

Workplace Health & Safety For Supervisors

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Outline

- **Supervisor Safety Commandments**
- **Employer Due Diligence**
- **In the Courts**
- **Key Takeaways**
- **Questions**



Hierarchy of Importance

- Ethical/Moral Responsibilities
- Legal
- Financial



*When ethics are strong, legal compliance follows—
and costs stay down.*



VISIBLE

Direct Costs

- *Injury Claims*
- *Medical Expenses*
- *Lost Time*

HIDDEN

Indirect Costs

- *Loss of Productivity*
- *Training & Retraining*
- *Legal Fees & Fines*
- *Equipment Damage*
- *Turnover & Absenteeism*
- *Reputation Impact*

Supervisor General Responsibilities

- Inform workers of hazards
- Ensure workers follow safety procedures
- Take every reasonable precaution to protect workers



Supervisor Safety Commandments

1. Know & brief the hazards

Before any task, explain site-specific risks (cables, wet floors, heavy equipment, blocked exits).

2. Verify training & competence

Confirm each worker can safely do their assigned job. Offer on-the-spot coaching as needed.

3. Provide & enforce PPE

Supply required gloves, safety footwear, vests, hearing protection – and ensure correct use.

4. Walk the floor – be visible

Regularly inspect all work areas. Correct unsafe acts/conditions immediately.

5. Enforce “no distraction” for critical tasks

No phone use while operating vehicles, lifts, moving heavy gear, or carrying hot liquids.



Supervisor Safety Commandments

6. Stop unsafe work on the spot

You have the authority and duty to halt any task that poses imminent danger. Investigate and retrain.

7. Document everything

Keep a shift log: safety checks, hazards corrected, worker concerns, refusals to work.

8. Act on hazard reports immediately

Loose cable, blocked exit, aggressive attendee – respond right away. Never say “fix it later.”

9. Respect the right to refuse unsafe work

If a worker refuses a dangerous task, do not threaten or penalize. Investigate together.

10. Model safety behaviour (Walk the Talk)

Wear your own PPE, follow traffic plans, obey barricades. Your example sets the standard.



Employer Due Diligence

- 1. Written safety policy & role responsibilities** – Define duties for supervisors, workers, and joint committees.
- 2. Formal training records** – Document initial training, competency verification, and annual refreshers. Signatures required.
- 3. Scheduled hazard inspections** – Perform daily/weekly checklists for every work area. Keep dated logs.
- 4. Hazard correction tracker** – Log each hazard found, assign corrective action, set a deadline, record completion date.
- 5. Incident & near-miss investigation** – Investigate every event; document root causes and preventive measures ASAP.



Employer Due Diligence

6. Work refusal procedure – Written, step by step process for investigating refusals, including worker participation.

7. Progressive discipline policy – State consequences for safety rule violations (verbal → written → suspension → termination).

8. Safety meeting minutes – Hold regular meetings; record topics, attendance, and action items.

9. Equipment maintenance & inspection logs – For lifts, vehicles, electrical tools, PPE. Document pre use checks and service dates.

10. Annual system audit – Review all records and procedures against CCOHS or provincial standards. Identify gaps and correct them.



Responsibilities of Employees

(Remember: Most Supervisors are also Employees – Situation Dependent)

An employee is any person employed by or working in connection with the place of employment

Employees must:

- Follow all workplace laws
- Report hazards, injuries and illnesses to an employer or supervisor
- Do what is necessary to keep themselves and others safe at work
- Wear and use personal protective equipment



Safety is everyone's responsibility.



We all have specific obligations.

SUPERVISION REQUIRED TO SATISFY DUE DILIGENCE

The diagram is a 3x3 matrix. The vertical axis on the left is labeled 'Novice', 'Intermediate', and 'Expert' from top to bottom, with an upward-pointing arrow. The horizontal axis at the bottom is labeled 'Low', 'Medium', and 'High' from left to right, with a rightward-pointing arrow. The matrix cells contain supervision levels: 'Moderate supervision', 'High supervision', and 'Constant supervision' for Novice; 'Limited supervision', 'Moderate supervision', and 'High supervision' for Intermediate; and 'Minimal supervision', 'Limited supervision', and 'Moderate supervision' for Expert. The background of the cells is a gradient of blue, with darker shades for higher supervision levels.

Novice	Moderate supervision	High supervision	Constant supervision
Intermediate	Limited supervision	Moderate supervision	High supervision
Expert	Minimal supervision	Limited supervision	Moderate supervision
	Low	Medium	High

RISK / HAZARD LEVEL

Supervisor OHS Resources (Atlantic Canada)

- **NS LSI**
 - [| novascotia.ca](https://www.novascotia.ca)
 - [Home | Nova SAFE](#)

- **WCB PEI**
 - [Supervisor Safety Responsibilities Prevention Update](#)
 - [WCB PEI – WCB PEI – SkillsPass](#)

- **WorkplaceNL**
 - [Supervisor-Health-and-Safety-Certification-Training-Standard-2025-11-05.pdf](#)
 - [NL OHS Guide](#)

- **WorkSafe NB**
 - [WorkSafeNB | Supervisor](#)
 - ohsguide.worksafenb.ca/index.html





Organizational OHS Essentials

*What every Organization Needs to Achieve a
Healthy and Safe Workplace*

1. **Leadership** and **Commitment** from Management
2. **Engagement** in HS from Employees
3. **R.E.C.** – Recognition, Evaluation, and Control of Hazards

In the Courts

PEI:

- New Article - Avondale Golf
- PEI Carpenter fined 30,000 after employee died
- GEBIS and 1 Buddhist monk told to pay \$110,000

NB:

- WorkSafeNB | Court cases
- 3 Years' Jail Time; 3 OHS Law Lessons | McInnes Cooper



Key Takeaways: All Supervisors Must Remember!

1. What you allow you condone, and own
2. What you permit you promote



Questions

