

JOINT HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEES

ARE YOU PREPARED?

AB BILL 30

SAFETY BULLETIN
ISSUE# 19-2018

JUNE 1, 2018 - EMPLOYERS, SUPERVISORS AND WORKERS ARE TO BE COMPLIANT WITH THE NEW ALBERTA OHS ACT

THE NEW OHS ACT

“Part 3: Establishment of joint work site health and safety committee. 16(1) An employer shall establish a joint work site health and safety committee”¹:

- If an employer employs 20 or more workers and the work is expected to last 90 days or more, employer must establish a joint work site health and safety committee (HSC)
- If an employer employs 5 to 19 workers and work is expected to last 90 days or more, an employer shall designate a worker as a health and safety representative
- Employers, prime contractors or owners are required to consult and cooperate with HSCs on a work site

WHAT IS A JOINT WORK SITE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE (HSC)?

- An HSC is a group of worker and employer representatives working together to identify safety hazards to workers arising out of the work site and recommend measures to protect health and safety of workers at the site
- Research shows HSCs help improve worker participation in health and safety, improve prevention and help promote a strong health and safety culture

¹Alberta Bill 30: An Act to Protect the Health and Well-being of Working Albertans, Sec.10(2).

WHAT EMPLOYERS SHOULD KNOW

- Employers are responsible for establishing an HSC if employer employs 20 or more workers and the work is expected to last 90 days or more or at any other work site designated by a Director
- The HSC must meet within 10 days after being established and meetings to be held at a minimum, once per quarter
- Committee shall consist of a minimum of four persons, and at least half represent workers who are not associated with management at the worksite
- The committee shall have co-chairs, serving as alternates, and one must be a worker representative
- Employers must ensure the names and contact information of committee members are posted at the work site
- Employers must ensure meeting minutes of the committee are recorded and approved copies are posted or provided by electronic means within seven days
- Employers shall ensure co-chairs receive adequate training and are allowed to take time from the member's or representative's regular duties. Co-chairs will attend health and safety training programs, prepare for committee work, attend seminars or course of instruction, and will be deemed to be at work during this time
- Employer should implement, address or remedy health and safety matters the HSC brings to their attention within 30 days

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WHAT WORKERS SHOULD KNOW

- An HCS is designed to provide workers with a voice for their concerns and complaints about health and safety in the work place
- Workers have the right to know about and participate in decision-making for the health and safety at their work site
- Workers on this committee must be selected by the workers they represent; a worker member is to co-chair the HSC meetings

ROLE OF AN HSC

- Advise and assist with responsibilities for health and safety at the work site
- Identify hazards to workers arising from and connected with the work site
- Develop measures to protect health and safety of persons at the work site
- Develop and promote health and safety programs for education and information
- Make recommendations to employer respecting health and safety of workers at the work site
- Conduct regular inspections of the work site
- Maintain records of HSC activities, worker concerns, and meetings
- Participate in investigations of serious and potentially serious incidents at the work site
- Cooperate with OHS officer exercising their duties

HSC TRAINING

- Employers are required to provide health and safety. To assist employers, Alberta Labour has developed a free introductory course to help committee co-chairs and representatives learn about their roles and responsibilities at: <https://www.ccohs.ca/distributors/alberta>

- Co-chairs, or in the case of an H&S rep, must receive training respecting the duties and function of an HSC.
- Members of an HSC or H&S rep, after giving reasonable notice, shall be permitted to take time away from regular work duties to attend health and safety training programs.

RESOURCES

- *Do I need a joint work site health and safety committee or a health and safety representative?* 2018 Government of Alberta
<https://www.alberta.ca/assets/document/s/ohs-when-i-need-a-committee.pdf>
- *Joint work site health and safety committees* 2018 Government of Alberta
<https://www.alberta.ca/assets/document/s/ohs-joint-worksite-health-safety-committees.pdf>
- *Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Act Highlights of Changes effective June 1, 2018*
<https://www.alberta.ca/assets/document/s/ohs-changes-highlights.pdf>
- *Joint Work Site Health and Safety Committees Program Development Guideline, Ed.1, 2018, Energy Safety Canada.*
- [WorkSafe Alberta – Preventing Violence and Harassment at the Workplace](#)

NOTES
