

# Worker Safety Rep Checklist

Questions to Ask as a Worker Safety Representative or Safety Committee Member

There are many questions you should be asking yourself as a worker or union health and safety representative. You have a vital role in keeping your members and workplace healthy and safe. Here are some key points to help you do your job.

## TRAINING

- Am I certified/trained to applicable government OHS standards?
- Am I aware of the industry standards related to my workplace?
- Who did my OHS training? Was it employer or worker-centred training? Am I competent in understanding my role?
- Have I been trained in all of my union's safety training programs?
- Do I maintain my skills and training on a regular basis by taking refresher courses?
- Do I pursue additional OHS training above minimum government standards?

## GENERAL QUESTIONS

- Am I improving overall health and safety conditions in the workplace?
- Am I raising the awareness of health and safety issues in the workplace?
- Am I identifying potential health and safety issues and bringing them to the employer's attention?
- Am I making recommendations to the employer to address risks?
- Does my collective agreement contain specific health and safety language related to my role in the workplace?
- Is my employer cooperating with me?
- Am I being consulted in regards to workplace health and safety programs or new chemicals coming into the workplace?
- Am I being given an opportunity to speak to workers who are not happy with their OHS responses from issues raised to the employer?



- Do I document everything that I do and am I given paid time to do so?
- Do I file and maintain all received documentation in a controlled and locked location?
- Am I able to access historical safety information or data from my predecessors?
- Am I giving a report on workplace safety to my local union at meetings, on line or in print?

## INSPECTIONS

- Am I inspecting the workplace once a month? Is this a partial or full inspection? Am I writing up the reports, delivering them to the employer, making recommendations and receiving feedback?
- Am I reviewing all employer programs related to health and safety?
  - Harassment and violence programs?
  - Designated substance reviews?
  - Employee screening programs?
  - WHMIS/GHS programs?
  - COVID-19 related programs?
- Am I inspecting chemical storage across the workplace?
- Am I speaking to workers during my inspections and utilizing their intimate knowledge of their work areas while looking for hazards?
- Am I inspecting safety training matrices and completion statistics?

## JOINT OHS COMMITTEES AND MEETINGS

- Who is my company OHS counterpart? Are they accessible? Are they honest/trustworthy? Are they trained to the correct standards?
- Am I a member a Joint Safety Committee?
- Does my workplace have a multi workplace committee or policy committee?
- Does our OHS committee have a terms of reference (ToR)?
- Are we having monthly or regular OHS meetings?
- Are JH&SC member names and contact information properly posted in the workplace?
- Is my employer supporting the OHS committee?
- Do I get ample time for OHS meetings and all of my other health and safety related duties?
- Do I get meeting preparation time paid?

- Am I co-chairing the meeting?
- Who sets the meeting agenda?
- Who sets the time of the meeting and am I involved in meeting planning?
- Are the meetings on a regular schedule?
- Are copies of the meeting minutes made available to everyone?
- Who writes the meeting minutes?
- Do I agree with the meeting minutes in their written form?

## TRANSFER OF INFORMATION - NOTIFICATION



- Am I getting correct information from the employer regarding health and safety in the workplace?
  - Am I being informed of health and safety developments in the workplace by the employer?
  - Am I being consulted during any biological, chemical or physical hazard exposure testing in the workplace?
  - Am I given information concerning tests of equipment, machines, devices or articles?
  - Am I being consulted with in regards to health and safety programs like WHMIS-GHS training or designated substance programs?
- Do I have copies of all reports related to health and safety occurrences in the workplace?
  - Do I have all copies of Ministry of Labour documentation left at the workplace after inspector visits?
  - Am I being notified of occupational diseases or injuries caused by accidents, fires, or workplace acts of violence?

## INVESTIGATIONS

- Am I attending and investigating accident investigations that result in critical injuries or fatalities?
- Am I receiving information concerning sources of danger from workers? Am I investigating these issues and are these issues being reported to the employer? Is the employer acting on my recommendations to resolve these issues?

## WORK REFUSALS

- Do I fully understand the work refusal procedure in my jurisdiction?
- Do my members fully understand the work refusal procedure?
- Does management understand their role in work refusal procedure?
- Am I attending all work refusals?
- Do I agree with the work refusal report and do I keep all documents related to work refusals of local union members in an accessible and transferrable file?
- Am I investigating alongside government inspectors investigating work refusals in my workplace?
- Do I have the right to a bilateral work stoppage with my certified co-committee chair? (Ontario)

For any questions related to this list, talk to your local union leadership, your National Union Representative or the National's Health, Safety and Environment Department.

