

Launching a Safe Start



An **employer's guide** to developing
a workplace health and safety
orientation program

This guide provides an overview of the steps you should take to set up an effective health and safety orientation program for your workplace.

We visited a number of workplaces to find the best practices for sharing injury and illness prevention information. They included unionized and non-unionized workplaces from a variety of industries.

For more in-depth information and help developing health and safety orientation programs, contact your health and safety association. They are listed at the end of this guide.

This booklet is part of workplace health and safety orientation resources, developed by the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board to help make Ontario's workplaces healthy and safe.

Resources include:

Booklets

Launching a Safe Start - An Employer's Guide (5009A)

Launching a Safe Start - A Worker's Guide (5010A)

Video

You have rights and responsibilities (5011C)



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Form 5009A (08/08)

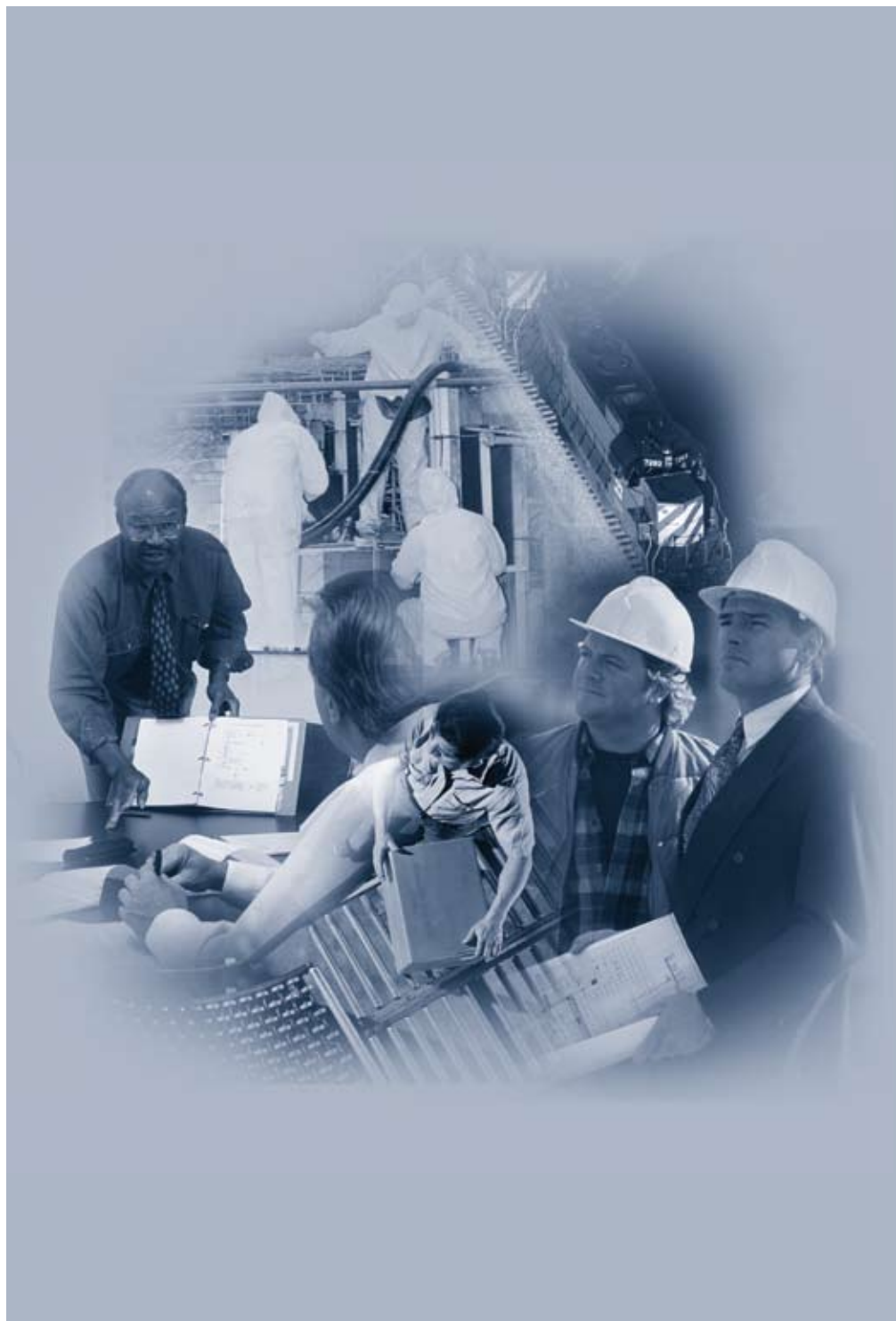
Ce document est aussi disponible en français.

