

A COR audit checks whether your health and safety management system is written down, actually in use and understood by your people. Auditors test it three ways: they review documents, interview workers, supervisors and managers, and observe the work. Use this checklist with our guide, **How to Prepare for a COR Audit**, whether you're working toward your first COR or keeping the one you have.

1. Know your certifying partner and its rules

- ☐ We know which certifying partner covers our industry in our province or territory, and we're registered with it.
- ☐ We have the partner's **current** audit tool and know which version our audit will use.
- ☐ The courses our partner requires are complete and current for the people who need them.
- ☐ We know how many months of records the partner expects, the pass marks and every submission deadline.

2. Build or update the system against every element

- ☐ We've compared our system with each element and question in the audit tool, and listed the gaps.
- ☐ Gaps are being closed with the supervisors and workers who do the work, on every site and crew.
- ☐ Our written procedures and hazard assessments match how the work is really done today.

3. Keep records for the full year

- ☐ Records show the system working through the months before the audit, typically about 12 months for a certification or recertification audit.
- ☐ Inspections, meetings, hazard assessments and drills happen on schedule every month, on every site, not just before the audit.
- ☐ We check the records monthly, because a missing month can't be created after the fact.

4. Prepare your people for interviews

- ☐ Workers can explain the hazards of their job, the controls, emergency procedures and their right to refuse unsafe work.
- ☐ Supervisors can explain their responsibilities, how they inspect and how they follow up on hazards and incidents.
- ☐ People know the audit is happening and that interviews are one-on-one. We explain the program; we don't script or coach answers.

5. In the weeks before the audit

- ☐ A pre-audit or mock audit, including interviews, has been done and its findings fixed.
- ☐ Records are organized by element and easy to find, and current site and employee lists are ready for sampling.

How auditors gather evidence

Method	What the auditor does	What helps you score
Documents	Samples policies, procedures, hazard assessments, inspections, training records, investigations and meeting minutes from across the year.	Complete records for every month and site, with signatures, dates and closed actions.
Interviews	Talks one-on-one with a sample of workers, supervisors and managers about the program and their part in it.	People who can explain the program in their own words because they use it.
Observation	Watches work on site and checks that what's done matches what's written.	Controls, PPE, permits and housekeeping that match your procedures on an ordinary day.

To pass a certification audit, most programs require a minimum overall score and a minimum score in every element. In Alberta, for example, that's at least 80% overall and at least 50% in each element. Check your certifying partner's pass marks.

6. After the audit and between audits

- ☐ Every recommendation in the audit report has an owner and a date, and is closed and verified.
- ☐ Maintenance audits or submissions are done on time in each year of the COR cycle, and used as a real review.
- ☐ New sites, crews, supervisors and provinces are brought into the system from their first day.
- ☐ For recertification, we compare our system with the partner's current audit tool well before the audit.

Common mistakes to avoid

- ☐ Documents that describe how work should be done, not how it's actually done.
- ☐ Records produced in a rush before the audit, with gaps across the rest of the year.
- ☐ Supervisors and workers who haven't seen the procedures they're expected to follow.
- ☐ Preparing from an old version of the audit tool, or missing a submission deadline.

Want a second set of eyes? Calgary Safety Consultants runs COR gap reviews and mock audits with real interviews. We help employers prepare; CORs and SECORs are issued through the applicable certifying partner. Read the full guide at calgarysafetyconsultants.ca/safety-guides/cor-secor/cor-audit/ or call 1-888-231-0358.