



Introduction to OHS

Information for SIAST Students

Shared Responsibility

Occupational health and safety legislation sets minimum standards for health and safety in the workplace. Everyone in the workplace shares the responsibility to keep the work environment healthy and safe, to the extent of their authority and ability to do so.

1. Employers' responsibilities

Employers have responsibilities to ensure a healthy and safe workplace insofar as it is reasonably practicable. For example, employers must:

- identify hazards in the workplace and take steps to eliminate or minimize the risk to workers arising from those hazards to the extent that is reasonably practicable; for example, reviewing work processes, and scheduling regular inspections;
- inform and train workers on matters necessary to ensure their health and safety in the workplace;
- ensure workers are adequately and competently supervised;
- establish an occupational health committee in workplaces with 10 or more workers; and
- ensure that the workplace and work complies with *The Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, 1996* and any applicable sections of *The Mines Regulations, 2003* – such as standards for using personal protective equipment, providing adequate sanitation, protecting workers from noise, limiting air contamination, controlling chemical and biological hazards, operating equipment safely, preventing harassment, and preparing emergency plans.

2. Workers' responsibilities

Workers have a responsibility to take reasonable care to protect their health and safety on the job and the health and safety of other workers who may be affected by what they do or fail to do. Workers are expected to participate in health and safety training.

Workers may not cause or participate in *harassment* as defined in *The Occupational Health and Safety Act*. Workers are expected to participate in occupational health and safety training.

Workers must also:

- follow safe work practices and procedures;
- use and take care of safety equipment properly;
- report occupational health and safety concerns to their supervisor;
- ask questions if they are unsure about how to do their job safely; and cooperate with the employer.

3. Workers have three basic rights

1. To know about the hazards at work and how to control them.
2. To participate in identifying and controlling hazards by:
 - telling the supervisor right away when any unsafe conditions or faulty equipment is observed;
 - participating in an occupational health committee (if there are 10 or more workers in the workplace); or
 - talking to the health and safety representative (in moderate to high-hazard workplaces with five to nine workers).
3. To refuse work that they believe is unusually dangerous. There are steps to follow when unsafe work is refused. Employees cannot be fired for exercising these rights.

To contact the Occupational Health and Safety Division:

Visit our website: www.labour.gov.sk.ca

Regina call: 1-800-567-7233 (toll-free) **Saskatoon** call: 1-800-667-5023 (toll-free)