



Department of
Health and Safety

Health and Safety Committees

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Memorial University has processes for ensuring that pertinent Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) information is communicated to and from employees and other interested parties. Employees shall be involved in the development and review of policies and procedures to manage risks, consulted where there are any changes that affect workplace health and safety, represented on health and safety matters, and informed as to who is their employee OH&S Committee(s) and specified management appointees are.

The primary role of Memorial University's OH&S Committees is to improve health and safety in the workplace by assisting in the development, implementation and promotion of safe work practices and procedures.

The University will also take the lead in helping the Committee function properly by creating an environment that enhances its effectiveness. The University accomplishes this by informing workers of the requirement for and the responsibilities of an OH&S committee, informing managers and supervisors of their responsibility to the committee, and encouraging the prompt scheduling of meetings.

The University and the committees have established terms of reference that specify the role of the committee, its structure, and function.

OH&S Committee - Duties of Committees

The following committees have been established according to the requirements of the OH&S Act and Regulations:

NAPE 7801
NAPE 7803
NAPE 7804
CUPE
MUNFA

The OH&S Committees at Memorial University have the following legislated responsibilities:

- to identify aspects of the workplace that may be unhealthy or unsafe
- to participate in workplace inspections that Memorial University is required by the regulations to conduct
- to make recommendations to protect the health, safety, and welfare of workers at the workplace
- to receive complaints from workers as to their concerns about the health and safety of the workplace and their welfare
- to establish and promote health and safety educational programs for workers
- to maintain records as to the receipt and disposition of complaints received from workers
- to meet during regular working hours at least once every 3 months

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Committee Meetings

OH&S committee meetings will be conducted at least on a quarterly basis. Minutes of each meeting are kept to track safety problems, record all recommendations, and serve as a permanent record of the committee’s activities. Minutes of the meetings must be recorded on prescribed minute forms which are available from the Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission and will be returned to the WHSCC Prevention Services Department as soon as possible after each meeting.

Committee Structure

Memorial University has a well-defined, clearly stated Terms of Reference that outlines the structure and function of the OH&S committee. This Terms of Reference is essential to its effectiveness. It provides clear direction in the OH&S committee’s roles and responsibilities in the workplace. It also addresses items such as:

- function, purpose and scope of the OH&S committee,
- process for forwarding recommendations to the employer,
- provisions for record keeping,
- frequency of meetings,
- number of people required to meet provisions for special meetings,
- number of OH&S committee members,
- specific responsibilities of OH&S committee, and
- members' terms of office.

Terms of Reference

At least half of the members of the committee are to be persons representing the workers at Memorial University who are not connected with management. Employer and worker members of a committee shall elect a co-chairperson from their respective groups. Memorial shall post the names of the committee members in a prominent place at the workplace.

The training provided to committee members shall meet the requirements of the Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission. Training is mandatory for all Committee members.

Meetings of a committee shall take place during regular working hours at least once every 3 months. A quorum shall consist of one-half of the membership of the committee provided both the employer and worker members are represented.

Minutes of all regular meetings and special committee meetings shall be recorded in the form prescribed by the Commission, and one copy shall be kept on file with the committee, one copy shall be filed with the Commission, and one copy shall be posted in the workplace.

It is recommended that committee members be prepared to serve a minimum of a two-year term.

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A representative of the employer and the workers of the Occupational Health and Safety Committee or the worker health and safety representative have the right to accompany an officer of the division when health and safety inspections are being conducted.

Meeting Agenda

To ensure effective OH&S committee meetings, an agenda will be developed and distributed to each OH&S committee member prior to the meeting. The order of business is to be standardized to include the following

- attendance
- approval of minutes of the previous meeting
- consideration of unfinished business, for example, follow-up on recommendations
- review of accident/incident investigation reports, workplace inspection reports, complaints from workers, work refusals, and reports from subcommittees
- review the status (development, implementation and evaluation) of the OH&S program elements
- Environmental OH&S training requirements and course updates

Legislative Reference: OH&S Act: Section 37, 38, 38.1, 39, and 40. OH&S Regulations: Part IV.

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