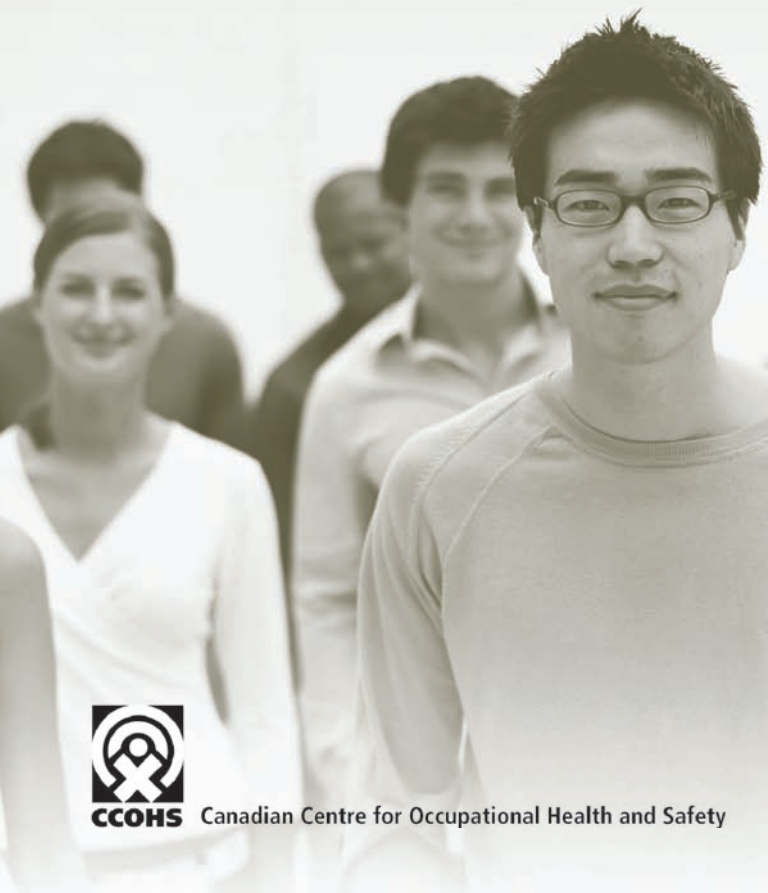


Orientation for **New Workers**

Health and Safety Guide **First Edition**



Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety

Orientation for New Workers

Objective

This guide will provide new workers with an overview of their health and safety rights and responsibilities, hazard recognition, hazard control, preparing for emergencies, occupational health and safety programs and who to contact for additional help.

It is designed to be both a guide for new workers, as well as a tool that employers can use as part of their workplace-specific orientation training program.

Scope

This guide provides new workers with an outline of important health and safety information that they will need on the job. It outlines, in general terms, the following:

- the three fundamental rights of workers in health and safety legislation
- the general duties of employers and workers
- the six basic types of workplace hazards
- how workplace hazards are controlled and steps workers can take to protect themselves
- preparing for emergencies
- the basic elements of an occupational health and safety program, and
- who to ask for help with health and safety matters.

New workers will learn about potential hazards they may encounter in the workplace and how they can help protect themselves and co-workers. This guide offers examples and practice scenarios.

Health and safety orientation should also include on-site workplace-specific training by the employer on the policies and procedures specific to the job and workplace. This guide is not a substitute for job-specific training that all new workers should receive from their employer.

NOTE: While this guide is meant to be used by all workers, not all situations discussed in this guide will apply to all workers or workplaces. During the job-specific training, the employer should highlight which parts of the guide apply.

Target Audience

This guide is for all new employees. The term “new” can mean workers who are new to the organization (of any age), all young workers under the age of 25, or people who have transferred from another department in the organization.

The guide outlines important information for new workers and serves to compliment workplace-specific health and safety information that an organization provides their new employees. It is written to “speak” directly to new employees.

Using this guide

New Workers

New workers can use this guide as a reference tool which allows them to look up facts and examples of hazards and controls when they need to. They can also write notes in the guide, as well as information specific to their workplace.

Employers

There is a lot of information in this guide which some learners may find overwhelming at first. Focus on the sections that apply to the hazards of your workplace, and the specific jobs done by the new workers. Break the orientation training into segments so that the educational component and the workplace specific training can compliment each other – use the education (e.g., information in this guide) to teach and inform, and then have practical, hands-on training to reinforce the learning and to show the correct way to do a job.

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Recognizing Workplace Hazards

Recognizing workplace hazards is very important for all employees, but it is especially important for new employees.

In order to prevent injuries and illnesses in the workplace, you need to be able to identify the potential hazards in your new job and workplace. If a hazard can be identified, it can be controlled and possibly eliminated or reduced. If a hazard is not recognized, it is simply a matter of time before an incident or exposure will occur to you or co-workers.

Always report hazards to your supervisor. If the supervisor does not take appropriate action, you can report the hazard to the health and safety committee, or your health and safety representative (if your workplace does not have a committee).

