



# **Health & Safety in the Workplace**

**An Orientation Guide  
for  
Co-op Students/Unpaid Learners**

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September 2022

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**This guide was developed to meet the requirements of:  
Ontario Occupational Health & Safety Act (OHSA) and Regulation 851**

## I. Introduction

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The definition of worker under the [Occupational Health and Safety Act](#) (OHSA) was expanded to include co-op students and unpaid learners and other learners and trainees participating in a work placement in Ontario.

The Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act defines worker as:

*“worker” means any of the following, but does not include an inmate of a correctional institution or like institution or facility who participates inside the institution or facility in a work project or rehabilitation program:*

- 1. A person who performs work or supplies services for monetary compensation.*
- 2. A secondary school student who performs work or supplies services for no monetary compensation under a work experience program authorized by the school board that operates the school in which the student is enrolled.*
- 3. A person who performs work or supplies services for no monetary compensation under a program approved by a college of applied arts and technology, university or other post-secondary institution.*
- 4. A person who receives training from an employer, but who, under the Employment Standards Act, 2000, is not an employee for the purposes of that Act because the conditions set out in subsection 1 (2) of that Act have been met.*
- 5. Such other persons as may be prescribed who perform work or supply services to an employer for no monetary compensation; (“travailleur”)*

The Upper Canada District School Board is committed to preventing occupational illness and injury in the workplace and to working with its employees to enhance safety. As part of this commitment, the Upper Canada District School Board is responsible for establishing, implementing, and maintaining programs designed to protect the health and safety of workers, students, and visitors. This guide has been designed to orient you to the safety policies, procedures and programs which are intended to keep you safe at work.

Preventing work-related illness and injury is an important responsibility of each member of the Upper Canada District School Board. The Occupational Health & Safety Act (OHSA) outlines the duties of employers and supervisors, as well as the rights and duties of workers.

A copy of the OHSA and its regulations, the school board’s Health and Safety Policy, and other required postings can be found on the Health & Safety Bulletin Boards located across school locations, as well as on the Upper Canada School Board internal website (InSite).

## II. A Note About Terminology

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Throughout this document the terms “workplace”, “employer”, “supervisor”, and “worker” are used. The definitions of these terms are per the OHSA.

School principals and departmental managers are “supervisors” of their respective departments and schools.

### III. Duties of the Employer, Supervisors, and Workers

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The OHSA assigns duties to everyone in the workplace and those duties are connected to the level of authority each person has in the workplace. The OHSA gives the employer the most responsibility for health and safety. It is important that you become familiar with everyone's duties as well as your rights as a worker.

#### Employer Duties

The following are some of the duties of employers:

- Make sure workers know about hazards in the workplace and how to work safely
- Make sure every supervisor knows how to deal with health and safety in the workplace
- Prepare and post a written Health and Safety policy, review that policy at least once a year and maintain a program to implement it
- Post a copy of the OHSA, as well as explanatory material prepared by the Ministry of Labour that outlines the rights, responsibilities and duties of workers (occupational health and safety poster)
- Make sure everyone knows and follows the health and safety procedures
- Make sure workers wear and use the right protective equipment
- Do everything reasonable to keep workers from getting hurt or sick on the job

#### Supervisor Duties

It is the direct responsibility of management and/or supervisors to develop, maintain and review safety procedures and encourage the active participation of all workers in safety activities.

The following are some of the key duties of supervisors:

- Tell workers about the hazards in the workplace and show them how to work safely
- Make sure workers follow the law and the workplace health and safety policies and procedures
- Make sure workers wear and use the required protective equipment
- Do everything reasonable to keep workers from getting hurt or sick on the job

In addition to these duties, the responsibilities listed under "Workers" also apply to supervisors.

#### Worker Duties

It is the obligation of every worker to observe and abide by all legislated and Upper Canada District School Board responsibilities, to work in a safe manner, and to take an active part in protecting themselves and fellow workers.

The following are some of the key duties of every worker as per the OHSA:

- Follow the law and the workplace health and safety policies and procedures
- Always wear and use the protective equipment that the employer requires
- Work and act in a way that won't hurt you or any other worker
- Report any hazard you find to your supervisor

A worker is not required under the Act to participate in a prescribed medical surveillance program unless the worker consents to do so.

### Internal Responsibility System

Together, the duties and responsibilities of employers, supervisors, and workers create an Internal Responsibility System (IRS). The IRS is a structure where everyone, regardless of their role, has direct responsibility for health and safety as an important part of his/her job.

The OHSA promotes the use of the Internal Responsibility System to resolve health and safety concerns in the workplace. Specific health and safety questions or concerns should first be directed to your immediate supervisor.

The IRS is based on the principle that people in the workplace are in the best position to recognize health and safety hazards, assess them, and develop controls because they have the most knowledge about the equipment, the processes, and the hazards involved. The basis for IRS is effective communication among workers, supervisors and the employer.

Please refer to the OHSA for a complete list of the duties of employers, supervisors, and workers.

## IV. Rights of Workers Under the Occupational Health & Safety Act (OHSA)

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Under the OHSA, workers have three (3) basic rights, including:

### 1. The Right to Participate

Workers have the right to be a part of the process of identifying and resolving workplace health and safety concerns. This right is expressed through:

- Worker membership on the Joint Health & Safety Committee
- Reporting accidents, hazards and near miss incidents
- Communication of unsafe conditions and/or acts to the employer

### 2. The Right to Know

Workers have the right to know about any and all hazardous materials/conditions that they may come in contact with throughout their employment.

### 3. The Right to Refuse Work

Workers have the right to refuse work that they believe is dangerous to their own health and safety. In general, workers can refuse work if they have reasonable grounds to believe that the job they are performing or are being asked to perform, could pose a danger to either themselves or another worker. This includes work refusal associated with workplace violence.

The Act prohibits the employer or persons acting on behalf of the employer from taking any action against a worker who behaves in compliance with the Act or the Regulations. Specifically prohibited are:

- Dismissal or threats to dismiss
- Discipline or threats to discipline
- Imposition of any penalty
- Intimidation or coercion

## V. Reporting and Assessing Hazards

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An occupational hazard is anything with the potential to harm a worker. Safety hazards can lead to accidents that physically injure workers and health hazards may result in the development of disease. It is the responsibility of the employer and supervisor to inform workers of health and safety hazards.

Some of the most common hazards include:

- Repeating the same movements over and over
- Slipping, tripping or falling
- Working near motorized vehicles
- Using or working near machinery
- Workplace violence

You also need to think of less visible hazards related to your work such as chemicals, fumes, toxic dust, and biohazards. Without proper controls, these hazards may result in occupational illness or disease.

The OHSA and Regulations require all workers to report hazards to their supervisor. It is then incumbent upon the supervisor to promptly investigate the reported hazard or concern and keep the worker advised. A response to the hazard/concern could include:

- Elimination of the hazard
- Substitution to lessen or reduce the hazard – Engineering Controls
- Implementation of measures to control the exposure to the hazard – Administrative Controls

If the hazard still exists after controls are implemented, personal protective equipment (PPE) or devices may be necessary.

If PPE is required, you need to ensure that you use the required PPE for the task that you are performing. Your supervisor is responsible for providing training on the proper use and maintenance of the PPE.

The following table outlines some of the most commonly used PPE:

Type	Personal Protective Equipment
Head	hard hats and bump caps
Eye & face	safety glasses, chemical resistant goggles, and face shields
Foot	slip resistant, steel toe/shank safety shoes & boots, electric shock-resistant footwear, and foot covers, YakTrax (for winter icy conditions)
Hearing	ear plugs and ear muffs – hearing protection
Respiratory	respirators and masks
Skin	gloves, barrier creams, sunscreen and protective clothing such as sunhats, reflective vests/clothing, coveralls, lab coats, aprons or long pants, and protective suits
Fall	fall arrest systems (harness & lanyard)

## VI. Preventing Hazards

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### Work Area

A tidy work area is a safe work area. Follow these safety rules:

- Ensure that all walkways, fire exits, fire extinguisher access, staircases, etc. are kept clean and clear of debris/obstacles
- Store all materials neatly and securely
- Keep tools, equipment and materials in their proper places
- Keep fire exits, fire extinguishers, doors and aisles clear at all times

### Worker Pre-start-up Inspections

A worker pre-start-up inspection is an inspection of equipment that is to be conducted by workers prior to the start of all applicable equipment. Workers may be supplied a checklist to conduct the inspection which needs to be signed and dated. If concerns are found during the inspection, do not attempt to use the equipment. Notify your supervisor immediately.

