

## OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

### Background

The Division is committed to providing a safe and healthy working environment for students, employees, volunteers and the general public. Divisions recognize that safe working procedures and conditions, accident prevention and the preservation of health are high priorities. These responsibilities are shared and require the combined efforts of the provincial government, Divisions, administrators, staff, students and parents.

Changes to the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* have further strengthened our Division focus on ensuring workers' safety in the workplace. To meet additional legislative requirements for ensuring that workers know, participate in, and know their rights to refuse unsafe work, as per the Act, the Division will enact a Joint Work Site Health and Safety Committee (Division JWSHSC). The Division values the work of site committees to carry forward training, safety checks, and educational requirements to ensure competent supervision of workplace safety.

### Guidelines

1. Division administrators and staff will comply with safety and health legislation.
2. Establishing and maintaining safe working conditions is to be a shared obligation of site-supervisors and staff.
3. Developing and implementing safety and accident prevention programs is strongly encouraged by the Division.
4. Provision of employee instruction and training to encourage safe work practices is strongly supported by the Division.
5. Site Health and Safety Committees (Site HSC) will be formed at each school, Operation Services and Division Services Centre site and they will support conditions that allow the due diligence required of all employees to ensure reasonable maintenance of health and safety in the workplace.
6. Proactive and preventative strategies as recommended through a Division Joint Work Site Health and Safety Committee (Division JWSHSC) supports the due diligence required of all employees to ensure reasonable maintenance of health and safety within the workplace.

## **Procedures**

### Roles and Responsibilities

1. Division: It is the responsibility of the Division to:
  - 1.1 formulate appropriate safety procedures in consultation with appropriate staff;
  - 1.2 facilitate the implementation of safety procedures by providing for adequate funding for the provision of a healthy, safe environment;
  - 1.3 ensure that the requirements of the various agencies such as Occupational Health and Safety, fire commissioner and building standards are met in Division facilities;
  - 1.4 ensure administrators and staff are aware of their rights and duties under the law and are aware of any health and safety issues;
  - 1.5 inform staff about potential hazards and have access to basic health and safety information on site;
  - 1.6 provide competent supervisors who are trained through ongoing workplace safety information shared through Division-led and school-led professional learning;
  - 1.7 train Site HSC staff through Division-led sessions and through Division-provided information for Site HSC meetings;
  - 1.8 ensure that information provided to HSC staff is easily shared and accessible to all staff who are to be involved in safety discussions and training, and to emphasize staff participation in health and safety committee meetings at their schools/sites and through individual training, and/or Division sessions;
  - 1.9 investigate complaints about workplace safety, hazards, harassment or concerns made by any person at a site and to resolve such complaints through the supervisor of the site who will rely on the expertise of the Site HSC and on the JWSHSC and the administrative procedures- Harassment (AP 358, AP 460);
  - 1.10 ensure that Occupational Health and Safety legislation is enforced through roles and responsibilities outlined in this AP 412.
  
2. Superintendent: The Superintendent is responsible for:
  - 2.1 recommending safety procedures;
  - 2.2 implementing safety procedures;
  - 2.3 establishing a system to monitor the effectiveness of safety policies and practices in the Division;
  - 2.4 initiating corrective action as required;
  - 2.5 ensuring that in each school there is at least one staff member trained in first aid and emergency cases;

- 2.6 ensuring that school principals and supervisors, and members of the Division JWSHSC are competent to protect the health and safety of workers, to advise staff of all health and safety hazards and, to report on all health and safety concerns to the Division and to the Superintendent or designate.
3. Principals and Supervisors: The school administrator or Division site supervisor is responsible for:
    - 3.1 providing for educational programs and resources which assist in the development of sound safety practices and attitudes;
    - 3.2 appointing one person to be responsible for the coordination of health and safety programs and resources in the school/Division site;
    - 3.3 maintaining accurate records of accidents at the school/site and the treatment provided;
    - 3.4 protecting the health and safety of staff;
    - 3.5 providing direction and support to staff regarding student and staff safety, supervision, and/or violations;
    - 3.6 identifying potentially hazardous conditions and/or materials, ensuring that safe practices and procedures are in place to correct conditions or dispose of hazardous materials, and advising staff of all health and safety hazards;
    - 3.7 conducting and/or facilitating regular safety inspections.
    - 3.8 ensuring that teachers provide safety instruction as required in the courses they teach;
    - 3.9 reporting accidents to the Superintendent and the Workers' Compensation Board as required;
    - 3.10 resolving complaints or expressed concerns of safety hazards, harassment, or violence brought forward by staff;
    - 3.11 preventing violence and harassment.
  4. Staff: Each staff member is responsible for ensuring the health and safety of themselves and others; cooperating with the Division/supervisor for the purposes of health and safety; using all devices and wearing personal protective equipment; reporting unsafe or unhealthy conditions, and refraining from causing or participating in violence or harassment; and for ensuring the health and safety of the students and staff in their charge.

