

Workplace Safety Group

February 2010

Monthly News e-Letter

BILL 168

Government Confronts Violence in the Workplace

Amendments to Ontario's Occupational Health and Safety Act will help further protect workers from violence and harassment in workplaces. The legislation not only enhances protection against workplace violence, but also addresses workplace harassment. It applies to all Ontario workplaces currently covered by the OHSA.

Managing workplace violence is a legal obligation with the passing of Bill 168! It requires employers to:

- Develop and communicate workplace violence and harassment prevention policies and programs to workers
- Assess the risks of workplace violence, and take reasonable precautions to protect workers from possible domestic violence in the workplace.
- Allow workers to remove themselves from harmful situations if they have reason to believe that they are at risk of imminent danger due to workplace violence

Helping you know what to do!

Get practical information on preventing workplace harassment and violence by creating a work environment that supports respect and tolerance of all workers.

- Assessing workplaces for harassment and/or violence
- Investigating complaints of harassment and/or violence
- Reporting incidents of workplace harassment and/or violence
- Writing Workplace Violence and Workplace Harassment Policies

Occupational Health and Safety Amendment Act

Insure Your Liability by Ensuring Worker Safety

If you are running a business, you should know that one quick decision to cut corners could end up killing someone, costing your company a lot of money and landing you in jail. The Criminal Code of Canada states that anyone with responsibility for the safety of employees must take reasonable safety precautions and, that those who fail to provide safe workplaces may be dealt with severely through criminal law.



Quite simply, the Occupational Health and Safety Act obligates employers in Canada to keep the workplace safe by ensuring that all required equipment and protective devices are provided and properly maintained; that required safety and emergency procedures are in place and followed; that equipment and materials are properly used; and that workers receive sufficient information, instruction, and supervision to carry out their jobs safely. They must also be trained in the proper use of any hazardous materials in the workplace through WHMIS training. Employers must alert workers to any known hazards, and prepare reports on workplace health and safety regularly.

By implementing due diligence basics, you are addressing worker safety and that can minimize liability if workers are injured in your workplace.

- a. examine and review operation processes to identify safety risks
- b. develop policies and procedures to address these risks
- c. train workers on the policies and procedures specific to their jobs
- d. monitor worker practices to ensure that compliance with the developed policies and procedures is taking place
- e. enforce the policies and procedures by disciplining non-compliant workers
- f. regularly re-examine and review the processes to keep policies current

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**NEW*

Workplace Safety Group now offers Ontario clients consulting services including:

- **Occupational Health & Safety Consultation and Assistance**
- **Safety Audits/Inspections**
- **Workwell Audits**
- **WSIB Claims and Assessment Management**
- **Return to Work Policies**
- **WSIB/WCB Claims Management and Appeals**
- **Hazard Assessments**
- **Customized Policy and Procedure Design and Implementation**
- **Accident Investigation and Documentation**
- **Respiratory Protection Training**

Workplace Safety Group consultants have the expertise to help you apply Health & Safety in your everyday business practices ensuring that your employees have a safe working environment that meets the requirements set out both by the WSIB and the Ministry of Labour.



These steps will help you lessen and possibly avoid, the hazards and risks inherent to operations, and help you send your workers home safely at the end of each workday. It is fact that companies face liability from any number of workplace safety issues and situations and careful attention to safety concerns in the workplace must be addressed! Employers have an obligation to appropriately train their employees and supervisors to ensure that they are competent to perform their jobs, recognize the hazards of the job and understand how to protect themselves from these hazards.

What is your health and safety provider really doing to help you? Are you getting complete safety training that is dedicated to the unique needs of your company? Do you get the information you need to help prevent injuries and foster a safety culture at your workplace? Appropriate health and safety training is an integral part of all health and safety programs and is a key component of due diligence in the workplace. Keeping your employees attention focused on safety is critical to the success of your workplace safety program.

The lesson for employers is a simple but valuable one: make sure that you are paying careful attention to safety issues in your workplace, and don't cut safety corners with the hope of saving time or money. Intelligent occupational health and safety management will reduce your liability!

Questions, Concerns, Comments?

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