



# SAFE WORK



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## SAFE Work and the Supervisor – Your Responsibilities

The person most relied on for training and direction concerning safety and health is a worker's supervisor. It is important for supervisors to be aware that the majority of serious incidents occur during a workers' first year on the job. Supervisors must be competent and trained to address work-related hazards.

### Supervisor Responsibilities

A supervisor is a person who:

- Is in charge of a workplace
- has authority over a worker
- implement management's policies

Supervisors must ensure that:

- everything is being done to protect the safety and health of workers
- workers follow procedures, and safety and health laws
- workers use all devices and wear all personal protective equipment as required
- workers are told of the safety and health risks for the area in which they are working. If they move to another area or different activity, workers must be trained before they begin their new work.

### Employer Responsibilities

- **Training** - An employer must ensure that supervisors are given and/or have the proper education, experience and knowledge for the job that they will be performing. At times, supervisors are given their positions because they are good at what they do. This does not mean that they know how to instruct and manage the day-to-day activities of others, nor does it mean they will be effective in managing workplace safety and health issues. The specific skills and knowledge required for effective supervision should be taught in order to make sure that supervisors are able to train other workers on safe work procedures for the tasks they supervise.
- **Strong safety and health policies** will support supervisors in their work. Company's must have strong safety and health policies in order to support the work of the supervisor, and so that supervisors fully understand and put into practice company policies and procedures.
- **Senior management commitment** is something that supervisors will need to rely on if it is expected that training and safety and health policies will be effective. Top level management must take the time required to make visible the safety and health within the organization, and to show that they are serious when it comes to the safety and health of workers.

(See over)

### **Workplace Safety and Health Division Contact Information:**

Winnipeg: (204) 945-3446

Toll-Free: 1-866-888-8186 (Manitoba only)

24-Hour Emergency Line: (204) 945-0581

Publications/resources available at: [www.safemanitoba.com](http://www.safemanitoba.com)



## **When Considering a Supervisory Position or When Already a Supervisor**

- Be aware that a supervisor has the right to ask the employer for information, and for a written safety and health orientation program that can be used with new workers in order to cover the basics in a consistent fashion.
- Understand that what you need to know varies with your job or type of industry. Asking questions about specific hazards and written safe working procedures will allow the training of new workers to become more effective.
- Be aware that different people learn differently and that a 'one-size-fits-all' approach for all workers may not be effective.
- Check back to ensure that workers understand the task – watch them perform their tasks. Remember that most new workers try to “fit in” with new co-workers. They are only able to absorb so much information.
- Encourage all workers to ask questions – new workers often try to impress their supervisors and do not want to appear as though they have not understood something.
- Assigning a mentor to a new worker is strongly recommended – this can help ease the process of “fitting in,” and will allow workers to focus on the safety and health aspects of their new job. Keep in mind that experienced and professional workers do not always follow the rules – they have often integrated bad practices into their day-to-day activities and are not always aware that they are doing them.
- Ask for a copy of your workplace written safety and health program (required in workplaces with 20 or more workers). Familiarize yourself with the contents. This program symbolizes your employer’s commitment to safety and health.

"Cette information existe également en français au [www.gov.mb.ca/labour/safety/index.fr.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/labour/safety/index.fr.html)"

### **Reference to legal requirements under workplace safety and health legislation:**

- Manitoba Workplace Safety and Health Act, W210
  - Section 4.1, Duties of supervisors;

**Additional workplace safety and health information available at [www.safemanitoba.com](http://www.safemanitoba.com)**