



Health and Safety:

Working with you to Maintain a Safe and Healthy Workplace

What are my Health and Safety Rights and Responsibilities?

In the York Region District School Board, like any workplace in Ontario, employees are entitled to a safe & healthy work environment. Violence & harassment in the workplace are unacceptable. Under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, employers, supervisors and workers share the responsibility of identifying and solving workplace health and safety problems.

Your rights under the Occupational Health and Safety Act

1. **The right to participate** is fulfilled through the Internal Responsibility System (IRS) which is outlined below.
2. All workers have **the right to refuse unsafe work** if they believe their work is dangerous to their health and safety or another worker's health and safety. One caveat on this right is that a teacher may **not** refuse to work if that may place a student at risk. The other is that work cannot be refused on the grounds of workplace harassment. Your supervisor has been instructed on work refusals and is aware of the very specific procedure required by law that must be followed. The key elements to understand are that you must immediately report your concern to your supervisor. Your supervisor may move you to a safer location but you must stay at the workplace until the matter is resolved.
3. You have the **right to know** about any hazards you may be exposed to on the job. One of the ways this is fulfilled is through training about WHMIS, the "Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System".

Internal Responsibility System

When internal responsibility is referred to in an occupational health and safety sense, it means that the workplace parties must, by law, do everything reasonable to resolve workplace concerns themselves in the workplace. The premise is that people at a workplace often know best what is needed to make the workplace safe. Where additional help is needed this should be sought, however people in the workplace are responsible to make sure all health and safety matters are resolved.

Your Responsibilities

Briefly stated, your duties include:

- Using and wearing any equipment, protective devices or clothing that is required;
- Reporting to your supervisor any missing, broken or defective equipment or other hazard in the workplace, or any violation of health and safety law that you know about; and,
- Not working or operating equipment in a way that would be dangerous to yourself or anyone else in the workplace and not taking part in pranks or horseplay.

Your Supervisor's Responsibilities

Your supervisor must inform you of any unsafe working conditions in the workplace and the appropriate measures to be followed to protect your health. Briefly stated, a supervisor must take every precaution reasonable to protect their staff.

How are Health and Safety concerns resolved?

You must report your health and safety concerns to your supervisor. Should the health and safety concern remain unresolved, your supervisor is to notify the appropriate teacher and/or support staff Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOHSC) member. The committee member, with the supervisor, will investigate the reported hazard or health and safety concern, and endeavor to resolve it. The Board's health and safety manager or officer may be requested to assist in the investigation.

Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOHSC)

The Board has two JOHSCs that have representatives from both workers and management. One has members representing support staff in CUPE locals 1196 and 1734. The other has members representing teacher federations OSSTF, ETFO and ETFO Occasional teachers. Health and safety committees are set up to look at the occupational health and safety problems in the workplace and make recommendations to resolve them. A list of members on each committee, their locations and phone numbers are posted on the health and safety bulletin board in your school, as well as on BWW.

Health and Safety Representatives

Sites with 6-19 workers represented by OPSEU will have a Health and Safety Representative. Sites with 5 or less workers do not require a JOHSC or Health and Safety Representative.

What should I do if I'm injured at work?

- Obtain first aid and/or medical or other emergency services.
- Report the injury immediately to your supervisor and directly to Human

Resource Services. Your supervisor must complete the "[Employee Accident/Incident Report eForm](#)". This form is available on BWW under Employee Self-Serve → My Eforms. Please refer to the "[Employee Checklist - Work Related Accident/ Incident](#)" under Board Documents → Worker Compensation Claims for more detailed information. Accidents will be investigated by either your supervisor, a member of one of the Board's JOHSC or both. Responsibility for investigation depends on the type of occurrence. Through the investigation of accidents and incidents, facts and circumstances related to the event are identified. These insights lead to the recommendation of corrective measures needed to prevent future occurrences.

What should I do if I witness a violent incident?

- Summon immediate assistance and/or call 9-1-1 as appropriate.
- Notify your principal/supervisor.
- The principal/supervisor, in consultation with the employee, will complete the Employee Accident/Incident Report eForm and investigate/take steps to prevent a recurrence.
- This form must be completed regardless of age of student or mitigating circumstances.

Health and Safety Office

Health and Safety is part of Human Resource Services and is located at Education Centre Aurora. The Health and Safety Office is staffed by:

- Health & Safety Manager – Renate Kaskow x2324
- Health & Safety Officer – Hilary Chalmers x2326
- Environmental Safety Officer – Kori Zsigmond x2467
- Health & Safety Specialist – Jessie Liu x2639
- Health & Safety Representative – Debra Anderson x2343

Where can I find more information in my school?

Each school has two health and safety bulletin boards, one of which is located in the staff room or other area accessible to all staff; the second located in the caretaking area. A copy of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* is posted on the board along with a contact list of your Health and Safety representatives as well as information about the Board's health and safety policy, procedures, programs and practices.