

Health and Safety Orientation

A well-planned health and safety orientation makes a powerful statement about an organization's commitment to the health and safety of their workers. A health and safety orientation will introduce workers to hazards in the workplace and what they can do to prevent injury. It introduces workers to required health and safety procedures while allowing them time to learn new information and ask questions.

Section 12 of the OHS Act require the employer to take every reasonable precaution to protect the health and safety of their workers.

In addition, an employer shall ensure that such information, instruction, training, and supervision, and facilities are provided as necessary to ensure the occupational health and safety of the workers.

Job-specific training and supervision of workers is critical to the establishment and ongoing maintenance of a safe and healthy workplace. Taking the time up front to prepare and deliver an effective health and safety orientation will increase worker understanding of their role in their occupational health and safety and that of their co-workers.

To Deliver an Effective Health and Safety Orientation

Choose competent people, familiar with a variety of job tasks and related hazard controls, to assist with delivering the orientation. The supervisor plays a key role in the orientation process and typically is responsible for determining and providing the safety information that must be delivered. Preparing for the orientation offers an excellent opportunity for the supervisor to review job descriptions to ensure all job tasks requiring safe work practices are updated and made available to the new worker.

To accommodate a variety of learning styles use an assortment of delivery methods—explanation, demonstration, hands-on learning, repetition, questioning to ensure understanding, one-on-one sessions, and group learning.

Allow several days over the first few weeks, for the roll-out of the orientation. This will allow learning to take place gradually, in context, and with ample opportunity for review and clarification.

Follow a check list which includes information everyone must know, as well as job-specific information.



Components of the Health and Safety Orientation

Workplace Contact Information and Reporting Process

Provide your workers with all the contact information they will need to ask questions, report concerns, injuries, respond to emergencies, etc. Discuss the importance and provide procedures for reporting hazards and near miss incidents.

Role of Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOSH) and OHS Representative

Ensure workers understand the JOSH committee/OHS representative requirements of the Act, how they are reflected in workplace policy, and how to contact the OHS representative or JOSH Committee member.

Health and Safety Rights and Responsibilities

Ensure your workers understand the duties of both “workers” and “employers,” as outlined in Parts 12 and 16 of the Act. Explain worker rights protected by the Act, and the procedure for exercising the right to refuse unsafe work.

Expectations Regarding Safety Procedures and Standards

Outline expectations around health and safety standards. Review worker’s job description, and explain the hazards related to each task, and the safe work procedures on which workers will be trained.

First Aid

Introduce designated first-aid providers at the workplace. Inform workers of the location of first-aid kits and eye wash stations. Outline the employer’s responsibility to provide first aid when required.

Emergency Procedures

Review workplace procedures for emergency preparedness, including job-specific procedures, contact information, evacuation plans, emergency exits, fire extinguishers, alarms, and emergency signals.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Outline job-specific PPE requirements, along with proper use, fit, storage, and maintenance. Explain duties of workers and employers around PPE use, as outlined in the Act. Explain disciplinary procedures for failure to comply.

Workplace Harassment Policy

Ensure workers are familiar with your Workplace Harassment Policy, as required by the [OHS Act](#) [Workplace Harassment Regulations](#). In particular, review formal reporting procedures and the process that will be used to investigate complaints of workplace harassment.

Additional topics, as needed

This may include regulations for working alone, violence in the workplace, working with chemicals, WHMIS program, and any additional topics specific to the workplace.