## Machine Operation Guidelines

Only properly trained and authorized workers are allowed to operate machinery and/or use equipment at the Upper Canada District School Board. Workers must ensure that all machine guarding is in place prior to use. Removing or tampering with guarding is strictly prohibited.

## Non-Routine Work

Any supervisor who asks a worker to perform a task outside of their regular work tasks must provide the worker with the proper protective device(s), when applicable, and training for the safe completion of the task and safe use of required protective device(s).

## VII. Learning About Hazards

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### WHMIS

The Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) is a comprehensive communication system for safe management and use of hazardous materials that is legislated by both federal and provincial jurisdictions. WHMIS legislation requires that workers must be informed about the hazardous materials in the workplace and receive appropriate training on how to use, store, and dispose of these materials safely.

WHMIS delivers the necessary information by the following means:

- Labels on containers of controlled products
- Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for each controlled product
- Worker training programs

WHMIS on-line training is available through a 3<sup>rd</sup> Party provider (YOW). Follow this link for instructions: [YOW Canada](#) (Submit completed training certificate to UCDSB Supervisor). Training run time is approximately 1.5 hours *and at a Student Cost of \$26.95. (to be paid on-line by student)*

Would also accept current WHMIS training certificates from a Ministry of Labour (MOL) approved certification training provider, e.g. Public Services Health & Safety Association, Workers Health & Safety Centre, and Workplace Safety & Prevention Services. Follow this link to the [MOL training providers](#) webpage for the entire listing of certified providers.

#### UCDSB Mandatory Training for All Workers

All employees are required to complete WHMIS training based on the following criteria:

1. Annual requirement for:
  - Custodial/Facility Dept. employees
  - Teachers (i.e. shop, science, art) or other staff that are in direct contact with chemicals on a regular basis
2. Every 3 years for all other employees

### MSDS Access Online

Workers have access to the Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for each hazardous material online by accessing the Upper Canada District School Board MSDS through a 3<sup>rd</sup> party provider. See your supervisor for specific MSDS information.



## Workplace Violence & Harassment

The OHSA sets out duties and responsibilities of the employer, supervisor and workers with respect to workplace violence and workplace harassment.

The Upper Canada District School Board has developed a Workplace Violence Prevention Program as well as a Workplace Harassment Prevention Program. All workers are required to review both program policies. See your supervisor with specific inquiries.

## Asbestos Inventory & Information

The Upper Canada District School Board has developed an Asbestos Program to comply with Ontario legislation and to ensure the health and safety of workers, students, and visitors. Asbestos containing materials inventories have been completed for all site/school locations containing asbestos materials. See your supervisor for more information.

## VIII. Accident/Injury Reporting and Accident Investigations

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### Accident/Injury Reporting

All workplace accidents and injuries must be reported to a supervisor as soon as they occur. For your safety and the future safety of your fellow workers, it is imperative that you report all accidents and injuries to your supervisor for documentation, analysis, and correction of the hazard.

### Accident/Injury Investigations

Accident investigations are to be performed whenever a worker experiences an accident or injury. An [Accident Investigation Report Form](#) must be filled out by the worker and their supervisor and forwarded to Health & Safety (via email to [healthandsafety@ucdsb.on.ca](mailto:healthandsafety@ucdsb.on.ca)) within 24 hours of the incident.

## IX. In Case of Injury

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### First Aid

The Workplace Safety and Insurance Act (Regulation 1101) requires all workplaces to have first aid stations and certified first aid workers. First aid kits are located in all buildings in the Board. All workers should become aware of the closest first aid kit location and the identity of their departmental (or designated) First Aid certificate holder.

