micro rest breaks. • Avoid sitting for a long period of time. • Alternate between sitting, standing and walking. • Consider alternating tasks within a job to minimize repetition. • Stretch regularly. Stretches should be done slowly and smoothly.	• Do not hold a single posture too long. • Do not lean back in a chair with your feet on a desk. • Do not squeeze the mouse or press buttons with excessive force. • Do not store items under your desk (allow for free movement of your legs).

5.2 Safe Job Procedures

Working Alone with Money

Working Alone Definition
A person is considered alone at work when they cannot be seen or heard from by another person. This can include situations where employees go for extended periods of time without direct contact with other co-workers. Working alone is not always hazardous, but when the person working alone will be handling money they are at higher risk of potential violence from the public.

Ways to Keep a Lone Employee Safe

- Assess the hazards of the workplace.
- Investigate incidents at the workplace, these help employers learn what types of hazards employees may face when working alone.
- Provide appropriate training to any employees that may be working alone. They should understand the check-in procedure and what to do in the event of an emergency.
- Establish a check-in procedure and make sure that regular contact is kept with all employees.
- Investigate and report all situations where being alone presents a greater risk to the employee.
- Make policy changes where necessary.
- Take corrective action to prevent or minimize the potential risks of working alone.
- Schedule higher risk tasks to be done during normal business hours or when another employee can help in the event of an emergency.
- Familiarize employee with Violence in the Workplace Regulations (where applicable).

Check-In Procedure

- Prepare a daily work plan so it is known where the lone employee will be and when.
- Identify one main person to be the contact, plus a backup
- Define under what circumstances the lone employee will check in and how often. Stick to the check-in schedule and have a written log of contact.
- Have the contact person call or visit the lone employee periodically.
- Use a code word to be used to identify that help is needed should the employee be unable to communicate freely.
- Develop an emergency plan should the lone employee not check-in when they are supposed to or is unresponsive.
- The contact person must know when and how to activate the emergency plan.

Things to Consider When Assessing the Workplace

- What is a reasonable amount of time for the employee to be alone?
- How long will the employee be alone?
- What time of day will the employee be working alone?
- What form of communication is available to the employee?
- Will emergency communication work in all situations?
- Does the employee working alone have appropriate training in working alone procedures?
- Does the responding employee have the appropriate training in working alone procedures?
- Are necessary emergency supplies available to the employee?
- Do they have the required training to effectively use emergency supplies?
- Which procedures are in place for bathroom breaks and regular breaks?

Ways to Reduce Risk When Handling Money

- Keep the minimum amount in the cash register as possible.
- Remove large bills as you receive them.
- Change the time of day you empty the cash register.
- Ask customers to use electronic payments such as credit or debit cards.
- Use a locked safe.
- Post signage explaining there is minimal cash kept on site.

Employee Training to Consider

- Emergency response procedures.
- Security system operation.
- Conflict resolution and non-violent responses.
- How to behave during and after a robbery (see Violence in the Workplace Safe Job Procedure).
- Strategies in place to prevent robberies.
- Violence in the Workplace Regulations.

Violence in the Workplace

What is Violence in the Workplace

Violence in the workplace is any act in which a person is harassed, abused, threatened, intimidated or assaulted in their place of work. Harassment includes discrimination based on race, religion, sex, marital status, physical disability, political opinion, age or nationality.

Notice the signs of possible aggression in fellow employees

Each situation is different and using personal judgement is required when identifying an aggressive person. These behaviors do not necessarily mean a person will become violent but could indicate that they are currently troubled or under an excessive amount of stress.

Warning Signs

Crying or temper tantrums.
Complaints of problems without resolving them.
Poor personal hygiene.
Unpredictable behavior.
Verbalizes negative thoughts towards others.
Confusion or distraction.
Pushing the limits of acceptable conduct
Poor quality work.
Unable to focus on tasks.
Absenteeism.
Disruptive at work.
Substance abuse.

Physical signs a person may become violent

Clenched fists.
Loud speech.
Pale or flushed face/Sweating.
Violation of personal space.
Trembling.
Rapid breath.
Not breaking eye contact or avoiding eye contact.
Violent gestures/Swearing.
Signs of fatigue.

Reporting Procedure

In all situations, if you witness or experience violence or threats of violence, take precautions to ensure your own safety and the safety of others.

- Inform the individual that their behavior is unwelcome and ask them to stop.
- File a Violence Incident Report Form.
- Report the problem and file a complaint to the follow individuals:
  - Owner (Name)
  - Supervisor (Name)
  - HR Rep (Name)

Violence in the Workplace *(cont.)*

Dealing with Upset Customers

Dealing with upset customers is part of business, knowing how to deal with these situations and diffuse them peacefully is required by all employees.

