



Occupational Health Committee (OHC) Terms of Reference

Whereas it is the desire of all parties:

- *To maintain healthy and safe working conditions by establishing an effective Occupational Health and Safety Committee at the place of employment.*
- *To encourage efficiency and safety in operations.*
- *To promote the well-being and security of all employees.*
- *To recognize the shared value of joint process and collaboration in all matters pertaining to occupational health and safety in the workplace.*

Therefore, the parties agree to enter into, establish and agree to the following terms:

(The terms of reference shall not circumvent the negotiated terms of the respective collective agreements).

1. Purpose The Occupational Health Committee has been established pursuant to the requirements set out in *The Saskatchewan Employment Act* and *The Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, 2020*.

The purpose of the Occupational Health Committee is:

- 1.1.** To provide communication related to Occupational Health & Safety between the employer and workers at the place of employment and to create and support a safe work environment.
- 1.2.** To work in collaboration to identify and resolve employee health and safety issues, and to prevent all work related illnesses and injuries.
- 1.3.** To allow any of the following to refer matter(s) to an Occupational Health Officer (OHO), the employer, OHC, a member of the OHC or an OHC representative.
- 1.4.** To monitor the effectiveness of the Saskatchewan Health Authority's Health and Safety Program and monitor the Workplace Responsibility System.

2. Membership – Composition, Attendance

- 2.1.** At every place of employment where ten (10) or more workers of one employer works, the employer shall establish an Occupational Health Committee at the place of employment.
- 2.2.** At each prescribed place of employment where fewer than ten (10) workers of one employer work, the SHA shall designate a person as an Occupational Health & Safety Representative, with the SHA option to establish an Occupational Health Committee at the place of employment.



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- 2.3.** The Occupational Health Committee shall have at least two (2), but no more than twelve (12) committee members that represent respective unions and departments.
- 2.4.** At least half of the members of an Occupational Health Committee must represent workers and ensure that there is a sufficient number of members representing all workers. Where possible, representation is recommended to equitably represent groups who have substantially different Occupational Health & Safety concerns. The worker members on the committee must be other than workers connected with the management of the place of employment.
- 2.5.** Each Occupational Health Committee shall have one (1) Employer co-chair and one (1) Worker co-chair. The Employer co-chair will be appointed by the Saskatchewan Health Authority, while the Worker co-chair will be appointed/elected by the committee members. Where a designated representative is required, the employer shall designate said representative.
- 2.6.** The respective unions are responsible for selecting their alternate members that will attend meetings or participate in necessary activities when the regular committee member is unable to attend. Committee members are responsible for contacting the alternates to attend.
- 2.7.** No person who represents workers shall be designated as a member of an Occupational Health Committee/ OH&S Representative unless the person:
- a)** Has been appointed from the place of employment for that purpose by the employees whom the person would represent; or
 - b)** Has been elected/appointed from the place of employment in accordance with the constitution or bylaws of the union of which the workers are members; or
 - c)** If a committee member belongs to more than one union, the person may represent multiple unions pursuant to an agreement amongst the unions.
- 2.8.** Where a vacancy occurs at any time within the members of the committee, where possible the vacancy may temporarily be filled if possible by an alternate. The union process for OHC membership selection shall be followed.
- 2.9.** A quorum must be present for meetings. A quorum shall consist of one-half of the members of a committee, where:
- a)** Representatives of both employers and workers are present.



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- b) At least one-half of the members present represent workers.
- c) Where there are more employer members than worker members at any meeting, extra employers would leave to ensure there are more employee members than employer members.

2.10. The committee may invite subject matter experts, and guest speakers as it may see fit from time to time to attend meetings of the Committee. Any guests are not considered members of the committee and thus do not count towards quorum and are ineligible to vote.

2.11. Members of the OHC committee/OH&S Representatives are allowed the opportunity for necessary activities as pursuant to The Occupational Health & Safety Regulations, 2020, Section 48.

3. Authority

The Occupational Health Committee functions collaboratively with the employer and employees as an advisory committee to recommend adherence to *The Saskatchewan Employment Act* and *The Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, 2020*. They advise, consult, and engage in joint decisions to identify and mutually resolve health and safety issues, but cannot assume any of the legal obligations, duties, or responsibilities of either the employer or the workers.

3.1. No disciplinary or discriminatory action shall be taken against a member of the committee by reason of that member performing duties and functions in *The Saskatchewan Employment Act* and *The Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, 2020*.

3.2. No worker member of the committee will be involved in the employers disciplinary matters of employees, concerning OHS incidents.

4. Responsibilities, Accountabilities

The Employer co-chair and the Worker co-chair have equal rights and responsibilities. Both co-chairs are responsible for:

- a) Establishing agendas for committee meetings.
- b) Ensure quorum is met for regular meeting.
- c) Chairing the meetings.
- d) Keeping their own members informed of the activities, concerns, and recommendations of the committee, as well as of any information addressed to the committee.



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- e) Receiving notifications of any lost time injury/ incident at the place of employment that results in the worker(s) receiving medical treatment and investigating as necessary.
- f) Reporting time loss injury/incidents investigation findings to the members of the committee.
- g) Reviewing Occupational Health & Safety incidents or trends including Near Misses &/or Property Damage. This excludes documented incidents of harassment/bullying.
- h) Submitting completed and signed minutes, reports, and any recommendations in a timely manner following any meeting of the Committee. These should be submitted to the employer no longer than two weeks (14 days) after the meeting was held. All committee records must be retained for a minimum of 7 years.

