

HR 191 Health, Safety & The Law

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The Occupational Health and Safety Act contains provisions for the administration of occupational health and safety in the workplace. The Act is the foundation of the legislation; the Regulations are the framework that outlines how to comply with the requirements for specific circumstances.

The Act is built on the principle of internal responsibility, which means that:

- Employers and workers each have responsibilities for health and safety in the workplace.
- The Joint Health and Safety Committee is a key player to ensure a worker's right to participate, right to know, and right to refuse unsafe work.

The Act must be available to all workers in each work place. As well, libraries must follow:

- Workplace Safety and Insurance Act
- Smoking in the Workplace Act
- First Aid Regulation
- Ontario Fire Code
- Ontario Building Code
- Electrical Safety Code

In addition, workplace policies and procedures required by the Act or Regulations may include references to codes, guidelines and standards. Similarly, safety procedures put into place by the employer may extend the legislation to include codes, guidelines and standards.

Duties of Employers, Section 25, The Act

The following are some of the general duties and responsibilities for employers (specifically, the County of Prince Edward Public Library):

- Ensure that the act and regulations are complied with
- Ensure that measures and procedures, where 'prescribed' are compiled with in the workplace
- Provide protective equipment, where 'prescribed' by Regulation
- Provide information, instruction and supervision to a worker to protect the health and safety of the worker
- Only appoint a 'competent' person as a supervisor
- Inform a worker, or supervisor, about any hazard in the work and ensure that training is provided in the handling, storage, use, disposal and transport of any equipment, hazardous substances, tools, material, etc.
- Health the JHSC to carry out the prescribed duties
- Prepare a written occupational health and safety policy, review the policy at least once a year and develop a program for implementation
- Take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of a worker.

Duties of a Supervisor, Section 27

A Supervisor (Branch Librarian) shall:

- Ensure that a worker complies with the Act and regulations
- Ensure that any equipment, protective devices or clothing required by the Act, a regulation or employer are used or worn by a worker
- Advise a worker of any potential or actual danger to the health or safety of the worker of which the supervisor is aware
- Take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of a worker

Duties of a Worker, Section 28

A worker shall:

- Work in compliance with the Act and Regulations
- Use or wear any equipment, protective devices or clothing required by the employer
- Report any known missing or defective equipment, or protective device to the supervisor or employer
- Report any known violation of the Act or regulations to the supervisor or employer
- Not remove or make ineffective any protection device required by the regulations or the employer
- Not use or operate any equipment or work in a way that may endanger any worker
- Not use or operate any equipment or work in a way that may endanger any worker
- Not use or operate any equipment or work in a way that may endanger any worker
- Not engage in any prank, contest, feat of strength, unnecessary running or rough and boisterous conduct.

Joint Health and Safety Committee

A committee shall consist of at least two persons for a workplace where fewer than fifty workers are regularly employed. At least half of the members of the JHSC shall be workers who do not exercise managerial functions. The worker members of the committee are to be selected by the workers, and the management members are to be selected by the employer from among persons who exercise managerial functions. At least one management and one worker member must be certified members. Not all members of the Joint Health and Safety Committee have to be certified.