- Remain calm and try to calm the other person.
- Listen carefully to the customer and attempt to find solutions.
- Record customer complaints.
- Ask if they would like to speak to a manager.
- Try to stay a safe distance away from customers.
- Avoid escalating the situation.

Working with Money Safe Work Practices

Employees that deal with money are often at greater risk for workplace violence. When working with money it is important to remember these safe work practices.

1. **Make store attractive to customers.**
   - Keep store clean and well lit.
   - Stay active while working.
   - Move away from the sales counter when there are no customers in the store.
   - Have sales counter in an areathat is visible from outside.
2. **Keep alert while at the workplace.**
   - Identify your escape route.
   - Know emergency contact numbers or where to locate them.
   - Avoid looking directly at suspicious individuals or groups.
   - If suspicious individuals do not leave call police and ask for a patrol check.
   - Door alarms can alert employees when someone enters the store.
3. **Greet everyone that enters the store.**
   - Be friendly and look everyone in the eye briefly.
   - Try to provide extra customer service to suspicious individuals. (Ask if they need help with anything).
4. **Keep cash at register to a minimum.**
   - Remove $50 and 100$ bills quickly.
   - Post signage stating, “minimum cash kept on premises”.
   - Ask customers for exact change or small bills if possible.
5. **Take extra precautions during slow periods and after dark.**
   - Run an empty register 5$ bills and change only.
   - Operate only one register at night and early morning.
   - Ensure outdoor lights are working.
   - Move cash handling areas away from entrances and exits

Violence in the Workplace *(cont.)*

Robbery Procedure

During a robbery it is important to follow this procedure to reduce the risk of injury to yourself or those around you.

1. **Remain calm.**
   - Act as if you are making a sale to a customer.
   - Be calm and courteous, if you don't understand what the robber is asking for ask for clarification calmly.
   - Most robberies last under two minutes.
   - Keep it short — the longer a robbery takes, the more agitated the robber will become.
2. **Listen to what the robber is asking for and obey, don't be a hero.**
   - Do not fight back.
   - Do not jeopardize the safety of yourself or the safety of other employees.
   - Give the robbers any cash and merchandise they ask for.
   - Don't delay or argue.
3. **Keep the robber informed to reduce the chance of surprises.**
   - Inform them if you are reaching for something or explain the purpose of your movements.
   - Ask them for directions.
   - Activate alarm system only after the robber has left not while they are in the store.
4. **Attempt to get as many observations as you can.**
   - Do not stare at robber but observe what they look like.
   - What are they wearing?
   - What size are they?
   - Type/colour of their weapon?
   - Voice?
   - Direction they left.
   - Record their appearance and mannerisms after they have left in the Violent Incident Report Form.
5. **Do not chase the robber, call the police.**
   - Lock the store.
   - Call the police and follow their instructions.
   - Call your supervisor or employer to report the robbery.
   - Ask witnesses to stay until police arrive

Employer Responsibilities After a Robbery

A robbery can be a traumatic experience for employees. It is important that employers understand employee concerns and make available any resources they may need.

- Provide professional help if the employee doesn't seem to recover from the incident.
- Do the best to calm and reassure the employee that everything will be alright.
- Provide them with a ride home, if required.
- Allow them time off if they require.
- Encourage a return to work through modified job tasks.

For WCB-covered employers, if an injury occurs that requires any level of medical attention or for the employee to take time off work, the injury must be reported must be reported to the WCB within five business days. Visit wcb.ns.ca to learn more.

Ergonomics

What is Ergonomics?

Ergonomics is the scientific discipline concerned with the understanding of the interactions among human and other elements of a system, and the profession that applies theory, principles, data and methods to design in order to optimize human well-being and overall system performance.

Definitions

Ergonomic Stressors
Conditions that pose a biomechanical stress to the human body associated with increased risk for development of musculoskeletal disorders.
Musculoskeletal Disorder (MSD)

Musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs)
Musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) are disorders of the muscles, nerves, tendons, ligaments, joints, cartilage and spinal discs. MSDs do not include disorders caused by slips, trips, falls, motor vehicle accidents, or other similar accidents.
Examples of MSDs include: Carpal tunnel syndrome, Rotator cuff syndrome, De Quervain's disease, Trigger finger, Tarsal tunnel syndrome, Sciatica, Epicondylitis, Tendinitis, Raynaud's phenomenon, Carpet layers knee, Herniated spinal disc, and Low back pain.

Work-related Musculoskeletal Disorder Hazard (WMSD Hazard)
Work activities and/or work conditions in which ergonomic stressors are present that are reasonably likely to cause or contribute to an MSD

Ergonomic Stressors

Workstations that are poorly designed can contribute to workplace injury. This can come in a variety of ways such as force, repetition, static postures, awkward posture or cold temperatures.

