

# Workplace Safety and Health Committee Checklist

Workplace safety and health committees play a valuable role. They work to help employers and workers create and maintain safe and healthy workplaces. All workplaces with 20 or more regularly employed workers are required to have a safety and health committee. The following checklist briefly summarizes information about workplace safety and health committees.

## Requirement for Safety and Health Committee

- ✓ Prime contractors must establish a safety and health committee at a construction project site where the total number of workers at the site is 20 or more, and the project is expected to require more than 90 days to complete.
- ✓ All seasonal workplaces where 20 or more workers are expected to work for at least 90 days must have a safety and health committee.
- ✓ The director of Workplace Safety and Health may designate the requirement for a safety and health committee at any workplace.

## Forming a Safety and Health Committee

- ✓ Committees consist of no fewer than four or greater than 12 persons.
- ✓ At least half of the committee members – the “**worker members**” – must represent workers who are not associated with the management of the workplace. The number of committee members representing management – the “**employer members**” – must not exceed those representing workers.
- ✓ A committee shall have two co-chairs, one chosen by worker members and one chosen by employer members.

## Democratic Elections

- ✓ In a unionized workplace, the union(s) should select/elect worker members in accordance with their constitution.
- ✓ In a non-unionized workplace, the employer must designate one or more workers not connected with management to co-ordinate the democratic election of worker members.
- ✓ Term of office is two years. At term-end, members are eligible for re-election. For unionized workers, term of office is determined by the union constitution.

## No Employer or Worker Influence

- ✓ No employer or worker shall attempt to influence the appointment or election of the other party's members.

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## Competently Trained Committee Members

- ✓ Both worker and employer safety and health committee members must be competently trained to perform their duties. Competently trained committee members demonstrate an employer's commitment to workplace safety and health, and provide guidance to workers and employers on safety and health matters. Competent training includes knowledge of safety and health rights, roles and responsibilities as well as knowledge of any of the tasks that may be required of a safety and health representative.

## Assessing Committee Training Needs

Every workplace is unique. Training needs of safety and health committee members will vary from workplace to workplace.

## For the Employer

- ✓ Establish a written workplace safety and health program. See Section 7.4(1) of *The Workplace Safety and Health Act, W210*.
- ✓ Respond in writing to committee recommendations within 30 days, including short and long term control measures to address the recommendations.
- ✓ Provide a bulletin board located in a prominent place for the exclusive use of committee members in connection with safety and health subjects.
- ✓ Provide a meeting place for the committee during regular working hours.
- ✓ Provide each committee member the greater of 16 hours or the number of hours the worker normally works during two shifts annually for safety and health educational leave (training seminars) to ensure competency.
- ✓ Committee members must be paid for the greater of the hours spent at training or the regularly worked hours at a shift.
- ✓ Consult and co-operate with the committee.
- ✓ Advise the committee of the planned introduction of new equipment, new operating procedures, new chemicals or other new substances or materials.
- ✓ Committee members are entitled to take time off from regular work duties in order to carry out the required duties of a committee member:
  - ✓ One hour or more, as determined necessary by the committee to prepare for committee meetings.
  - ✓ Time required to attend each meeting.
  - ✓ Time required to attend safety and health training in accordance with *The Workplace Safety and Health Act*, Section 44, as approved by the employer.
  - ✓ Time required to carry out other assigned duties of a committee member.
- ✓ Members shall be paid by the employer at regular or premium pay, as applicable, for all time spent carrying out the duties of a committee member.

## Meeting Guidelines

### Regularly Held Meetings

Meet regularly, at intervals determined by the committee, but not less than once every three months.

### Quorum

Quorum is met when at least one half of the worker members and one half of the employer members of the committee are in attendance.