4.1. All members of the committee (including OH&S Representatives) are responsible for the following:

- a) Receiving, considering, investigating, and assisting in the resolution of health and safety concerns.
- b) Preparing for committee meetings and regularly attending, participating, engaging.
- c) Recording minutes of each meeting, and maintaining the minutes on file with the committee. These minutes shall be formatted using the template provided either by the Saskatchewan Health Authority or by Labor Relations Work Place Health & Safety Division.
- d) Ensuring an ongoing evaluation of the Occupational Health & Safety Program through consistent use of the program's master plan for that place of employment.
- e) Ongoing communication with the employer and workers on Occupational Health & Safety matters.
- f) Working collaboratively with the employer to participate in identifying and controlling health and safety hazards at the place of employment, assessing and investigating worker exposure to hazardous substances, and implementing and monitoring of programs designed to prevent workplace hazards.
- g) Participating in the development, implementation, follow-up, and promotion of safe work practices and procedures.



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- h) Coordinating and conducting regularly scheduled formal inspections of the place of employment.
- i) Reviewing and ensuring adequate records are maintained in regards to workplace incidents, injuries, investigations, and inspections.
- j) Making recommendations to the employer about health, safety, and wellness concerns at the place of employment.
- k) Ensuring resolution and documentation is maintained in relation to investigations, workplace incident reports, or inspections. Resolutions and recommendations shall be assigned timely target dates.
- l) Advising manager/supervisor of any outstanding recommendations, and request resolution or written reason for the deficiency.
- m) Having knowledge of and monitoring the overall functionality of the Safety Management System at the place of employment.
- n) Cooperating with Saskatchewan Labor Relations and Workplace Safety Occupational Health Officers (OHO) of Saskatchewan as applicable, or anyone acting in an OH&S capacity.
- o) Receiving and distributing to workers any relevant or applicable information related to health, safety, and wellness, including OH&S Division publications.
- p) Investigating, where required, any matters related to a worker exercising their Right to Refuse.

5. Commitment

5.1. A committee shall hold its first meeting within two (2) weeks after being established. After that, three (3) subsequent meetings are to be held at intervals not exceeding one (1) month. Regular meetings shall then be held at intervals not exceeding three (3) months.

5.2. Committees shall hold regular meetings at intervals not exceeding three months. The director of LRWS may require a committee to meet more frequently because of any of the following factors:



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- a) The existence of particular hazards or circumstances
- b) The complexity of the operation
- c) The number of workers

5.3. Special meetings of the committee shall be held at the call of either committee co-chair or at the request of an Occupational Health Officer (OHO) to deal with urgent concerns, imminent dangers to health or safety, investigations of accidents or dangerous occurrences, or refusals to work.

5.4. A copy of any meeting minutes and any other Occupational Health & Safety information must be posted at a location that is readily accessible to workers at the place of employment until all concerns recorded in the minutes are resolved.

5.5. A list of all committee members, their occupation, must be posted at a location that is readily accessible to workers at the place of employment.

5.6. Annually, the OHC will review the Terms of Reference.

5.7. The employer in consultation with the OHC shall:

- a) Ensure attendance at OHC meetings or OH&S committee business is considered employer paid time at work with no loss of benefits.
- b) Establish goals, objectives, educational training to meet the requirements of both the Occupational Health & Safety Program as well as the Workplace Responsibility System at the place of employment.
- c) Employer will consider requests for support (ie. typing committee minutes)

6. Term

All members of the committee, including co-chairs, are appointed/ elected for a term of three (3) years with the option to be re-appointed/ re-elected for a second or subsequent term. Whenever possible, members of the Committee maintain their membership until a successor is designated.

6.1. Terms of membership of committee members should be staggered; no more than one half of the committee should be new at any given time.



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6.2. If a member of the committee chosen by their respective union is unable to complete the term of office, their union will choose another member.

6.3. If a designated representative appointed by the employer is unable to complete the term of office, the employer will appoint another member.

7. Training

7.1. A member of the committee shall be entitled to take leave for a period or periods of not more than five (5) working days per year to attend Occupational Health & Safety training programs, seminars, or courses of instruction.

7.2. Co-chairs will be trained regarding their duties and responsibilities.

7.3. Committee members must be provided with training to enable them to understand applicable legislation, rights, duties, responsibilities, and functions. (ie- OHC Level 1 + 2)

8. Resources

OHC Level 1 Manual, Worksafe Saskatchewan- www.worksafesask.ca

OHC Level 2 Manual, Worksafe Saskatchewan

Saskatchewan Association for Safe Workplaces in Health SMS

The Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, 2020

The Saskatchewan Employment Act

In recognition of the sites/facilities who follow the Alberta Occupational Health & Safety Act/Regs, namely:

Lloydminster Continuing Care

Dr. Cooke Extended Care Centre

Alberta Home Care Services



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The OHC Statutes of Alberta is available for review on the OH&S SharePoint once developed and activated.

DOCUMENT OWNER: *[Chairperson, Committee Name]*

Approved by: *Tammy Martins* November 2, 2021

Revision History: