

OHS Program:

2. What is an OHS committee, representative or designate?

Occupational health and safety committees, representatives and designates bring management and workers together to talk about occupational health and safety (OHS) concerns and find the safest way for workers to do their work. They allow workers to participate in OHS and support the three basic rights of workers:

- Right to know
- Right to participate
- Right to refuse unsafe work



Requirements

In Newfoundland and Labrador, employers who are regulated by provincial OHS legislation must have a committee, representative or designate for a work site, construction site or industrial project.

Provincially-regulated employers (OHS Act)

Number of employees	What is required
10 and up	OHS Committee
6 to 9	Worker Health and Safety Representative
2 to 5	Workplace Health and Safety Designate

Training

Committee members, representatives and designates must be trained by a training provider approved by WorkplaceNL. Trainers are listed in the Certification Training Registry.

Provincially-regulated employers (OHS Act)

Number of employees	Who requires training
50 and up	All OHS committee members

Tips for effective management:

The employer is responsible to develop a system for managing OHS in the workplace. The committee, representative and designate are not responsible for the developing this system. Their role is to monitor the health and safety of the workplace with the employer in the following ways:

- Identify unhealthy or unsafe aspects of the workplace
- Participate in inspections
- Make recommendations to the employer
- Receive and document worker concerns
- Recommend and promote educational programs
- Participate in work refusals

Employer:

- Consult and cooperate on all matters with respect to OHS at the workplace
- Respond in writing within 30 days to a recommendation
- Provide written updates on the implementation of a recommendation
- Consult on the scheduling of workplace inspections and ensure participation
- Post names of your committee members, representative or designate

OHS committee facts:

- There are no less than two persons and no more than twelve
- Half of your committee must represent workers who are not connected to management
- Co-chairs are elected or appointed with one from management and the other from the workers
- They meet within two (2) weeks of forming and at least once every three months after that
- Meetings take place during regular work hours
- They follow a terms of reference
- Minutes are recorded on WorkplaceNL forms
- Copies of minutes are kept by the committee and posted at your workplace and sent to WorkplaceNL

Federally Regulated Employers (Canada Labour Code)

Work sites in Newfoundland Labrador under federal jurisdiction must comply with the Canada Labour Code and the Canadian Occupational Health and Safety Regulations. For more information on committees or representatives, see the following publications produced by Employment and Social Development Canada:

- Pamphlet 6A – Policy Health and Safety Committees
- Pamphlet 6B – Workplace Health and Safety Committees
- Pamphlet 6C – Health and Safety Representatives

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