



# SAFE WORK



No. 255  
October 2007

## Safety and Health Orientation

### What is Safety and Health Orientation?

Workplace safety and health orientation involves **acquainting employees and others to the workplace's health and safety program and the hazards** to which a worker, visitor, or contractor/customer may be exposed. Orientation ensures that individuals are familiar with the company's expectations for health and safety, the role that managers and workers have in the health and safety program and the hazards of the particular worksite.

### Why conduct a safety and health orientation?

- Reduce injuries and consequently, costs
- Legislated requirement to provide adequate safety and health training
- Demonstrate due diligence

### Who needs to be oriented?

Circumstances vary from workplace to workplace, but occupational safety and health (osh) orientation must be given to new hires, temporary, seasonal or full time returning employees, outside contractors, visitors and others. Orientation must also be provided for employees that are assigned new or unfamiliar work and/or equipment. Consider:

- commencement of employment
- reassignment or transfer to a new job
- introduction of new equipment, processes, or procedures
- challenges with performance

### Who is responsible for the orientation?

The ***Workplace Safety and Health Act*** requires **employers and supervisors** to acquaint workers with the hazards in their workplace and the procedures for doing the job safely. Beyond this legal requirement, many people have a role to play in ensuring that individuals are properly prepared for entry and continued safe employment.

It is possible that different people could be responsible for different parts of an orientation program. For example, the health and safety coordinator might deliver the overall orientation to the organization's policies and program, a nurse might review incident reporting procedures and a supervisor might detail specific job hazards and outline specific safe work procedures for a particular job or change in job/task.

## What topics are usually covered in an OSH orientation?

- ✓ Safety and health policies
- ✓ Roles and responsibilities of various workplace parties including the new worker
- ✓ Emergency procedures (first aid, fire, evacuation, etc.)
- ✓ Personal protective equipment
- ✓ Joint Safety & Health Committee (or worker rep)
- ✓ Work refusal procedures
- ✓ Accident/incident/hazard reporting and investigation
- ✓ Specific hazard information
- ✓ Safe work procedures for each specific task a worker will perform

## How Do I Conduct an Orientation – A Step-By-Step Approach

1. Decide who should receive orientation or re-orientation training;
2. List what orientation and training you'll provide your employees – see suggested topics above – BE SPECIFIC (Among others, your safety and health committee or worker representative would be helpful in developing the orientation program);
3. Write it down (a checklist - sample attached - is often a useful tracking tool both for delivery and for tracking what has been done by when and by whom);
4. Assign who will provide what parts of the orientation;
5. Write down expected timelines for delivery of each part of the orientation;
6. Develop and/or collect the required materials for the delivery of each part of the orientation;
7. Provide the training;
8. Check off each item as it is delivered, note who delivered and on what date;
9. Designate a person(s) responsible to ensure the orientation is provided and that it is done in a timely fashion (ensure all senior managers and supervisors are aware that this is a requirement that is supported by company senior management);
10. Keep copies of the training in individual personnel files;
11. Develop a system to "refresh" or review policies and procedures training as they change (e.g. new equipment or procedures) and on a regular basis even if no changes are made.

"Cette information existe également en français au [www.gov.mb.ca/labour/safety/index.fr.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/labour/safety/index.fr.html)"