

Mandatory Health & Safety Awareness Training



Umbrella Central
Day Care Services

A fatal scaffolding accident on Dec. 24, 2009, highlighted a need to improve workplace health and safety in Ontario. An Expert Advisory Panel consisting of health and safety specialists from labour groups, employer groups and academic groups was assembled to conduct an evaluation.

The panel issued fourteen recommendations to improve workplace health and safety. Ontario committed to implement the panel's recommendations and incorporated them into the Occupational Health and Safety Statute Law Amendment Act, which was passed in the spring of 2011.

One of the panel's discoveries was that workers were generally unaware of important parts of the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA), and were taking unnecessary health and safety risks in the workplace. To address this issue, the Occupational Health and Safety Awareness and Training Regulations require mandatory occupational health and safety training for all employees and supervisors. This mandatory training expands on previously required OHSA training, with the purpose of ensuring that workers are aware of their involvement, rights and duties while on the job. On July 1, 2014, the training became mandatory for all workplaces, regardless of size or sector.

Training for Workers

Employees must undergo employer-led training on occupational health and safety awareness as soon as practicable. The training program for employees must include:

- WHMIS legislation
- Occupational Health and Safety Act
- Worker duties and rights under the Act
- Employer and supervisor duties and rights under the Act
- Common hazards and illnesses that arise in the workplace
- The duties of joint health and safety committees, health and safety representatives, the ministry, the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board and the Health and Safety Associations, under the Act

Employers must keep records of employee training.

A free training program is available on the Ministry of Labour (MOL) website. Employees have two options for training: an eLearning module or a printable workbook.

Training for Supervisors

All current supervisors must undergo training within one week of assuming supervisor duties. The training program for supervisors must include:

- Occupational Health and Safety Act
- Worker duties and rights under the Act
- Employer and supervisor duties and rights under the Act
- How to recognize, evaluate and handle common hazards and illnesses that arise in the workplace
- The duties of joint health and safety committees, health and safety representatives, the ministry, the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board and the Health and Safety Associations, under the Act
- Sources of occupational health and safety information

Employers must keep records of supervisor training.

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A free training program for supervisors is available on the MOL website. Supervisors have two options for training: an eLearning module, or a printable workbook with an employer guide.

Exemptions

- An employee or supervisor is exempt from training IF he or she can provide proof of previous training AND the employer verifies that the training was adequate.
 - The employee or supervisor must request proof of training within six months of leaving previous employer where training was completed.
- Supervisors who have previously completed basic occupational health and safety awareness supervisor training programs do not need to complete training again.

Documentation

Employers are responsible for documenting training and can be fined if unable to prove that all supervisors and employees have received adequate training. Scheduled inspections of workplaces will be conducted, and a list of upcoming inspections will be posted on the MOL website, along with post-inspection results.

Additional Responsibilities

- Display the Health and Safety Poster in the workplace as it is mandatory. It must be displayed in English and the majority language of the workplace. The poster outlines worker, supervisor and employer safety rights and responsibilities. Employers can print a copy of the poster directly from the MOL website.
- Post a copy of the Occupational Health & Safety Act in the office.
- Post a copy of your Health & Safety Policy for offices of more than 6 people (we suggest each employee sign the policy at time of training).
- Post workplace Violence and Harassment Policies.
- Keep a fully stocked first aid kit on premises with at least one first aid certified worker present at all times.
- For businesses of between 5 and 20 employees, nominate a health and safety representative.
- Provide each employee a copy of the Employment Standards Act poster (recent revision of May 1 available online) and post it in the office.

For more information, please contact the Umbrella Insurance Program Administrators, Cornerstone Insurance Brokers.

For training/certification for Occupational Health and Safety specific to your childcare organizations, please contact Joy Lerman at joylerman@tjsolutions.ca.

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