

Health & Safety at Work

Prevention Starts Here

An Employer Guide to Supervisor Health and Safety Awareness in 5 Steps

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Supervisor Health and Safety Awareness in 5 Steps explains the responsibilities of supervisors and describes what Ontario's Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) expects from them, their employers and the workers they supervise. The OHSA defines a supervisor as anyone who "has charge of a workplace or authority over a worker," whether it be a permanent or temporary assignment. This awareness training program is for anyone who supervises and/or provides direction to workers.

Everyone in the workplace, from the employer to the newest worker, has different but important duties to keep the workplace safe. Because employers have the most authority in the workplace, they have the greatest responsibility for health and safety. Supervisors are next in line. Since supervisors' jobs involve taking direction from the employer and giving direction to the people they supervise, it's important that they understand the health and safety responsibilities of everyone in the workplace.

If you already provide your supervisors with health and safety training or information that includes this awareness training, you may not need to deliver this.

The focus here is on general awareness of rights and responsibilities and does not, in any way, replace the OHSA or its regulations or any other training that may be required for supervisors.

Learning Objectives

At the end of this health and safety awareness training, supervisors should be able to:

STEP 1: Make a Difference

1. Describe why they are needed and where they fit in the internal responsibility system by describing the health and safety roles and responsibilities of the employer, supervisor and worker

STEP 2: Lead the Way

2. Identify the three core rights of workers
3. Know that they are required to support the three core rights of workers.

STEP 3: Use The Supervisor's Toolkit

4. Know that they should incorporate the recognition, assessment, control and evaluation of hazards when planning and organizing work
5. Understand that they must tell workers about potential or actual hazards and need to show them how to work safely
6. Understand that they should look for hazards, take action as directed by the employer to control them, and listen to and respond to worker concerns
7. Know that they must take steps to make sure workers follow the rules and wear and use protective equipment
8. Understand that they and the employer are responsible for addressing health and safety hazards/ concerns as they arise
9. Know that if they don't have the authority or ability to address a health and safety concern, they should seek help from the employer
10. Know what to do if something goes wrong
11. Know that there could be legal consequences as well as a weakening of the internal responsibility system if they don't fulfill their legal obligations

STEP 4: Know that You Are Not Alone

12. Describe sources of information – i.e. employer policies, joint health and safety committee (JHSC) minutes, JHSC members, health and safety representatives, inspections, investigations, posted OHSA and Regulations
13. Explain the role of the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB), the Ministry of Labour (MOL), the health and safety associations (HSAs) and the availability of resources
14. Ask the employer for training to get the knowledge, skills and abilities to plan, organize and supervise work

STEP 5: Be a Role Model

15. Describe why they need to set a good example and how this influences others

How to Deliver the Training Program

Supervisor Health and Safety Awareness in 5 Steps should be completed within the first few days of being a supervisor and may be delivered in different ways:

- Face to face with one supervisor or a group of supervisors using the workbook
- Electronically, through an e-learning program (when available)

Both e-learning and face-to-face learning may be supplemented with discussions with the employer, a review of quiz questions and safety talks in the workplace. Training program materials can be provided at no cost through the Ministry of Labour.

Here are some steps that you or the person who will deliver this training program in your workplace should consider:

Before You Start

- Read through the workbook and plan for the activities for face-to-face learning.
- Consult the learning objectives above. It is important to understand the key messages of this awareness training program. Familiarize yourself with the program and be prepared to support your supervisors for e-learning.
- Encourage questions and make sure that your supervisors are comfortable responding to health and safety concerns right from the start.
- Make sure you have information on the following topics available; as they are covered in the program and may come up in your discussions with supervisors:

- ✓ Copy of the workplace health and safety policy (if 6 or more workers)
- ✓ Copy of the Occupational Health and Safety Act and applicable regulations
- ✓ Copy of the poster: *Health & Safety at Work > Prevention Starts Here*
- ✓ Name of health & safety representative if you have between 6 and 19 workers
- ✓ Names of JHSC members (generally, if you have 20 or more workers)
- ✓ JHSC recommendations and workplace inspection reports
- ✓ Hazards in your workplace and safe operating procedures
- ✓ Procedure for workers to follow when reporting health and safety concerns and for supervisors to follow when responding to worker concerns
- ✓ Incident investigation reports
- ✓ Workplace violence and harassment policies and procedures
- ✓ Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) training and material safety data sheets (MSDS)
- ✓ Protective equipment that must be worn or used by workers
- ✓ Emergency procedures
- ✓ Location of first aid stations and names of qualified first aiders
- ✓ Further training to be a 'competent' supervisor as defined in the Occupational Health and Safety Act

Help Your Supervisors Understand

To help make sure that your supervisors understand the material, there are quiz questions at the end of each of the five steps. In face-to-face learning you can ask supervisors to write down their answers or tell you what they think the correct response is. Discuss the answers that your supervisors give to help strengthen their understanding. The correct answers to each quiz appear at the back of the supervisor workbook; the quiz questions will be the same in the e-learning program. You may review these with your supervisors to reinforce the information.

Please Note: Pay close attention to Exercise 4 under Step 3, which asks the supervisor to think of the steps they should take when a worker is injured. This is designed to allow the supervisors to share their own knowledge of the steps they should take. In some cases the supervisor may have limited knowledge about the steps to take. This exercise is designed to encourage discussion and provide a learning opportunity for the supervisor. It is recommended that the employer be very clear on the steps that should be taken so they can take this opportunity to coach their supervisors.

Afterward

It is your responsibility to keep records that show all of your supervisors have received this training. Each supervisor should have his or her own workbook (or print-outs from the e-learning program) as a reference for the future.

As an employer, you must ensure your supervisors are competent under the OHSA. This involves ongoing training and support to keep up with changes in the legislation and in the workplace.

If you have any questions about this program, contact the Ministry of Labour at 1-877-202-0008 or visit the website at ontario.ca/healthandsafetyatwork

For general information about workplace health and safety, contact your Health and Safety Association.

Workers Health and Safety Centre
www.whsc.on.ca

Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers
www.ohcow.on.ca

Health and Safety Ontario
www.healthandsafetyontario.ca

including:

- Public Services Health and Safety Association (health, education, municipal sectors)
- Workplace Safety and Prevention Services (farm, industry, service sectors)
- Infrastructure Health and Safety Association (electrical, transportation, construction sectors)
- Workplace Safety North (pulp and paper, mining, forestry sectors)