



**Reference Guide for the
National Construction Safety
Officer (NCSO®) and the
National Health and Safety
Administrator (NHSA™)**

**Infrastructure Health and Safety Association
National Construction Safety Officer/
National Health and Safety Administrator**

Table of contents

Introduction	3
Overview	4
Objectives	4
Application process.....	5
Application fees	5
Required courses	5
Practical construction experience for NCSOs	6
Provincial and national exam.....	7
Application process step by step	7
Re-certification or renewal process.....	8
Course credit/competency	8
Appeals process	9
NCSO®/NHSA™ Review Process.....	10
Maintenance requirements	10
Maintenance flowchart.....	11
Privacy and confidentiality.....	11

Infrastructure Health and Safety Association National Construction Safety Officer/ National Health and Safety Administrator

Introduction

NCSO®

IHSA's National Construction Safety Officer (NCSO®) Certificate is to recognize those who have practical construction knowledge and experience in a range of health and safety topics. With this certification, an NCSO™ can be identified as having met a specific set of criteria with regard to health and safety in construction. This makes them stand out as a valuable health and safety resource in today's busy construction marketplace.

NHSA™

The National Health and Safety Administrator (NHSA™) certificate provides formal, entry-level training to individuals who are active in the administration of their company's health and safety program but do not currently possess a minimum of three years of construction safety-related field experience in the last ten years.

The following NCSO®/NHSA™ Reference Guide provides prospective candidates with an outline of the requirements and an overview of the application process, and required maintenance program.

Please take the time to read the entire package before beginning the application process. If you have any questions about the certificate, please contact IHSA's NCSO®/NHSA™ administrator at NCSOadministrator@ihsa.ca

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DISCLAIMER: The National Construction Safety Officer Certificate/National Health and Safety Administrator is the property of the Canadian Federation of Construction Safety Associations (CFCSA) and its affiliates, of which IHSA is one. The CFCSA reserves the right to reject any incomplete or unqualified applications. IHSA also reserves the right to change or amend the procedures, courses, or requirements as it sees fit. In addition, IHSA has the right to revoke NCSO®/NHSA™ status in the event that circumstances arise requiring the association to do so.

Infrastructure Health and Safety Association National Construction Safety Officer/ National Health and Safety Administrator

Overview

NCSO®

The objective of the National Construction Safety Officer (NCSO™) Certificate is to combine practical construction experience with a range of health and safety training. A certified NCSO™ is a valuable resource for construction firms when implementing health and safety measures, recognizing, assessing, controlling, and evaluating hazards or working toward building a strong health and safety culture. They can oversee others and provide support and advice specific to the industry and work.

IHSA offers the NCSO™ Certificate to recognize those who have practical construction knowledge and experience in a range of health and safety topics. This certificate acknowledges that the individual has completed courses that are consistent in content with such certificates offered in other provinces and territories.

An NCSO™ Certificate also signifies that someone with this certification is not only qualified, but they have promised to adhere to a code of ethics and to maintain a high level of professional conduct while on the job.

In order to qualify for the IHSA NCSO™ Certificate, you must complete all requirements. At the time of application, all courses must be valid with respect to legislative requirements. All renewals must be done in timely fashion and evidence of their validity must be provided.

Upon successful achievement of the NCSO™ Certificate, you will be required to maintain all compulsory maintenance on any courses that have an expiry date. As well, you are expected to supplement your knowledge and skills by taking **Professional Development** courses. Failure to maintain these requirements will result in your NCSO™ status becoming inactive.

NHSA™

The National Health and Safety Administrator (NHSA™) requires the same training and submissions of records and information. Pursuit of NHSA status provides formal, entry-level training to individuals who are active in the administration of their company's health and safety program, but do not currently possess the minimum of three years' construction field experience that is required to achieve the NCSO® certification. The role of this certificate is to assist individuals who want to pursue the NCSO™ certificate in the future.

For specific information, you can contact the [NCSOadministrator](#) listed in the package.

All application forms and checklists can be found on the [IHSA.ca](#) website.

Objectives

The NCSO®/NHSA™ is intended to identify participants as individuals with a unique set of skills. These skills combine hands-on experience obtained from the construction sector with the education required to support health and safety initiatives on the job. An NCSO™ will be able to:

- Help construction managers to implement and maintain a health and safety management system (HSMS)
- Recognize, assess, control, and evaluate health and safety hazards relevant to the work
- Communicate with management, inspection authorities, and other groups on health and safety issues
- Provide workers and other workplace parties with the relevant information and skills required for safe work.

Infrastructure Health and Safety Association National Construction Safety Officer/ National Health and Safety Administrator

Application process

In order to complete the NCSO™ Certificate, participants must:

- Complete all required courses.
- Complete the NCSO®/NHSA™ application.
- Complete and document a minimum of two safety talks
- Provide a letter from employer verifying employment
- Provide a résumé outlining in detail their proof of practical construction experience.
- Provide proof of certificate renewals or transcripts or equivalent course credit for relevant courses.
- Complete national and provincial exams, as well as the simulated workplace assessment
- Sign a code of ethics.

** NHSA® applicants are not required to provide a résumé, a letter from the employer, or proof of practical experience.*

Be prepared to be re-certified every three years including professional development training (as outlined in the maintenance requirements section).

Once participants have completed all of the required courses, they can apply for the NCSO®/NHSA™ Certificate with the application form. Participants must also submit all training records with the completed application along with documentation that proves they have completed three years of practical construction* work experience within the past ten (ten years). Then they will be able to write both the national and provincial exam. (NOTE: If you have successfully written the national exam outside Ontario after January 1, 2017, you need only to successfully write and pass the Ontario portion to receive the Ontario NCSO®.)

Application fees

	Application Fees	Maintenance Fees
Member	\$169 + HST	\$169 + HST every three years

Required courses

All participants must complete the following required IHSA courses. Visit IHSA.ca for the most up-to-date course schedules and price listings.

Course Name

[Basic Auditing Principles](#)

[Basics of Supervising](#)

[JHSC-Part One](#)∞

[JHSC-Part Two Construction](#)∞

[COR™ Essentials](#)

[COR™ Internal Auditor](#)

[Defensive Driving – G Class Driver](#)

[Standard First Aid/CPR](#) †

[Introduction to Hazard and Risk Management](#)

Infrastructure Health and Safety Association

National Construction Safety Officer/ National Health and Safety Administrator

[WHMIS \(Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System\)](#)

[Working at Heights – Fundamentals of Fall Prevention](#) ∞

[Investigating and Reporting Incidents](#)

[Preventative Maintenance webinar \(no charge\)](#)

[Health and Safety Policies, Procedures, and Practices \(no charge\)](#)

†This course and any other courses that contain an expiry date must be renewed as required. Up-to-date certificates will need to be supplied every three years for the maintenance portion of the certificate. Failure to do so will result in your NCSO®/NHSA™ status becoming inactive. In the case of Standard First Aid/CPR, a certificate from an organization approved by the WSIB must be produced. IHSA will accept certificates, records of training, training transcripts or equivalent. IHSA can provide re-prints of certificates from the [IHSA website](#).

∞ These courses must be approved by the Chief Prevention Officer of Ontario and meet the requirements as laid out in Ontario's Working at Heights Training Standard and JHSC Certification Training Standard. For this reason, no out-of-province working at heights course or Joint Health and Safety Committee certification can be accepted.

Detailed descriptions of each course and their prices are available both on the [IHSA.ca](#) website and in the IHSA Training Catalogue.

Practical construction experience for NCSOs

NCSO® applicants must be able to provide a résumé and signed verification letter that they have obtained a minimum of three years of practical construction experience within the past ten years. This can be done through a signed verification letter from a direct supervisor, manager, trade union representative, current employer, or owner. Applicants will also be asked to make a declaration on their application to this effect.

Construction field experience is defined as:

A construction worker (labourer or skilled construction tradesperson) working directly and actively in the construction field (i.e. residential, commercial, industrial, road building, pipeline construction, mobile equipment operations, etc.); or, an individual who is directly and actively engaged in safety (i.e. Site Safety Coordinator) or responsible for the supervision (i.e. Site Superintendent) the construction worker, who also works directly and actively in the construction field.

– Canadian Federation of Construction Safety Associations (CFCSA) Memorandum of Understanding regarding NCSO™ recognition

This type of experience is found by working directly and actively in the construction sector and/or in workplaces where the Ontario Construction Regulations are applicable. Construction experience must indicate the percentage of time in the field and list specific projects the applicant worked on. (NOTE: This does not apply to NHSA® applicants.)

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Provincial and national exam

