

Employing Young Workers

Tips for...

Employers



A safe workplace is a sound business.

Legislation

Section 25 of Ontario's Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA)

describes some of your responsibilities as an employer. Employer duties under this section include:

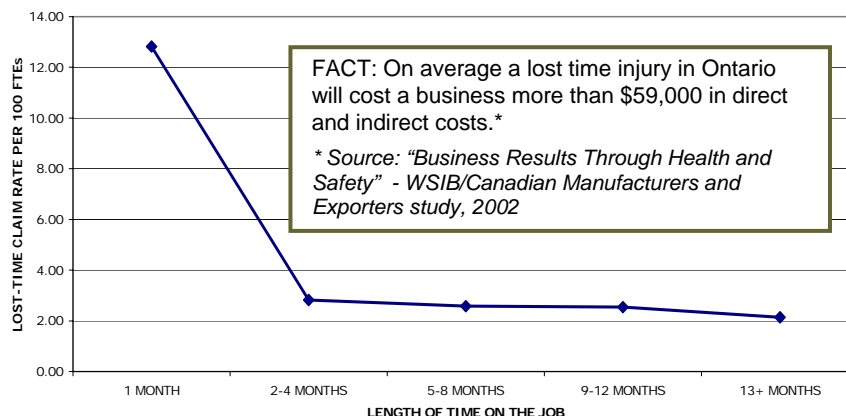
1. Ensuring equipment, materials and protective devices are provided and maintained in good condition and used as required by the regulations made under the OHSA.
2. Informing, instructing and supervising workers to protect their health and safety, including acquainting workers and supervisors about any hazards in the work and safe use and handling of equipment or agents.
3. Only hiring or allowing young people in the workplace if they are of the minimum age set out in OHSA regulations.
4. Ensuring supervisors are competent persons.
5. Assisting and cooperating with health and safety committees or worker representatives.
6. Taking every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of a worker.

Did You Know?

- ... that if you, the employer, fail to comply with a provision of the OHSA, you could be subject to a fine or jail term?
- ... that in 2002, Ontario courts levied a total of \$5 million in total fines against Ontario employers for contraventions of the OHSA?
- ... that young workers get hurt on the job when they:
 - do jobs they are not trained to do
 - don't have adequate supervision
 - work with dangerous equipment.
- ... that the measures you take to keep young workers safe will help protect all employees?
- ... 56% of young workers reported that they had not received any training before taking on a new task?*

* Source: Industrial Accident Prevention Association

RATE OF LOST-TIME CLAIMS AMONG YOUNG WORKERS IN ONTARIO BY LENGTH OF TIME ON THE JOB



Source: Institute for Work and Health (hours worked derived from the Labour Force Survey)

Here's What You Need to Do...

- Ensure that procedures and measures for workplace health and safety are established and always followed.
- Ensure equipment, materials and protective devices required by law are provided and used. This includes guards on machinery and the use of protective equipment.
- Ensure that all hazards, illnesses and injuries are reported immediately.
- Ensure workplace health and safety policies, procedures and programs are current.
- Know the hazards in your workplace and inform supervisors of hazards and how to handle them.
- Encourage all workers, especially young ones, to alert their supervisors immediately if they see something that could endanger their safety.
- Ensure lots of time is allotted to train young workers.
- Demonstrate your commitment to health and safety with your own consistent, safe work practices – and emphasize that unsafe work practices are unacceptable.
- Provide training for your supervisors so that they maintain their competence.
- Respond promptly to all health and safety concerns.
- Know minimum age and wage requirements for working in Ontario.

...Employing Young Workers



Your visible participation in workplace health and safety will create a positive environment.

Tips for Employers

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Lead by Example....

Listed below are ways in which you can lead by setting a good example for young workers.

- Attend the training sessions being provided for your workers.
- Use and wear safety equipment when it's required to be used by your employees.
- Participate in fire drills and any other emergency response training.
- Treat every young worker with the same care and respect you would want bestowed on your teen.
- Include health and safety in your company's strategic plan.
- Personally encourage young workers to report health and safety problems they may encounter.
- Tell your young workers everything they need to know about workplace health and safety **before** they have to ask.

Bright Ideas

- Attend new worker welcoming get-togethers to celebrate their arrival.
- Make yourself available during new worker orientation sessions.
- Introduce new young workers to key people in the organization. This may include the Health and Safety Manager, Joint Health and Safety Committee members or Health and Safety Representatives.
- Turn every interaction with a young worker into an opportunity to reinforce your company's health and safety values and priorities.
- Encourage young workers to come forward with ideas and suggestions.
- Make health and safety a part of all workplace communications.
- Pair up young workers with experienced, safety-conscious workers.
- Encourage supervisors to periodically take young workers on health and safety inspections to spot hazards and unsafe practices.
- Review other tip sheets in this series, such as "Employing Young Workers – Tips for Supervisors."

For helpful resources to kick-start successful young worker training and orientation, contact your health and safety association or find yours by contacting the WSIB Prevention Hotline at 1-800-663-6639.

For Compensation and Prevention information for Ontario employers, go to www.wsib.on.ca and click on Employers.

For more information about young workers go to www.youngworker.ca -or- www.WorkSmartOntario.gov.on.ca

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Words make up less than 10% of your message. Be aware of body language, the tone of your voice and other non-verbal communications.*

*Source: Prime Leadership – The Hidden Drive of Great Performance, Daniel Coleman

Bottom Line

YOU have direct responsibility for the safety of everyone in your workplace, but also the unique opportunity to be a role model for young workers starting out. Be a part of creating tomorrow's safe and healthy workforce.