1. What is a hazard?

A safety or health hazard is anything in the workplace that has the potential to cause harm to a person's well being. Health and safety hazards vary greatly depending on what the workplace does, and the type of work involved. Every workplace, however, has hazards. Although it may be hazards in places like mines or on construction sites that first come to mind when thinking of dangerous workplaces, workplaces like schools, offices, farms, hospitals, restaurants, and stores have their own hazards.



7. Working Smart

To avoid injuries and accidents, it is important that we all follow safe work practices on-the-job.

- Take time to plan your work. Always think through the job or task carefully before starting
- Follow all safety rules and precautions, as instructed by your supervisor
- Know when to ask for assistance – don't try to do a job that needs two people by yourself (e.g. lifting a heavy or awkward object)
- If your job requires personal protective equipment, wear it. Learn how to take care of it (cleaning, maintaining)
- Tell your supervisor if you see anything that you feel may be unsafe to you or others
- Report accidents, emergencies, injuries or incidents to your supervisor (even if it was a “near miss” or if no injury occurred)
- Check equipment before use
- Report unsafe conditions, equipment, materials or actions to your supervisor as soon as possible
- Practice good housekeeping - e.g. quickly clean up spills, do not block aisles, walkways, or fire exits
- Be prepared for any emergency. Know who to call and what to do

There are many workplaces that take safety very seriously. These workplaces realize that a safe workplace means not only healthy employees but healthy economics as well. Hopefully you are now working for one of these great employers but here are some possible warning signs to be on the lookout for:

- Other workers have been hurt or injured doing the same job as you or there are frequent injuries in the workplace

3. Administrative Controls

Administrative controls limit the workers' exposures by scheduling shorter work times in contaminant areas or by implementing other "rules". These control measures have many limitations because the hazard itself is not actually removed or reduced. Administrative controls are not generally favoured because they can be difficult to implement, maintain and are not a reliable way to reduce exposure.

There are a few different approaches to administrative controls, including:

- Work practices
- Personal hygiene and facilities
- Employee education and training
- Equipment and facility maintenance
- Housekeeping

Work Practices

Work practices are a form of administrative controls. In most workplaces, even if there are well designed and well maintained engineering controls present, safe work practices are very important.

Work practices are policies and procedures that reduce hazards and exposures by managing the way that work is done or performed. The hazard itself is not controlled.

Some examples of work practices include:

- Developing and implementing standard operating procedures. These detailed written procedures describe how a particular job is to be performed – including necessary personal protective equipment, training, disposal, etc.
- Preparing and training for emergency response for incidents such as spills, fire or injury.

9. Working at a Computer (Office/Computer Ergonomics)

Many workers spend some or all of their workday at a computer workstation. When the setup of the computer workstation is not suited to the individual using it, health problems such as sore wrists, shoulder, neck, lower back, eyestrain and headache can result.

Setting up the computer workstation to suit the user is what computer ergonomics is all about. It does not necessarily mean having to buy expensive “ergonomic” equipment. A few small adjustments can make a big difference.

Also, it is important know that regardless of how well-designed and ergonomic a workstation may be, the person must be allowed (and remember) to take regular breaks to rest their eyes, and to stretch and move their body. If we sit and work for hours at a time without giving the body a chance to change positions, aches and pains will happen.

Tips for Healthy Computing:

In general, the more time an individual works at a computer, the more important it is to make sure that the computer workstation is set to meet the ergonomic needs of that individual. Work practices are also crucial since an individual working at even the most ergonomically correct workstation could develop problems if concepts such as work breaks are ignored.

Keyboard and Mouse

- The keyboard and mouse (or any pointing device) should be located beside each other and at the same height.
- Position the keyboard and mouse so that the elbows stay close to the side of your body and the arms are maintained in a non-reaching position.

Who to Ask for Help

Remember these questions from the beginning of the guide? Do you feel better prepared to answer them?

Don't forget - Don't take chances. If you have not been trained about the proper and safe way to do a job, ask for help. Asking for help is the smart thing to do!

A good employer will encourage employees, particularly new, inexperienced or transferred ones, to ask questions at any time when doubt exists as to correct procedures. Review these questions and make sure you know all of the answers.

- What are the hazards of the job?
- How can I be injured doing my job?
- Who is my supervisor?
- What safety training will I need to take?
- Do I need any specific safety equipment and will I be trained to use it?
- Do I need to wear personal protective equipment (PPE)? Will I receive training on how to use the PPE?
- When will I receive training on any chemicals I'll need to use?
- Who will train me about the safe work procedures that need to be followed?
- What do I do in case of fire or another emergency?
- Where do I find fire extinguishers, first aid kits, first aid rooms and emergency assistance?
- What are my responsibilities regarding health and safety?
- What should I do if I see something I think is dangerous?
- Who do I ask if I have a safety and health concern or questions?
- What do I do if I get injured or have an accident?

(Adapted from: WorksafeBC, SafeWork Manitoba, and CCOHS's Young Worker Zone)

APPENDIX B: Training Record Sheet

Organization Name: _____

Employee Name: _____

Job Title: _____

Date of Hire: _____

Course	Date	Expiry or Date that Refresher Course is Required (if needed)
Health and Safety orientation		