## Medical Aid

If you need to seek medical attention due to your injury:

- Notify your supervisor
- Seek medical attention as necessary. The employer shall provide transportation for the worker (if required) to a location within a reasonable distance
- Obtain the completed WSIB Form 8 (from your health care provider) and submit it to your supervisor as soon as possible
- Notify your supervisor if your injury results in any time lost from work (as authorized by a health care provider on the appropriate WSIB form) and keep your supervisor updated as to your progress

## Early and Safe Return to Work

It is the policy of the Upper Canada District School Board to encourage early intervention of injured workers through an Early and Safe Return to Work (ESRTW) program. Whenever possible, modified work that meets the worker's functional abilities, as prescribed by a medical professional, will be provided.

## X. Joint Health and Safety Committee

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Upper Canada District School Board has a Joint Health & Safety Committee (JHSC) that meets regularly. The JHSC is an advisory group of worker and management representatives that meets to identify workplace health and safety hazards and to recommend strategies to eliminate or minimize such hazards. See your JHSC member or supervisor for more information.

## XI. Fire Plans & Emergency Preparedness

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### Fire Plans & Evacuation Procedures

Fire/Evacuation Plans for all UCDSB buildings are available at the school or building location. See your supervisor for details and ensure that you are familiar with the evacuation procedure for your location. Should you anticipate requiring additional assistance to evacuate a building, please discuss with your supervisor.

### Emergency Response Program Plan

#### Emergency Protocol Codes

The codes consist of:

- "Lockdown" - lockdown the school (duck and cover)
- "Hold and Secure" - lockdown the school (carry on)
- "Shelter In Place" - continue what you are doing within the building

**See your supervisor for more information.**

## XII. More Information and Resources

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### Safety Bulletin Boards

Health & Safety bulletin boards, containing pertinent Health & Safety information, are located in all schools and school board buildings.

### Ontario Ministry of Labour

Health & Safety Contact Centre  
24 hours/day, 7 days a week  
1-877-202-0008  
[www.labour.gov.on.ca](http://www.labour.gov.on.ca)

### UCDSB Health & Safety Department Key Contact

Health & Safety Specialist  
Dennis Koluk  
Tel: 613-342-0435 ext. 1243  
[dennis.koluk@ucdsb.on.ca](mailto:dennis.koluk@ucdsb.on.ca)

### Health & Safety Website

The Health & Safety website connects workers to the Board's Health & Safety policies, procedures, and other relevant health and safety information.

Visit the page at: [Health & Safety](http://insite.edu.ucdsb.on.ca/departments/healthandsafety)  
(<http://insite.edu.ucdsb.on.ca/departments/healthandsafety>)

## XIII. Co-op Students/Unpaid Learners Health & Safety Training in the Workplace

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As part of this mandatory orientation, you are required to complete the Co-op Students/Unpaid Learners Training Tracking Form "Appendix A" prior to starting work at any UCDSB school/workplace location. Please submit the completed and signed form to your supervisor along with the two (2) completed certificates.

If you need assistance with the form or have questions about the training material, please contact your supervisor or the Health & Safety Department at 613-342-0435 ext. 1243.

The Co-op Students/Unpaid Learners and UCDSB workplace supervisor must sign the completed form. This completed original form will be filed and retained by the supervisor/principal and the Health & Safety Department will receive a scanned copy. (Forward copies to [healthandsafety@ucdsb.on.ca](mailto:healthandsafety@ucdsb.on.ca))

## Co-op Students/Unpaid Learners Tracking Form

*(Source Document: Orientation Guide for Co-op Students/Unpaid Learners)*

### Upper Canada District School Board (UCDSB) Training Responsibilities:

Co-op students/unpaid learners will be treated the same as a regular worker because both are entitled to the same rights, responsibilities and benefits under the Occupational Health and Safety Act. Employers have the legal requirement to provide a full suite of information, instruction, and supervision to co-op students/unpaid learners workers.