Force: The amount of muscular effort required to perform a task. Generally, the greater the force, the greater the degree of risk. High force has been associated with Work Related Musculoskeletal Disorders at the shoulder/neck, the low back and the forearm/wrist/hand.

Repetition: Repetition is the number of similar exertions performed while engaging in a work-related task. Excessive repetition required for the performance of a job may cause an employee to experience a repetitive stress injury (RSI) or other MSD.

Static Postures: Static postures are positions that someone holds for an extended period such as sitting, standing or sleeping. Holding these static postures can result in muscle fatigue which can lead to MSDs.

Awkward Postures: Awkward postures are postures that require the body to be bent or twisted in an unnatural way. Working in awkward postures increases the amount of stress on the body and can lead to injury

Cold Temperatures: Working in cold temperatures causes the body to work harder to maintain its internal temperature. Working in these conditions places the persons at greater risk of developing an MSD

Proper Lighting: Working in an environment with improper lighting can cause issues such as eye fatigue and headaches.

Ergonomics *(cont.)*

Symptoms of Musculoskeletal Disorders

The presence of MSDs is a red flag that there may be an ergonomic stressor in the workplace. Symptoms may vary from person to person completing the same task, but all symptoms are to be taken seriously. These symptoms can include but are not limited to:

- Swelling
- Pain
- Stiffness. Numbness
- Tingling
- Tightness

Workplace Controls

_____ will work with employees to identify any ergonomic stressors in the workplace and eliminate or mitigate those stressors. This may be through administrative controls, engineered controls or through the use of PPE.

Administrative Controls: Administrative controls are changes in work procedures such as written safety policies, rules, supervision, schedules, and training with the goal of reducing the duration, frequency, and severity of exposure to hazardous situations.

Engineered Controls: Engineered controls protect employees by removing hazardous conditions or by placing a barrier between the employee and the hazard.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): PPE is equipment used to minimize exposure to hazards that cause injuries.

Roles and Responsibilities

Employer

- Take every reasonable precaution to protect the employee by minimizing exposure to MSD hazards.
- Support and provide financial support for ergonomic initiatives.
- Ensure employees are properly trained in proper ergonomic techniques prior to beginning work.
- Comply with ergonomic policy and procedure.

Supervisors

- Take every reasonable precaution to protect the employee by minimizing exposure to MSD hazards.
- Record any MSD complaints from employees.
- Work with employees to identify MSD hazards in the workplace.
- Comply with ergonomic policy and procedures.

Employees

- Comply with ergonomic policy and procedures.
- Participate in regular education as established by _____
- Report any hazards, equipment problems or any other unsafe tasks immediately to the Supervisor.
- Support the Ergonomic Program by bringing forward any ideas and initiatives that could improve workstation ergonomics, process and production requirements and overall employee wellness.
- Report any concerns, incidents and near misses to the Supervisor immediately and cooperate in the investigation as required by Management.
- Use best work methods when working and communicate best practices to the Supervisor.
- Be responsible for correct use of the equipment provided by the Employer.

Ergonomics *(cont.)*

Safe Work Practices

It is important to follow all safe work practices in order to mitigate hazards associated with extended periods of sitting or standing.

- Change positions frequently to reduce strain on muscle groups.
- Avoid situations that require employees to bend, twist or over-reach.
- Have equipment that is adjustable to the employee.
- Take breaks frequently in order to stretch and move around.
- Maintain good posture while performing tasks.
- Do not use equipment for anything other than its intended purpose.
- Read operating manual to become familiar with equipment.
- Maintain equipment – Damaged equipment may result in injury.
- Keep equipment away from the edge of desks.
- Keep workplace tidy and clean, free from debris and other hazards.
- Use proper lifting techniques when required.

Training

_____ will provide ergonomic training to all employees in the New Employee Orientation Program. The training program will include but not be limited to the definition of ergonomics, ergonomic stressors, types of MSDs, symptoms of MSD, reporting, workplace controls, and proper lifting techniques.

Procedure

All ergonomic complaints will be investigated.

1. At the beginning of every employee's employment, prior to starting work, they will review all ergonomic policies and procedures.
2. Supervisors will fill out an ergonomic evaluation form with the employee and submit it to HR.
3. Should employees at any point in their employment experience discomfort that may be caused due to their workstation, the employee and their supervisor will conduct another ergonomic evaluation.
4. If the discomfort continues contact an ergonomics consultant and refer the employee to a doctor.
5. Should the employee's injury result in lost time, contact WCB.

