

Prevention Update



HEALTH AND SAFETY ORIENTATION

A **health and safety orientation** introduces workers to hazards in the workplace and the procedures they must follow to prevent injury. It introduces them to their work environment and allows time for workers to ask questions.

Section 12 of the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act requires employers to **take every reasonable precaution to protect the health and safety** of their workers. This includes making sure that information, instruction, training, supervision, and facilities are provided, as necessary, to make sure workers remain healthy and safe.

Job-specific training and supervision of workers is a critical component of a strong workplace safety culture. Taking time at the beginning to prepare and deliver an effective health and safety orientation will help make sure that the worker feels safe, confident and ready for their role.

DELIVERING AN EFFECTIVE HEALTH AND SAFETY ORIENTATION

The supervisor plays a key role in the orientation process and is typically responsible for determining and providing the safety information that must be delivered. The supervisor is usually aware of all the job tasks that require safe work procedures. The supervisor must make sure they are presented and made available to the new worker.



→ Use **different methods** like explanation, demonstration, hands-on learning, repetition, one-on-one sessions, group learning, and questions and answers - to make sure workers understand the safe work procedures.

→ **Spread the orientation session over several days** to support gradual learning, to provide context, and to allow time for reviewing and clarifying any procedures.

→ **Follow a checklist** that is customized to your workplace which includes essential information for everyone, as well as job-specific details.

WHAT IS A NEW WORKER?

A new worker can be described as:

- Any individual new to a position or a workplace.
- A worker returning to a workplace where hazards have changed during their absence.
- Anyone in the workplace that changes role and the hazards associated with that new role are different.
- A young worker who is returning after an extended absence, such as a summer student.

Due to their lack of experience and unfamiliarity with workplace hazards, new workers are particularly vulnerable to work-related injuries.

WHAT'S INCLUDED IN A HEALTH AND SAFETY ORIENTATION

Safety policy	To be reviewed to make sure workers understand the organization's commitment to maintaining a safe workplace.
Roles and responsibilities	Clear expectations for employers, supervisors, and workers in maintaining a safe work environment.
Workplace harassment	An overview of the workplace harassment policy, including how to recognize, report, and prevent harassment.
Safe work procedures and policies	Training on established safe work procedures and policies relevant to the worker's role.
Incident reporting	Guidance on how to report unsafe work conditions, near misses, and workplace incidents.
WHMIS training	Instruction on the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) and how to safely handle hazardous substances.
Safety Committee and Representative	An introduction to the company's Safety Committee members, or Safety Representative, and their role in making sure the workplace is safe.
Ergonomics and hazard recognition	Training on proper ergonomics, injury prevention strategies, and identifying workplace hazards.
Workplace inspections and safety controls	An overview of the workplace inspection process and how hazards are corrected.
Right to refuse unsafe work	A review of the worker's right to refuse unsafe work and the steps to follow if they believe a task is unsafe.
Important contact information	An overview of key safety contacts such as the worker's Supervisor, Safety Representative or Safety Committee members, and Workplace First Aiders.
Emergency preparedness	Training on emergency procedures, awareness of emergency exit locations, and an introduction to Workplace First Aiders and first aid kit locations.
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	Training and instruction on the proper use, fit, storage, and maintenance of required PPE.