<i>Please Print</i>	
<b>Co-op Student/Unpaid Learner Details</b>	<b>Name:</b>
	<b>Name of Post-Secondary School:</b>
<b>UCDSB Workplace Details</b>	<b>Name of School/Location:</b>
	<b>Name of Supervisor (Principal/Manager):</b>
<b>UCDSB Placement Sponsor/Contact's Name</b>	

### Co-op Student/Unpaid Learner Responsibilities:

The Co-op Student/Unpaid Learner and UCDSB workplace supervisor will complete this form's checklist (on the backside of this form) regarding Occupational Health and Safety requirements.

The original form will be retained by the School/Workplace Supervisor and the Health & Safety Department will receive a scanned copy. (Forward copies via email to [healthandsafety@ucdsb.on.ca](mailto:healthandsafety@ucdsb.on.ca))

### Co-op Student/Unpaid Learner and Supervisor will complete the checklist by:

- 1. Initialing in the appropriate boxes for each of the requirements**
- 2. Signing the bottom of the tracking form upon completion**

<b>Occupational Health &amp; Safety Requirements Checklist</b>				
<b>Health &amp; Safety Training Requirements</b>	<b>Training Resource(s)/Vendor</b>	<b>Co-op Student/ Unpaid Learner INITIAL Upon COMPLETION</b>	<b>Supervisor/ Principal INITIALS</b>	<b>Applicable or Non- Applicable</b>
<b>Ministry of Labour Worker Health &amp; Safety Awareness Training Online</b> (Run time approx. 45 min.)	<a href="http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/English/hs/elearn/worker/index.php">http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/English/hs/elearn/worker/index.php</a> Submit completed training certificate to UCDSB Supervisor			Applicable (Certificate required)
<b>YOW Canada WHMIS Training Online</b> (Run time 1.5 hours) <i>Student Cost: \$26.95</i>	<a href="http://www.yowcanada.com/course_outlines_WHMIS.asp">http://www.yowcanada.com/course_outlines_WHMIS.asp</a> Submit completed training certificate to UCDSB Supervisor			Applicable (Certificate required)
<b>UCDSB Occupational Health &amp; Safety Policy 424</b>	<b>Review of Policy</b> <a href="#">BoardDocs® Policy: Occupational Health and Safety ~ Policy 424</a> ( <a href="http://www.boarddocs.com/can/ucdsb/Board.nsf/goto?open&amp;id=9MJJS D4DE907">http://www.boarddocs.com/can/ucdsb/Board.nsf/goto?open&amp;id=9MJJS D4DE907</a> )			Applicable
<b>UCDSB Safe Workplace - Workplace Harassment Policy 226</b>	<b>Review of Policy</b> <a href="#">BoardDocs® Policy: Safe Workplace- Workplace Harassment ~ Policy 226</a> ( <a href="http://www.boarddocs.com/can/ucdsb/Board.nsf/goto?open&amp;id=9MVR L76A7051">http://www.boarddocs.com/can/ucdsb/Board.nsf/goto?open&amp;id=9MVR L76A7051</a> )			Applicable
<b>UCDSB Violence in the Workplace Policy 421</b>	<b>Review of Policy</b> <a href="#">BoardDocs® Policy: Violence in the Workplace ~ Policy 421</a> ( <a href="http://www.boarddocs.com/can/ucdsb/Board.nsf/goto?open&amp;id=9MYK U24F8F60">http://www.boarddocs.com/can/ucdsb/Board.nsf/goto?open&amp;id=9MYK U24F8F60</a> )			Applicable
<b>Fire Evacuation &amp; Emergency Procedures</b>	<b>Review of Procedure</b> Onsite documents provided by Supervisor/Principal			Applicable
<b>COVID 19: Employees are recommended to answer the questions in this provincial screening tool to help decide if they should attend their workplace each day.</b>	<b>Students, teachers and school staff must answer the school and child care screening questions before leaving for school or child care. (link below)</b> <a href="#">COVID-19 school and child care screening</a>			Applicable

<i>Upon completion of ALL sections of this form, please sign and date</i>	Signature	Date
Co-op Student/Unpaid Worker		
UCDSB Placement Sponsor/Contact		
Supervisor (Principal or Manager)		