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Why should you launch an orientation program?

Think about someone new joining your workplace or one of your workers changing jobs. Do you help them understand their role in the health and safety program and the potential hazards of the job?

Here's the risk

A significant number of workplace injuries occur in the first few days of employment or after a change in duties. Effective health and safety orientation can help prevent these injuries and illnesses.

Remember what the law says

You, as an employer, are required to take reasonable precautions to protect your workers from injury and illness. That includes ensuring they have the information they need to participate in your health and safety program, the training to perform the job safely, and the safety equipment needed to protect themselves.

How will an orientation program help?

Having an orientation program ensures that your workers

- understand their role and the role of others in creating a healthy and safe workplace
- know the hazards in their workplace
- receive training in safe operating procedures



The pay off

- fewer injuries
- reduced WSIB costs
- reduced risk of lost time or damage to equipment or materials
- increased commitment from your workers; taking the time to orient and train staff shows that you care about their well being.

A quote from our survey:

"Your health and safety is more important than any job"

Know what the law says

The *Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHSA) and the *Canada Labour Code, Part II* both include rules that apply to orientation and training of workers. Here are some of the responsibilities.



Employers must

- Take every reasonable precaution to protect a worker's health and safety
- Ensure equipment, materials and protective devices required by law are provided, used as prescribed and are maintained in good condition
- Inform workers or their supervisors of any hazards and how to handle them
- Ensure that procedures and measures are followed in the workplace
- Provide information, instruction and competent supervision to protect the health and safety of workers

Supervisors must

- Take every reasonable precaution to protect a worker's health and safety
- Inform workers of job hazards and should train them to do their jobs safely
- Ensure that workers work safely and use the equipment and protective devices properly where required

Worker rights

Workers have the right to

- Know about hazards in the workplace and their job
- Participate in keeping the workplace healthy and safe
- Refuse unsafe work

Worker responsibilities

- Always practice safe work procedures
- Report unsafe conditions to their employer or supervisor as quickly as possible
- Properly wear any protective equipment the job requires
- Work safely and not do anything on the job that would endanger themselves or others



How to meet these responsibilities?

Employers and supervisors must ensure workers receive the training and orientation they need to participate in the health and safety program and prevent personal injury, illness and other losses.

Planning and preparing an orientation program

One size does not fit all

Provide each worker with information to outline their role in the organization's health and safety program and about hazards encountered in their type of work.

Make orientation a daily practice

The employers we visited recognized the importance of knowing workplace hazards and the procedures for daily work.

"We want to keep health and safety 'in your face' every day," they told us.

Your program should identify

- Who needs orientation
- What information workers need
- How to deliver orientation
- What training methods to use
- Who delivers orientation
- Record keeping



Who needs orientation?

Start designing your program by listing who needs health & safety orientation:

- New hire, with or without experience in your industry
- Existing worker starting a new job, being transferred, returning after an absence
- Workers who will benefit from retraining after a near miss or injury
- Workers who will be working on a new or different work process or a new machine
- Seasonal or summer help
- Student worker or co-op student
- Temporary worker who may or may not have experience in your industry or your company
- New supervisor with or without prior experience, internal or external to organization
- All workers requiring training in your new or revised health and safety policy or program
- All workers requiring periodic refresher training
- Contractors and/or subcontractors
- Visitors to the workplace

What information do workers need?

