OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE POLICY

[Organization Name] is committed to providing a healthy and safe workplace for all employees. This policy outlines the roles, responsibilities, and guidelines for establishing and maintaining an Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Committee in accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations of Newfoundland and Labrador.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all [Organization Name] workplaces where an OHS Committee is required by legislation, typically where 20 or more workers are regularly employed.

POLICY

[Organization Name] is committed to the health and safety of its employees and will establish an Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) committee at workplaces where 20 or more workers are regularly employed, in accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations. The OHS committee functions as an advisory body in the workplace that identifies hazards, promotes safety awareness, and makes recommendations for improving occupational health and safety.

The OHS committee must have at least four members, and half of the members must represent the workers. The worker-representatives will be chosen by the rest of the workers and the management-representatives will be selected by the employer. The names of the committee members shall be posted in a prominent location at the workplace.

The employer will ensure that once established, the committee develops and adheres to set procedures, including how committee members or co-chairs will be selected, how the committee will perform its duties, when and where meetings will be held, and how a quorum will be established.

The employer will also maintain records of committee membership, ensure committee access to management staff with authority to resolve issues, and provide access to necessary workplace health and safety information.

Training

Note: training is required as per health and safety legislation. This training time counts as work time and the employer shall bear all costs for the training.

| **Number of Workers** | **What You Need** | **What Training You Need** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 20 or more | OHS Committee | OHS Committee, Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) Representative or Designate Certification Training - Level 1 and OHS Committee Member Certification Training - Level 2 |
| 19 or fewer (not connected to management) | Health and Safety Representative | OHS Committee, WHS Representative, or Designate - Level 1 |
| Fewer than 6 (when a representative is impractical) | WHS Designate | OHS Committee, WHS Representative, or Designate - Level 1 |

Employer Responsibilities

[Organization Name] (the “Employer”) will:

* Establish an OHS committee where 20 or more workers are employed.
* Ensure the OHS committee has no fewer than 2 and no more than 12 members, with at least half being workers not connected to management.
* Ensure worker representatives are elected by other workers.
* Ensure an equal, but not greater, number of employer representatives are appointed to the committee.
* Ensure that employer and worker members each elect their own co-chairperson.
* Ensure no committee member loses pay or benefits while attending meetings or training.
* Compensate committee members for time spent on training and OHS duties as though it was regular working time.
* Ensure OHS committee meetings occur during regular working hours at least once every three months.
* Consult and cooperate with the OHS committee on all matters related to health and safety.
* Respond in writing to any OHS committee recommendations within 30 days, indicating acceptance or rejection of the recommendations and reasons for any rejection.
* Provide periodic written updates on accepted recommendations until fully implemented.
* Include the OHS committee in the scheduling and performance of workplace inspections.
* Distribute copies of inspection reports and provide access to all relevant health and safety information.
* Ensure that records and statistics (e.g., meeting minutes, inspection reports, incident investigations) are maintained and accessible.
* Consult with the committee on the scheduling of workplace inspections and ensure committee participation in those inspections.
* Ensure that the committee is included in the development and review of the workplace's occupational health and safety program, including emergency response plans, violence and harassment prevention policies, and hazard identification systems.

OHS Committee Responsibilities

The occupational health and safety committee will:

* Participate in mandatory training as required by [Organization Name] and applicable legislation.
* Meet within two weeks of establishment, elect co-chairs, and notify WorkplaceNL of elected co-chairs.
* Meet at least once every three months during regular working hours.
* Maintain and distribute meeting minutes as required.
	+ This includes posting them in a prominent location; and
	+ Submitting them to WorkplaceNL.
* Ensure that quorum is met at meetings (at least half of members present, with employer representatives not exceeding worker representatives).
* Request intervention if co-chairs cannot agree on meeting scheduling.
* Identify and assess health and safety hazards in the workplace.
* Participate in workplace inspections with the employer or supervisors.
* Make recommendations to the employer to improve health and safety in the workplace.
* Track employer responses and follow up on recommendations.
* Receive and document health and safety complaints from workers, including follow-up actions.
* Promote and support workplace health and safety education and awareness initiatives.
* Cooperate with any OHS Officers carrying out their duties.
* Perform all other duties as required under the Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations.
* Review and contribute to workplace risk assessments and control plans.
* Participate in the review and development of the violence and harassment prevention policies.
* Support the development, implementation, and review of written work procedures, safe work practices, and training plans to eliminate or control workplace hazards.