This involves:

- 4.1 exemplifying safe behavior in teaching practices and procedures;
- 4.2 accepting as a professional obligation the responsibility of providing and emphasizing safety education in the classroom;
- 4.3 implementing documented safety education programs in accordance with Board policy and the regulations and standards of other regulating bodies.

- 4.4 evaluating safety education efforts, monitoring student behavior and initiating corrective action as required;
  - 4.5 identifying unsafe environmental conditions to the principal or site manager and arranging for the reporting of these in writing;
  - 4.6 identifying through a site and division representation model, a member who will serve on this committee with the primary responsibility of providing advice, from the site perspective, of how to proactively improve the overall quality of safety within our schools;
  - 4.7 reporting concerns of safety hazards, harassment, or violence to supervisors and working towards resolution of those concerns with the supervisor;
  - 4.8 reporting unresolved concerns of safety hazards, harassment, or violence to the Division Joint Work Site Health and Safety Committee;
  - 4.9 refusing to perform dangerous work and being protected from any form of reprisal for exercising this right.
5. Students: Students have the responsibility to conduct themselves in accordance with safe practices and procedures. This requires students to:
- 5.1 be knowledgeable of both environmental safety factors and safe behavioural practices;
  - 5.2 conduct themselves in accordance with established safety practices and rules such as appropriate dress and protective clothing;
  - 5.3 identify unsafe practices or environmental conditions and report these to the school staff;
  - 5.4 inform school staff of possible health concerns relevant to their personal safety and protection.
6. Parents: Parents have the responsibility to:
- 6.1 inform the school about relevant student medical problems arising in the context of an occupational health and safety-related hazard;
  - 6.2 inform the school if they wish their child to be excluded from particular course activities that may be potentially hazardous.
7. A terms of reference dedicated to supporting the work of the Division Joint Work Site Health and Safety Committee will be updated as needed through the leadership and direction of the Division JWSHSC. The terms of reference will be an appendix to this procedure.
8. In the event that any action, claim or charge of any type is brought against an employee for acting with the course and scope of his / her duties, in good faith, as a member of the Division health and safety committee, the employer agrees to defend and indemnify the employee from such claims in such circumstance.

**Greater St. Albert Roman Catholic Separate School Division  
JOINT WORK SITE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE  
TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**Background**

The Joint Work Site Health and Safety Committee is formed and operates in accordance with Part 3 of Bill 30 (an act to protect the health and well-being of working Albertans) comprised of sections 16 to 30 inclusive.

**Joint Work Site Health and Safety Committee**

In Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools, the Joint Work Site Health and Safety Committee (Division JWSHSC) is comprised of 3 union representatives for the worker (non-management) representation, and 3 employer representatives (Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources; Secretary-Treasurer; Manager of Operation and Facility Services) for the employer's representation. This Committee will have two co-chairs, one from the worker and one from the employer representation.

**Co-Chairpersons:** The health and safety committee will have 2 co-chairs, one selected from the worker members and one selected from employer members. Co-chairs will alternate as Chair at ongoing meetings and shall participate in all decisions of the committee.

The co-chairs of the JWSHSC must ensure that:

- (a) minutes of each meeting of the committee are recorded;
- (b) copies of the minutes approved by the committee are given to the employer within 7 days of the meeting, and;
- (c) copies of the minutes approved by the committee are posted or provided by electronic means at each school/facility within 7 days of the meeting.

**Joint Work Site Health and Safety Training for Co-Chairs:** To ensure a successful committee, the employer will provide the committee co-chairs with training about duties and functions of the committee (16 hours per year). Annual training sessions will be organized by a member of the Division's Senior Leadership Team. Representatives from each of the unions are welcome to attend these training sessions, at the cost of the union, as has been regular practice.

**Replacement of Members:** In the event of a member departing, each site must ensure that a replacement member is in place within 7 days of that member's departure from the committee.

**Terms of Office:** Members may hold the position for a term of not less than 1 year and may continue to serve until their successors are selected or appointed. There is no limit to the number of terms a person may serve, unless specified in a union agreement.

