

## HEALTH CARE SECTION 21 COMMITTEE

A section 21 committee is appointed by the Minister of Labour under the authority of the Occupational Health and Safety Act to provide ongoing advice on how to improve health and safety in workplaces.

Such a committee has now been appointed for the health care sector. Section 21 committees currently exist for the construction, mining, police, fire fighting, film and television sectors.

### Who sits on the committee?

The committee is comprised of representatives from organizations representing a broad range of workers and employers in the health care sector. These organizations include:

- Canadian Auto Workers (CAW)
- Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE)
- Ontario Association of Community Care Access Centres (OACCAC)
- Ontario Association of Non-Profit Homes and Services for Seniors (OANHSS)
- Ontario Community Support Association (OCSA)
- Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL)
- Ontario Home Care Association (OHCA)
- Ontario Hospital Association (OHA)
- Ontario Long Term Care Association (OLTCA)
- Ontario Nurses' Association (ONA)
- Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU)
- Service Employees International Union (SEIU).

The Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, the Ministry of Community and Social Services and the Ontario Safety Association for Community and Healthcare will take part as observers, providing technical advice and information.

### What impact have other section 21 committees had?

Section 21 committees representing other sectors have provided important information and advice to the government. Recommendations have been acted on, leading to new or revised legislation and regulations and improved practices in workplaces and within the Ministry of Labour.

Actions taken as the result of recommendations from section 21 committees have included:

- Amendments made to regulations regarding electrical work and lifting multi-tiered loads as the result of technical information and advice provided by the Construction Section 21 Committee
- Commercial diver training requirements strengthened due to recommendations from the diving subcommittee of the Construction Section 21 Committee
- Mining regulations updated and strengthened several times due to recommendations from the Mining Section 21 Committee.

Section 21 committees have also helped develop numerous guidance notes that help workplaces meet existing health and safety requirements. Recent guidance materials developed or updated have included:

- Ice and water rescue operations
- Operation of hybrid vehicles, that use batteries
- High-angle rescue
- Respiratory protection programs
- Building collapse for emergency responders in fire situations
- Emergency preparedness
- Confined space rescue.

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