

Important words when learning about workplace health and safety and workers' compensation

You may come across some words that are new to you when learning about workplace health and safety, and workers' compensation. The following list may be helpful.

Accident: An unfortunate incident that happens unexpectedly and unintentionally, typically resulting in damage or injury

Dangerous work: Work that poses a danger that is not normal to the job; for example, using a machine that does not have a properly fitted safety guard

Employer: The company (or person) that hires workers

Harassment: Tormenting or repeatedly irritating behaviour that causes feelings of anger, insecurity or discomfort in the person being harassed, including physical harassment (unwanted touching), psychological harassment (humiliating, intimidating or abusive behaviour), sexual harassment (unwanted sexual touching, gestures, symbols or comments), religious or racial harassment (targeting someone for abuse due to their religion or race) and bullying

Hazard: Anything that can hurt someone; for example, oil spilled on a walkway that could cause a person to slip

Incident: An event or occurrence

Injured: Hurt in any way

Injury: Damage done to the body

Joint health and safety committee: A workplace committee made up of management and worker representatives, in which the worker representatives are chosen by the workers; looks for health and safety problems in the workplace and suggests ways to fix them

Laws: Rules made by government that everyone must follow; for example, laws that prohibit stealing

OHS: Abbreviation or acronym for "occupational health and safety," which is concerned with protecting the safety, health and welfare of people engaged in work or employment

OH&S Act or OHSA: Abbreviation or acronym for the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, which is the set of official rules that govern health and safety at work in Ontario

Personal protective equipment (PPE): Equipment worn by workers to protect them from job hazards and prevent injury; for example, safety glasses, respirators, steel-toed boots, protective gloves



Regulations: Rules or directives made by an authority, such as a government; can also determine rights and responsibilities

Reprisal: An act of retaliation or revenge

Responsibilities: Legal duties of both employers and workers; for example, an employer's responsibility to pay workers for their work

Rights: Legal, social or ethical principles of freedom or entitlement; in these resources, references are to legal rights

Risk: How great the chance or possibility that someone will be harmed by a hazard; for example, the more people using a walkway with an oil spill, the greater the risk that someone will slip and fall

Supervisor: Employee (worker) who is in charge of and oversees other workers

Violence: Behaviour involving force intended to hurt or kill someone or to damage property; violence may be physical (aimed at causing injury, damage and death), political (to apply regime change by enforcing at least some of the population to accept an undesirable governing body) or emotional (blackmail, threat)

Worker: Person hired by a company to do a specific job; also called an employee

WSIB: Abbreviation or acronym for the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board, which administers workers' compensation in Ontario

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- Skills for Change
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- Workplace Safety and Insurance Board
- Ontario Ministry of Labour
- Workplace Safety and Prevention Services
- Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers



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