

BILL 47 AND THE RIGHT TO REFUSE UNSAFE WORK

Background

Bill 47 was introduced by the provincial government on November 5, 2020. It contains major revisions of health and safety regulations, all of them cut corners and roll back workers rights for the exclusive benefit of employers.

Changes to your rights

You have a right to refuse to perform any work you think will injure you or your fellow workers. Bill 47 rolls back your right to refuse unsafe work:

| Before Bill 47 | After Bill 47 |
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| Your employer must tell you if the work you're assigned has been refused by somebody else for safety concerns. | Your employer is only required to tell you after the other worker has contacted Occupational Health and Safety Alberta, which can only happen <i>after</i> the employer has written a report. |
| You can refuse unsafe work that has "dangerous conditions". | You can only refuse unsafe work if it is an "undue hazard", a far higher standard that includes an "immediate threat" requirement. This likely excludes your ability to refuse work that could result in a COVID-19 exposure, since the illness will not manifest immediately. |
| Workers who have refused unsafe work participate in the workplace investigation. | No requirement exists to involve the worker or their union in the investigation. |
| If you are disciplined by the employer, you can file a complaint with a provincial Occupational Health and Safety Officer. | Unionized workers may only use the grievance process. In some workplaces, this could be a significant new administrative burden. |