**Quorum:** In law, a quorum is the minimum number of voting members that must be in attendance at a meeting of an organization for that meeting to be regularly constituted. In Alberta, quorum is one-half of the members if both worker and employer members are present (50% of members), and if at least one-half of those present are worker members (50% of attendees are worker members). Committee decisions and action are not considered to be valid if quorum was not met.

**Agenda:** Co-chairs will work collaboratively to create meeting agendas. Meeting agendas will be distributed by the recording secretary one week in advance of the meeting.

**Duties of the Joint Work Site Health and Safety Committee:**

- (a) to help maintain safe work sites by working together and meeting regularly;
- (b) to make recommendations to improve the health and safety of Division sites;
- (c) to participate in identifying hazards and recommend measures to eliminate or control them.
- (d) receive from the DHSC for consideration and disposition of concerns and complaints respecting the health and safety of workers;
- (e) cooperation with an officer who exercises duties under this Act, the regulations and the OHS code (shared with Division HSC);
- (f) the review of the development and promotion of programs for education and information concerning health and safety;
- (g) the making of recommendations to the employer respecting the health and safety of workers;
- (h) the participation in investigations of serious injuries and incidents at the work site in accordance with related legislation;
- (i) as presented from Division Office, the maintenance of records in connection with the receipt and disposition of concerns and complaints and the attendance to other matters relating to the duties of the committee (shared with Division HSCs);
- (j) such other duties as may be specified in the OH&S legislation the regulations and the OHS code (shared with Division HSCs).

**Duties of the Site Health and Safety Committees:**

- (a) to help maintain safe work sites by working together and meeting regularly;
- (b) to make recommendations to improve the health and safety of Division sites;
- (c) to participate in identifying hazards and recommend measures to eliminate or control them.
- (d) conduct a minimum of four meetings per year (this may be a component of regular

staff meetings, but does require a separate agenda and minutes).

- (e) participation in the identification of hazards to workers or other persons arising out of or in conjunction with the activities at the work site;
- (f) the development and promotion of measures to protect the health and safety of persons at the work site and checking the effectiveness of such measures;
- (g) the making of recommendations to the site supervisor respecting the health and safety of workers;
- (h) the inspection of the work site at regular intervals (a minimum of four per year);
- (i) the maintenance of records in connection with the receipt and disposition of concerns and complaints and the attendance to other matters relating to the duties of the committee;
- (j) such other duties as may be specified in the OH&S legislation, the regulations and the OHS code.

**Roles and Accountability:** Each Division site's health and safety committee's role is to discuss health and safety issues and make recommendations to the employer about ways to prevent incidents, injuries, and illness. The Division Joint Work Site Health and Safety Committee has an oversight function, but, ultimately, the Superintendent has the responsibility for ensuring the health and safety of all workers. Hence, the employer has the final authority and responsibility for health and safety at the work site. Establishing a committee does not reduce or change the employer's responsibilities.

- A. **Work Site Inspections:** Occupational health and safety legislation requires that inspections be conducted at least once each quarter, before committee meetings.
- B. **Work Refusals – Role of Committee Member:** The role of a committee member with regards to work refusal is to resolve the work refusal according to legislated requirements and established procedures at the work site; as well as to ensure that decisions are made jointly without coercion by labour and management.
- C. **Dispute Resolution:** In the event that the site health and safety committee fails to reach a consensus about recommendations to be put forward, the committee representatives.

**Process for Coordinating with Other HSCs Established by the Same Employer:** The division co-chairs training sessions will provide opportunities for co-chairs from each site to collaborate with HSC co-chairs from other sites.

**Duties of the Division Health and Safety Committee:**

- (a) to help maintain safe work sites by working together and meeting regularly;
- (b) to make recommendations to improve the health and safety of Division sites;
- (c) to participate in identifying hazards and recommend measures to eliminate or control them.

- (d) Assist in maintaining safe work practices through collaboration and the sharing of best practices related to OH&S.
- (e) Conduct a minimum of four meetings per year
- (f) Collect the agendas and minutes of the SHSC meetings
- (g) Develop recommendations related to safety for the JWSHSC by supporting the work of SHSC in identifying potential hazards and proposing solutions related to the safety concern
- (h) Promote safety and wellness among all employee groups
- (i) Engage in collaboration among DHSC members by promoting to have one annual inspection at each site be completed with a guest SHSC from another site/school.
- (j) the development and promotion of measures to protect the health and safety of persons at the work site and checking the effectiveness of such measures;
- (k) the making of recommendations to the site supervisor respecting the health and safety of workers.

Revision Dates: Revision Dates: June 21, 2018, August 9, 2021