5.3 Workplace Health and Safety forms

New Employee Orientation Checklist

Company/Organization: _____ Supervisor: _____

Employee: _____ Position/Job Title: _____

Employee Status: New Hire Temporary Worker Return to Work
Promotion Student/Co-op Placement

General Items		Date Completed	Trainer Initials	Employee Initials	Comments
Legislation	Health and Safety Legislation				
	Health and Safety policies and procedures				
	Employees Rights				
Responsibilities	Management				
	Employee				
Rules	Company Overview				
	Disciplinary Action Procedure				
Preventing Employee Injury	Reporting Unsafe Conditions				
	Reporting Injuries				

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New Employee Orientation Checklist

General Items		Date Completed	Trainer Initials	Employee Initials	Comments
Emergency Procedures	Emergency Call Numbers				
	First Aid Call Numbers				
	First Aid Supplies				
	Evacuation Procedures				
Job Specific	Safe Work Practices				
	Safe Work Procedures				
	Use of Equipment				
Communications	Annual Safety Meeting				
WHMIS	Symbols, Labels, SDS				
	Safe Handling Procedures and Appropriate PPE				

Date: _____ Employee Signature: _____

Date: _____ Supervisor Signature: _____

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Workstation Evaluation Report

Chair (sit fully back into chair)

Parameter	Description	Yes	No	Action
Seat Height	• Feet flat on floor • Knees bent at right angles • Thighs horizontal to the floor			
Back Rest Height	• Lumbar support is at the correct height			
Seat Pan Depth	• 2–3 fingers between the front of the seat and the back of the knees			
Tilt	• Seat is tilted so hips and tops of thighs are at right angles or slightly greater			
Armrest Position	• Out of the way when typing • Provide support when needed			

Keyboard/Mouse (should be the same height)

Parameter	Description	Yes	No	Action
Keyboard/ Mouse Height	• Elbows 90 degrees • Forearms and hands form straight lines			
Mouse Height	• Close to keyboard • On the same level as the keyboard			
Keyboard Distance	• Distance allows relaxed shoulders with elbows close to body			
Mouse Distance	• Directly next to keyboard • Same distance as keyboard			
Hand Posture on Mouse	• Base of hand rests on mouse			

NOVA SCOTIA *Workstation Evaluation Report*

Monitor

Parameter	Description	Yes	No	Action
Height	• Top of screen slightly lower than eye level			
Distance	• Depending on vision 18–33” • Should see screen clearly without straining			
Alignment	• Directly behind keyboard			
Visual Comfort	• Positioned to avoid glare • Perpendicular to bright sources			
Brightness	• Adjust to the user’s preference			

Work Environment

Parameter	Description	Yes	No	Action
General Lighting	• Reflections are minimal • Work materials are easy to read			
Leg Clearance	• 2” clearance for hips and knees			
Document Placement	• Area to store documents • Easily within reach			
Item Placement	• Area to store items • Easily within reach			

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Violence Incident Report

Full Name: _____ Date: _____

Position/Job Title: _____ Time: _____

Location: _____

Type of incident (check all that apply):

Aggressive behaviour	Fighting	Alcohol/drug use
Threatening behaviour	Theft	Verbal abuse
Mentally disturbed behaviour	Intimidation	Harassment
General disturbance	Weapon use	Other (specify) _____

Medical attention or first aid?	Yes	No	Investigation conducted?	Yes	No
Reported to supervisor?	Yes	No	Police called?	Yes	No

Names and phone numbers of persons involved, including witnesses

Description of incident

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Violence Incident Report

Assailant: Customer Employee Manager Delivery person

Other (specify) _____

Assailant name, if known: _____

Description of individual(s):

Male Female Age: _____ Height: _____ Weight: _____

Complexion: _____

Actions taken

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Fire Safety Checklist

Company: _____ Inspected by: _____

Area inspected: _____ Date: _____

Check	Yes	No	Corrective actions required
Are corridors and stairways unobstructed?			
Are exit doors unobstructed?			
Can exit doors be unlocked from inside with one motion?			
Is the exit to outside unobstructed?			
Are fire doors kept closed and latched?			
Are exit signs illuminated where required?			
Are emergency lights provided where needed?			
Is emergency lighting operational?			
Are fire alarm pull stations visible and accessible?			
Can fire alarms be heard in all parts of the building?			
Are extinguishers visible and unobstructed?			
Are fire extinguishers installed properly?			
Is exit signage adequate?			
Is exit signage visible?			

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Musculoskeletal Disorder Report

Full Name: _____ Date: _____

Company/Organization: _____

Position/Job Title: _____

Location of injury: _____

Workstation location: _____

Supervisor: _____ Evaluated by:_____

Primary activities

Current musculoskeletal concerns

NOVA SCOTIA

Safety Branch

Department of Labour, Skills and Immigration
1-800-9LABOUR (1-800-952-2687)
SafetyBranch@novascotia.ca

SafetyBranch.ca