Once you've identified who needs orientation, determine the information to cover. Organize it into topics and prepare training for each. Some of your topics will be general and apply to all staff while others will be specific to certain jobs. Some sample topics are provided below.

General information

- Organization's health and safety policies
- Management commitment
- Legal rights, responsibilities and duties of employers, supervisors, workers, joint health and safety committee (JHSC) or health and safety representative
- Emergency procedures and location of first aid stations and emergency exits
- General hazards or hazardous substances found at the worksite
- How to report hazards, injuries and illnesses

Specific to the job

- Safe operating procedures
- Known hazards
- Safety equipment and personal protective equipment
- Expectations for production, quality and health and safety

Make expectations clear

Workers need to know how they fit into the health and safety program. Let your workers expect a lot from you, and tell them that you expect a lot from them.

Don't do it all at once

People learn best by progressing through sessions.

Think about what the worker needs to know today, next week and next month and design your program around those needs.

How to deliver orientation***Set objectives***

For each topic in the orientation program, set training objectives. Objectives describe what you want the worker to learn from the training. You can later test the success of the training by comparing the workers' knowledge and practices with the objectives of the training they received.

Plan

Plan which topics to include, the information to cover, what training aids will be helpful, and in what order to present the information. This will ensure that the orientation sessions are well organized and all the important information is included.

Evaluation

Determine how you are going to evaluate the effectiveness of the training. Monitor the workers who received orientation. Find out: Are they applying their new knowledge? Do they remember the content of the training? Are they carrying out their duties in a safe and appropriate way?

By evaluating the effectiveness of the orientation, you can improve the program accordingly.

What training methods to use

Here are some ideas for different training methods to use to deliver information in your orientation program. The training program can be made up of a combination of training styles. For example, self-study materials can be used prior to on-the-job training, as training aids during the actual training or for review after the training sessions.

Some training methods are:

Lecture

Usually a formal method with an instructor in a classroom setting. It's effective when providing a group or an individual with information that requires little or no hands-on instruction. Examples include introducing new workers to the organization's health and safety policy or presenting a revised or new health and safety program.

On-the-job training

A supervisor or someone skilled in the job provides the trainee with hands-on instruction. Practical training allows the trainee to ask questions and apply knowledge. This method is ideal to orient workers to their specific job and the hazards in their job.



Our survey showed that direct senior management participation in general orientation sets the tone that health and safety is a priority in the workplace.

Self-study

Trainees independently review information (written, video, audio or computer-based) or instruction related to orientation, under controlled conditions. The material could cover topics like hazards that exist in the workplace, the health and safety program, emergency procedures and exits.

Regardless of the training method used:

- Ensure the training methods, aids and language used match the trainees' learning abilities
- Keep the training interactive, even in lecture style – allow trainees to draw on past experiences, ask questions, provide input and discuss training content
- Keep the training as practical as possible, provide examples, demonstrations and/or training aids that complement the content

Who delivers orientation?

For each topic covered in your orientation program, consider:

- Who has the skills or knowledge about that topic?
- Are they able to do the orientation or training?
- Are they prepared to deliver when the time comes?
- How will they measure learning?
- Who will evaluate the effectiveness of the training?

Share responsibility for delivering the orientation

For example:

- Occupational health nurse could cover how to report injuries and the return to work program
- Plant manager could cover corporate expectations
- Supervisor could cover hazards and procedures of the job
- JHSC co-chair could outline the role of the committee

This demonstrates that everyone has a role to play.

Record keeping

Plan who will document the training, and how and where the records are kept. Record keeping is important to track who received orientation and when it took place. This helps ensure that everyone in your organization has received orientation and helps monitor when refresher training is required.

Records are also critical documents to support due diligence. They will show what has been done to meet legal obligations under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* or the *Canadian Labour Code, Part II*.

Who to Contact

There are both federal and provincial laws, regulations and resources concerning occupational health and safety.

Canada (*federal*)

Human Resources and Skills Development Canada enforces the laws and regulations for workplaces covered by the *Canada Labour Code, Part II*. Check the federal listings of the blue pages of your local telephone book for the Labour Program or visit their Web site at www.labour.gc.ca.

Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS) provides information and advice about workplace health and safety. Visit their Web site at www.ccohs.ca or call their inquiry line at 1-800-263-8466.

Ontario (*provincial*)

The Ministry of Labour enforces the laws and regulations for workplaces covered by OHSA. Check the provincial listings of the blue pages of your local telephone book for the nearest office or visit their Web site at www.labour.gov.on.ca

Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB)

When a workplace injury or illness occurs, a report is sent to the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB). It manages Ontario's workplace safety and insurance system. It is a no-fault system that:

- provides information and services to promote prevention of workplace injury and illness
- ensures that injured workers are receiving highest quality health care if needed
- helps workers and employers arrange safe and early return to work
- provides compensation to injured workers if needed

For more information, the WSIB has a toll-free line dedicated to occupational health and safety:

1-800-663-6639 or **(416) 344-1016**

or visit the Web site at www.wsib.on.ca or www.prevent-it.ca

Health and Safety Associations (HSAs)

The **Safe Workplace Associations in Ontario** can provide you with information, training, and consulting services for injury and illness prevention.

Construction Safety Association of Ontario

Phone: (416) 674-2726
1-800-781-2726
Fax: (416) 674-8866
www.csao.org

Education Safety Association of Ontario

Phone: (416) 250-8005
1-877-732-3726
Fax: (416) 250-9190
www.esao.on.ca

Electrical & Utilities Safety Association

Phone: (905) 625-0100
1-800-263-5024
Fax: (905) 625-8998
www.eusa.on.ca

Farm Safety Association

Phone: (519) 823-5600
1-800-361-8855
Fax: (519) 823-8880
www.farmsafety.ca

Ontario Safety Association for Community and Healthcare

Phone: (416) 250-7444
1-877-250-7444
Fax: (416) 250-7478
www.osach.on.ca

Industrial Accident Prevention Association

Phone: (905) 614-4272
1-800-406-4272
Fax: (905) 614-1414
www.iapa.ca

Mines and Aggregates Safety and Health Association

Phone: (705) 474-7233
Fax: (705) 472-5800
www.masha.on.ca

Municipal Health and Safety Association

1-866-275-0045
Phone: (905) 890-2040
Fax: (905) 890-8010
www.mhsao.com

Ontario Forestry Safe Workplace Association

Phone: (705) 474-7233
Fax: (705) 474-4530
www.ofswa.on.ca

Ontario Service Safety Alliance

Phone: (905) 602-0674
1-800-525-2468
Fax: 1-877-250-9744
www.ossa.com

Pulp & Paper Health and Safety Association

Phone: (705) 474-7233
Fax: (705) 472-8250
www.pphsa.on.ca

Transportation Health and Safety Association of Ontario

Phone: (416) 242-4771
1-800-263-5016
Fax: (416) 242-4714
www.thsao.on.ca

The **Workers Health and Safety Centre** provides general health and safety training as well as programs and training modules specific to your industry sector.

Workers Health and Safety Centre (WHSC)

Phone: (416) 441-1939
or 1-888-869-7950
Fax: (416) 441-1043
www.whsc.on.ca

The **Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers (OHCOW)** provides information and diagnostic services about occupational diseases such as repetitive strain injuries, noise induced hearing loss, respiratory problems and cancer. Visit their Web site at www.ohcow.on.ca.

Hamilton Clinic

Phone: (905) 549-2552
1-800-263-2129
Fax: (905) 549-7993

Toronto Clinic

Phone: (416) 449-0009
1-888-596-3800
Fax: (416) 449-7772

Sarnia-Lambton Clinic

Phone: (519) 337-4627
Fax: (519) 337-9442

Sudbury Clinic

Phone: (705) 523-2330
1-800-461-7120
Fax: (705) 523-2606

Windsor Clinic

Phone: (519) 973-4800
1-800-565-3185
Fax: (519) 973-1906

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Workplace Safety &
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Commission de la sécurité
professionnelle et de l'assurance
contre les accidents du travail

www.wsib.on.ca