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#### SAFE Work Manitoba contact information:

Winnipeg: 204-957-SAFE (7233)

Toll-Free: 1-855-957-SAFE (7233)

Publications and resources available at: [safemanitoba.com](http://safemanitoba.com)





### Three-Stage Procedure for Handling Concerns – No Imminent Risk

- ✓ **Stage One** (Direct Resolution) – Supervisor shall attempt to resolve the matter, with involvement from a worker member of the committee where practicable, and, in certain circumstances, the affected worker. Concerns resolved in this manner shall be recorded in the minutes of the next meeting.
- ✓ **Stage Two** (Committee Involvement) – Where a satisfactory resolution is not achieved at the first stage, the committee member or supervisor shall ensure the concern is on the agenda of the upcoming meeting for the purpose of resolution. The concern shall be placed on the agenda of each successive meeting until it is resolved.
- ✓ **Stage Three** (Outside Assistance) – If the committee members are unable to resolve the concern, they shall request assistance from Manitoba Workplace Safety and Health (WSH), Department of Labour and Immigration. Committee members may also request assistance from other appropriate consultation services. It is preferable that all committee members agree when a request for assistance is made; however, such agreement is not required.

### Duties and Responsibilities of Committee Members

- ✓ Protect the anonymity of complainants when requested.
- ✓ Notify complainants of any decisions or recommendations made by the committee relating to their concerns.
- ✓ Periodically assist the employer with determining the types of hazards that may be encountered in the workplace.
- ✓ On a regular basis, at least every 90 days, and prior to regular meetings, inspect the entire workplace and the operations conducted therein.
- ✓ Participate in investigations of incidents and dangerous occurrences at the workplace.
- ✓ Review safety of new equipment, materials or processes and make recommendations accordingly.
- ✓ Worker co-chair or designate may be required to accompany a WSH Safety and Health Officer during any inspection or investigation. They may be joined by the employer co-chair or designate.
- ✓ Distribute and display safety and health information and educational materials relevant to your workplace.
- ✓ Ensure the safety and health committee minutes have been given to the employer.
- ✓ If required, perform the duties of a worker co-chair (e.g., in their absence).

### Duties and Responsibilities of Committee Co-chairs

- ✓ Meeting chairpersonship alternates between the two co-chairs from meeting to meeting.
- ✓ Co-chairs participate as equally as any other member in the discussions and decisions of the committee.
- ✓ Conduct investigations of serious incidents.
- ✓ Inspect dangerous conditions.
- ✓ May call special meetings to deal with matters of urgent concern.

### Agenda

- ✓ Co-chairs of the committee prepare the agenda.
- ✓ Include the place and time of the meeting.
- ✓ Forward to individual committee members at least three clear days in advance.
- ✓ Post the agenda on the safety and health bulletin board in advance.
- ✓ Meeting discussion to focus only on safety and health issues.

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## Minutes

- ✓ Use WSH form or create your own (must contain all fields in WSH form) to record minutes.
- ✓ Put the name and address of your workplace in the minutes.
- ✓ List those in attendance and their role (e.g., worker rep, employer rep, resource person).
- ✓ Record the date an issue was raised (use the “origin” column on the WSH form).
- ✓ Minutes must be signed by both co-chairs.
- ✓ Minutes must be kept for 10 years.
- ✓ Distribute minutes to workers within seven days.
- ✓ Put a copy in your safety and health committee files.
- ✓ Circulate minutes to safety and health committee members.
- ✓ Post minutes on the workplace safety and health bulletin board.

## The Safety and Health Bulletin Board

The safety and health bulletin board must be readily accessible to workers.

### Board to Include:

- ✓ Names of all committee members, how to contact them and their term of office expiry date.
- ✓ Scheduled dates (and times, when available) of committee meetings.
- ✓ Meeting agenda – post ahead of time.
- ✓ Meeting minutes – post within one week. Leave minutes up until at least one month after the next meeting has passed.
- ✓ Items recommended by committee members.
- ✓ Items/materials issued by WSH.

## Contact

- ✓ Contact Workplace Safety and Health *Client Services* if you are unable to resolve an issue and would like assistance in finding a solution:

Winnipeg: 204-957-SAFE (7233)

Toll-free (in Canada): 1-877-957-SAFE (7233)

E-mail: [wshcompl@gov.mb.ca](mailto:wshcompl@gov.mb.ca)

### Reference to legal requirements under workplace safety and health legislation:

- Workplace Safety and Health Committees and Representatives: Workplace Safety and Health Act, W210 Parts 40 and 41
- Workplace Safety and Health Committees and Representatives: Manitoba Regulation 217/2006 Part 3

Additional workplace safety and health information available at: [safemanitoba.com](http://safemanitoba.com)

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