CALGARY SAFETY CONSULTANTS

HSR Duties Quick Guide

Your role at a glance

This quick guide is for the health and safety representative. It explains what the role involves, what you can expect from your employer, and how to do the work well, with prompts, a recommendation form and logs you can fill in. Keep it handy and use it alongside your training.

How to use this guide

- Fill in your details below and the jurisdiction notes on page 5, so the rules that apply to you are in one place.
- Use the inspection prompts on page 3 and the recommendation form on page 4 each time you need them. Print extra copies.
- Record your activities on page 6. Good records protect you, your co-workers and your employer.

Your name | **Workplace** | **Term ends**

Alternate | **Employer contact** | **Contact phone**

Your jurisdiction (tick one)

- ☐ Alberta
- ☐ British Columbia
- ☐ Saskatchewan
- ☐ Manitoba
- ☐ Ontario
- ☐ Quebec
- ☐ Federal (Canada Labour Code)
- ☐ Nova Scotia
- ☐ New Brunswick
- ☐ Prince Edward Island
- ☐ Newfoundland and Labrador
- ☐ Northwest Territories
- ☐ Nunavut
- ☐ Yukon

What the role is

- You speak for your co-workers on health and safety, in effect a one-person committee for a smaller workplace.
- You take in worker concerns, help find hazards, take part in inspections and investigations, and make recommendations to the employer.

What the role is not

- You are not responsible for safety at the workplace. The employer and supervisors are.
- You don't enforce rules or discipline anyone.
- Federally, a representative isn't personally liable for things done in good faith (CLC s. 136(10)).

What you can expect from your employer

- Paid time for representative duties and required training. In almost every jurisdiction this is work time or protected from loss of pay; New Brunswick's Act doesn't spell it out for representatives, but paying for the time is good practice.
- Training on the role, as your jurisdiction requires (see page 5).
- Information you ask for about hazards, plus inspector orders and reports and notice of serious incidents (Ontario and federal rules spell this out).
- Regular meetings, and a special meeting on urgent concerns where your law provides for one (for example Saskatchewan, Alberta, NWT and Nunavut).
- A written answer to written recommendations, often within 21 or 30 days.
- Protection from reprisal for raising concerns or doing the role.

First month: questions for your employer

- ☐ How much paid time do I have each month, and who do I tell when I need it?
- ☐ When is my training booked, and who pays for it?
- ☐ When will we meet, and how do I ask for a special meeting on an urgent concern?

General information, not legal advice. Occupational health and safety requirements differ between provinces, territories and federally regulated workplaces, so adapt this form to your workplace and confirm the requirements that apply to you.

Your duties look much the same across Canada. Use the self-check boxes to note what you're comfortable with, and raise any gaps with your employer or trainer.

1. Receive worker concerns

- Make it easy for co-workers to reach you, on every shift.
- Write each concern down with the date, location and who is exposed.
- Raise it with the employer and report back to the worker. Federally, complaints must be considered and resolved quickly.

☐ I know how workers can reach me and how I record concerns.

2. Inspect the workplace

- Agree a schedule: in Ontario, the whole workplace monthly (or all of it yearly and part each month); federally, each month; in the NWT and Nunavut, at least every three months.
- Use the prompts on page 3 and give the employer a written report.
- Follow up on what was found at the next inspection.

☐ I know my inspection schedule and how to report findings.

3. Take part in investigations

- Ask to be called early after a serious incident or near miss.
- Help gather facts, talk to workers and suggest fixes that remove the hazard.
- In Ontario, you may inspect the scene of a critical injury or fatality and report your findings.

☐ I know when I'll be called for an investigation.

4. Help identify hazards

- Take part in hazard assessments where your law provides for it (Alberta, for example).
- Ask to be consulted before new equipment, chemicals or layouts arrive.

☐ I'm included in hazard assessments and planned changes.

5. Make recommendations

- Put recommendations in writing using the form on page 4.
- Be specific: the hazard, the location, the fix, a suggested owner and date.
- Track the employer's written answer against the deadline on page 5.

☐ I know how to write a recommendation and the response deadline.

6. Be part of work refusals

- Know your jurisdiction's refusal steps and your part in them (page 4).
- Stay calm and factual, and focus on making the work safe.

☐ I know my role if a co-worker refuses unsafe work.

Tips for doing the role well

- Close the loop: when a concern is fixed, tell the worker who raised it.
- Look for fixes that remove or reduce the hazard, not just reminders to be careful.
- If you're not getting time, training or answers, raise it in writing, and know how to contact your regulator.

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Use these prompts on your walk-around, together with your employer's own inspection checklist. Tick OK or Action, add notes, and give a copy to the employer. Look past "be careful" to fixes that remove or reduce the hazard.

Area inspected | **Date** | **Inspected with**

Prompt	OK	Action	Notes and location
Floors, aisles and stairs are clear, dry and in good repair	☐	☐	
Exits and emergency routes are marked and unobstructed	☐	☐	
Fire extinguishers, first aid kits and eyewash are in place and inspected	☐	☐	
Machine guards are in place and working; lockout devices are available	☐	☐	
Tools, ladders and equipment are in good condition	☐	☐	
Chemicals are labelled; safety data sheets are available	☐	☐	
Required PPE is available, fits and is being worn	☐	☐	
Lighting, noise, ventilation and temperature are acceptable	☐	☐	
Electrical cords, panels and outlets are safe and accessible	☐	☐	
Storage is stable; heavy items are stored low	☐	☐	
Vehicles, forklifts or mobile equipment are operated safely	☐	☐	
Workers know the hazards of their tasks and how to report concerns	☐	☐	
Actions from the last inspection are complete	☐	☐	

Other item found	OK	Action	Notes and location
	☐	☐	
	☐	☐	
	☐	☐	

Summary for the employer (top three issues and suggested fixes)

Representative | **Copy given to** | **Date given**

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Writing a recommendation the employer can answer

A strong recommendation names the hazard and where it is, says what you recommend and why, and suggests an owner and a date. **Weak:** "Look at the dust collector." **Strong:** "Repair or replace the dust collector at the panel saw, which has clogged three times this month and leaves fine dust in the air, by the end of the month." The second can be answered with a yes, a no or a date.

Date | **Location** | **Workers exposed**

Hazard or concern (what, where, how often)

Recommended action and why

Suggested owner | **Suggested completion date** | **Response due by**

☐ A written response is requested ☐ Copy kept by the representative ☐ Logged in the concerns log

Employer response received | **Outcome** | **Closed on**

Your part in a work refusal

A worker who believes work is dangerous can refuse it. The steps differ by jurisdiction, so learn yours in training. Examples from the guide:

- **Ontario:** the representative must be present for the employer's investigation, and the inspector must consult the representative if the refusal goes further.
- **British Columbia:** an unresolved refusal is investigated with a worker member of the committee, a union-selected worker or another worker the refusing worker selects.
- **Quebec:** the representative can intervene when a worker exercises the right of refusal.
- **Alberta:** the employer must inform the representative of a refusal report as soon as possible (OHS Act s. 17(5)).

☐ I know my jurisdiction's refusal steps and when an officer is called.

☐ I record the date, the task, what was found and how it was resolved.

Refusal notes

Date of refusal | **Task refused** | **Resolved on**

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Find your jurisdiction and copy the rules that apply to you into the box at the bottom. Confirm them in training or with the regulator, as rules change.

Jurisdiction	Your local name	Inspections and meetings	Response to recommendations
Alberta	Health and safety representative	Duties in normal working hours; special meetings of representatives (Code s. 199.2)	No fixed number of days
British Columbia	Worker health and safety representative	Inspections include you where feasible (OHS Regulation s. 3.8)	Written, 21 days, when a response is requested
Saskatchewan	OHS representative	Inspections at reasonable intervals; employer meets you regularly; special meetings on urgent concerns	Written, after written notice of an unsafe condition
Manitoba	Worker safety and health representative	Same duties as a committee, with the employer's representative	Check the Act (s. 41.1 described for committees)
Ontario	Health and safety representative	Whole workplace monthly, or all of it yearly and part each month on an agreed schedule	Written, 21 days
Quebec	Représentant en santé et en sécurité	Inspect workplaces; accompany the inspector (Act s. 90)	Recommendations to the committee, or to workers and employer
Federal	Health and safety representative	All or part each month, so every part is inspected at least yearly (CLC s. 136(5)(j))	Written, 30 days
Nova Scotia	Health and safety representative	Take part in inspections, inquiries and investigations; accompany officers	Written, 21 days, when a response is requested
New Brunswick	Health and safety representative	Anything a committee may do; consult regularly with the employer	No fixed period; call an officer on disagreement
Prince Edward Island	Occupational health and safety representative	Take part in inspections and investigations	Written, 30 days from the request
Newfoundland and Labrador	Worker health and safety representative	Same duties as a committee where reasonably practicable	Written, 30 days
NWT and Nunavut	OHS representative	Inspect at least every three months with a written report; regular and special meetings	Written reply as soon as reasonably possible
Yukon	Worker health and safety representative	Inspections, investigations of serious incidents and refusals; keep records	No fixed period stated by the regulator

My rules

Inspection frequency

Response deadline

Training required

Regulator phone

Paid time arrangement

Meeting schedule

Ask in your training

- ☐ Where do I find my jurisdiction's OHS Act and regulations?
- ☐ What are the exact work refusal steps where I work?
- ☐ What information am I entitled to, and how do I ask for it?

Other notes

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Record what you do as a representative. Keep a copy, and give one to your employer for the health and safety file. Records to keep: your selection record, training certificates, inspection reports, recommendations and responses, and meeting notes.

Date	Activity	Details	Follow-up needed	Done
				☐
				☐
				☐
				☐
				☐
				☐
				☐
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				☐

Activity types (for reference)

- ☐ Inspection
- ☐ Investigation
- ☐ Worker concern
- ☐ Recommendation
- ☐ Work refusal
- ☐ Meeting with employer
- ☐ Training
- ☐ Other

Representative _____ **Signature** _____ **Date** _____

Free guide. Read How to Appoint and Support a Health and Safety Representative at calgarysafetyconsultants.ca/safety-guides/committees/health-and-safety-representative/. Training for representatives and committee members: call Calgary Safety Consultants at 1-888-231-0358.

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