



# Young and new workers... Are yours ready? Ready... Safe... Work!

Providing a safe working environment and ensuring a safe start when new people come to work for you is not only the right thing to do, **it's the law**. The Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) includes a general provision requiring employers to ensure their workers have been provided with proper information, instruction and supervision to protect their health and safety while they perform their jobs. While this provision applies to all workers, whether they are new to their job or not, providing the best possible supervision and introduction to safety in the workplace is critical for anyone new on the job. As well, many regulations made under the OHSA have specific requirements for training regarding specific hazards or safety precautions.

## Heads up!

The Ministry of Labour enforces Ontario's labour laws, including the OHSA. During our visits to your workplace Ministry inspectors will be asking you questions about how you ensure the safety of new and young workers. Remember that inspectors may issue orders or tickets when they find that provisions of the legislation are not being followed. Below are general topics you'll be asked questions about and some helpful resources from our partners in Ontario's occupational health and safety system.



## Ministry of Labour inspectors are asking...

### 1. Is your workplace prepared for new workers?

Ensuring you're in compliance with the OHSA and regulations and making the workplace safe for workers is mandatory. This includes following Ontario's minimum ages for work. Ensuring that supervisors are competent persons as required by the OHSA is essential. A management team committed to excellence in health and safety that is prepared to answer and is supportive of questions new workers may have, and will keep an eye out for them and reinforce safe working procedures is critical.

See:

- WorkSmartOntario: Facts for Employers at [www.worksmartontario.gov.on.ca](http://www.worksmartontario.gov.on.ca)
- Tip sheets: Tips for Employers and Tips for Supervisors at [www.labour.gov.on.ca](http://www.labour.gov.on.ca)

### 2. Are you ensuring your new workers are ready for work?

Asking your new workers about their previous safety education and work experience helps you ensure they know the basics of workplace safety. Too often we assume that everyone knows the basics, only to find out after something happens that they didn't. Ensure every new worker knows his or her rights and responsibilities, including:

- The right to participate in health and safety training and safety programs in the workplace,
- The right to know about hazards they may be exposed to on the job,
- The right to refuse unsafe work, and
- The responsibility to follow safety procedures and wear any personal protective equipment that may be required.

See:

- The Workplace Safety and Insurance Board's Health and Safety 101 (suitable for workers under 25 –at [www.hs101.ca](http://www.hs101.ca))
- Passport to Safety (a general knowledge safety test to ensure basics are understood – all ages –at [www.passporttosafety.com](http://www.passporttosafety.com))

### FACT:

Workers in their first 4 weeks on a new job are up to 4 times more likely to be injured than at any other time on the job.

For more information, visit the Institute for Work & Health at [www.iwh.on.ca](http://www.iwh.on.ca).

### Who is NEW to the job?

- Any new hire – permanent or temporary, including supervisors, with or without experience in your industry
- Your current workers who are assigned new jobs
- Student workers, co-op placements or apprentices
- Contractors and/or subcontractors
- Visitors to your workplace who need to know the general rules

## Ensure your workplace has what it takes


- ✓ **BE PREPARED FOR NEW WORKERS:**  
Compliance includes meeting minimum age requirements and having competent supervisors, and a management commitment to ensuring a safe start and a zero-tolerance for injuries.
- ✓ **MAKE SURE NEW WORKERS ARE READY:**  
Ensure they know the basics about safety and their rights **BEFORE** they start to work.
- ✓ **ORIENTATION:**  
Provide a thorough introduction to the workplace itself, all the safety features, rules and general information that everyone in the workplace must know.
- ✓ **JOB-SPECIFIC TRAINING:**  
Clearly delivered with a demonstrated understanding of all the procedures and practices to ensure the safety of workers.
- ✓ **SUPERVISION:**  
Have active, accountable, competent supervisors who are accessible to new and young workers.

### 3. Do you provide orientation to introduce your new workers to your workplace?

Orientation is more than just a tour of your workplace. It should cover emergency procedures, workplace safety rules everyone must follow at your workplace, general requirements for personal protective equipment, first aid provisions, information about where the OHS is posted and all other essential health and safety facts. If possible introduce new and young workers to the health and safety committee members or the health and safety representative during orientation and show them where their names are posted.

See:

- *Launching a Safe Start – An Employer’s Guide* and *Launching a Safe Start – A Worker’s Guide*

 Both are Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) publications in PDF only at [www.wsib.on.ca/wsib/wsibsite.nsf/public/ReferencePreventionGettingStarted](http://www.wsib.on.ca/wsib/wsibsite.nsf/public/ReferencePreventionGettingStarted).


### 4. Does your job-specific training ensure that every worker who takes on a new task understands how to perform the work safely?

Every Ontario employer **MUST** provide information about hazards in the workplace and how to perform work safely. Ensure that training takes place before any new task is assigned and that all information provided is understood. Cover everything – new workers, regardless of age and previous experience need to know all the basics – and don’t skip any details. The ideal method of training new and young workers is to demonstrate safe performance of a task and then have the trainee perform the task under supervision until they can demonstrate that they have mastered it.

If workers will need to use safety devices or wear personal protective equipment they will need to be trained to use and wear them properly. If the trainer isn’t the new worker’s supervisor, ensure the trainer is an expert at performing the tasks and is a good teacher.

See:

- WSIB’s Fact Sheets: *Recognize, Assess, Control Workplace Hazards* and *Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)*

 Both are available in PDF only at [www.wsib.on.ca/wsib/wsibsite.nsf/public/factsheetsprevention](http://www.wsib.on.ca/wsib/wsibsite.nsf/public/factsheetsprevention).

### 5. Are all new workers, especially young ones, closely supervised?

A supervisor must be in regular contact with workers. It’s a two-way street. The supervisor needs to provide instruction and ensure that safe work practices are always followed. The new worker needs to have the supervisor close by so they can ask questions and report any unsafe working conditions.

#### Getting Started . . .

There are many comprehensive resources to help any company ensure excellence in introducing new workers into their workplace and starting them on new jobs. Here are three to get you started:

- WorkSmartOntario – facts about working in Ontario at [www.worksmartontario.gov.on.ca](http://www.worksmartontario.gov.on.ca)
- Tip Sheets for employers, supervisors, parents and young workers at [www.labour.gov.on.ca](http://www.labour.gov.on.ca)
- WSIB’s *Launching a Safe Start – An Employer’s Guide* at [www.wsib.on.ca/wsib/wsibsite.nsf/public/ReferencePreventionGettingStarted](http://www.wsib.on.ca/wsib/wsibsite.nsf/public/ReferencePreventionGettingStarted)

...and check the list of sector-specific safety associations at [www.wsib.on.ca/wsib/wsibsite.nsf/public/PartnersHealthandSafety](http://www.wsib.on.ca/wsib/wsibsite.nsf/public/PartnersHealthandSafety) for more detailed resources to help you provide a safe introduction to the workplace.

Need to know more about the law? Is the OHS posted in your workplace?

- Purchase a copy of the OHS or the Guide to the OHS at [www.publications.serviceontario.ca](http://www.publications.serviceontario.ca)
- Review the OHS on-line at [www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws\\_statutes\\_90o01\\_e.htm](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90o01_e.htm)
- Read/print the Guide to the OHS at [www.labour.gov.on.ca](http://www.labour.gov.on.ca)