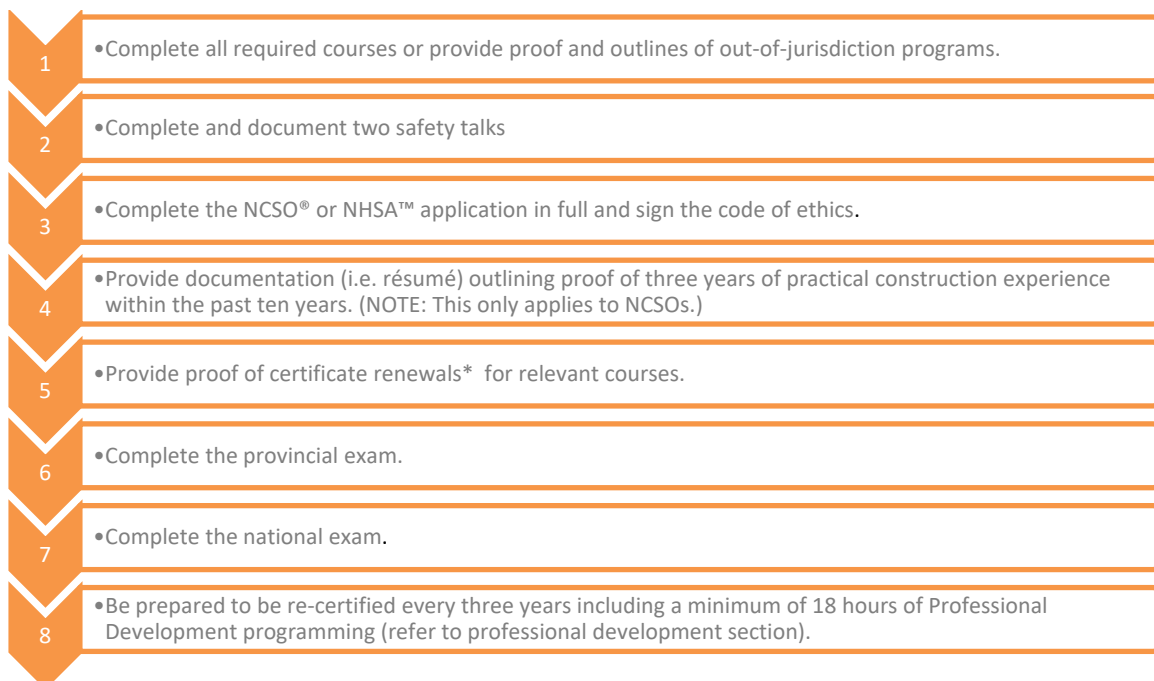
All participants will be expected to complete both of these exams as part of the NCSO®/NHSA™ process. The Provincial Exam has been written by IHSA and all questions will be based on information taught in all required courses under the NCSO®/NHSA™ certificate. The NCSO® administrator will provide exam dates and other information, via email, once your application has been approved. If you have completed the national exam, after January 1, 2017 in another province you must submit proof of successful completion in order to not write it again. Verification of successfully completing the National Exam created by the Canadian Federation of Construction Safety Associations (CFCSA) shall be submitted before taking the Provincial Exam. Applicants may only attempt the exam process three times in one year from the time the administrator has informed the applicant that their application has been approved.

Application process step by step

Applications must be completed in full for consideration. It is **MANDATORY** that the applicant supply **all required documentation**. Incomplete applications will not be considered. NCSO® applicants must provide a résumé outlining proof of three years of practical construction experience within the past ten years as well as proof that courses requiring renewals are up-to-date.

Once the application has been received and approved by IHSA, applicants must then complete the national and provincial exams, as well as the simulated workplace assessment. Applicants must also be prepared to be re-assessed every three years including Professional Development programming (as outlined in the Maintenance requirements section).

The following chart outlines the process for application to the NCSO®/NHSA™ Certificates.



Infrastructure Health and Safety Association

National Construction Safety Officer/ National Health and Safety Administrator

** IHSA will accept certificates, records of training, training transcripts or equivalent. IHSA can provide re-prints of certificates from the [IHSA website](#).*

Re-certification or renewal process

Every three years, an NCSO®/NHSA™ will be required to complete a renewal process on or before the anniversary date on the original NCSO®/NHSA™ certificate. All applicants must be able to demonstrate:

- Proof of renewal of any courses that have expired
- Completion of a renewal application
- Appropriate proof of completion of maintenance courses (as outlined in the Maintenance requirements section)

Once the appropriate documentation has been completed, it can be submitted to the NCSO® administrator. Courses with an expiry date must be valid and have at least six months of validity left at the time of application to the NCSO® program and should not expire through the application process.

As of January 1, 2023, new applicants and renewals must, in addition to the current NCSO®/NHSA™ requirements, complete and demonstrate the following:

1. Preventative Maintenance on-demand webinar
2. Health and Safety Program, Policies, Procedures, and Practices on-demand webinar
3. Investigating and Reporting Incidents training program
4. Submit a minimum of two previously completed safety talks, demonstrating the applicant's ability to communicate specific hazard information in an established format.

Course credit/competency

If you have some health and safety training from a recognized training agency or educational institution, Ontario Prevention Office-approved training provider, another provincial health and safety association, or from another provincial construction safety association, your training **may** qualify for course credit. **There is no guarantee that training from other jurisdictions or training bodies will be accepted.** Proof of completion of these courses must be provided at the time of application. All applications for course credit will be subject to approval from IHSA. For out-of-province or non-IHSA courses, applicants will have to submit course outlines that specify the learning outcomes, durations, results etc. You must complete the course credit exemption form for each course.

Submit the following documents to verify:

- A course description including total duration that meets or exceeds current IHSA requirements.
- Proof of course completion within a period of five (5) years from date of application for course credit.
- Verification that the course was taken from a recognized institution, including but not limited to a college, university, trade school, or safety association.

Infrastructure Health and Safety Association National Construction Safety Officer/ National Health and Safety Administrator

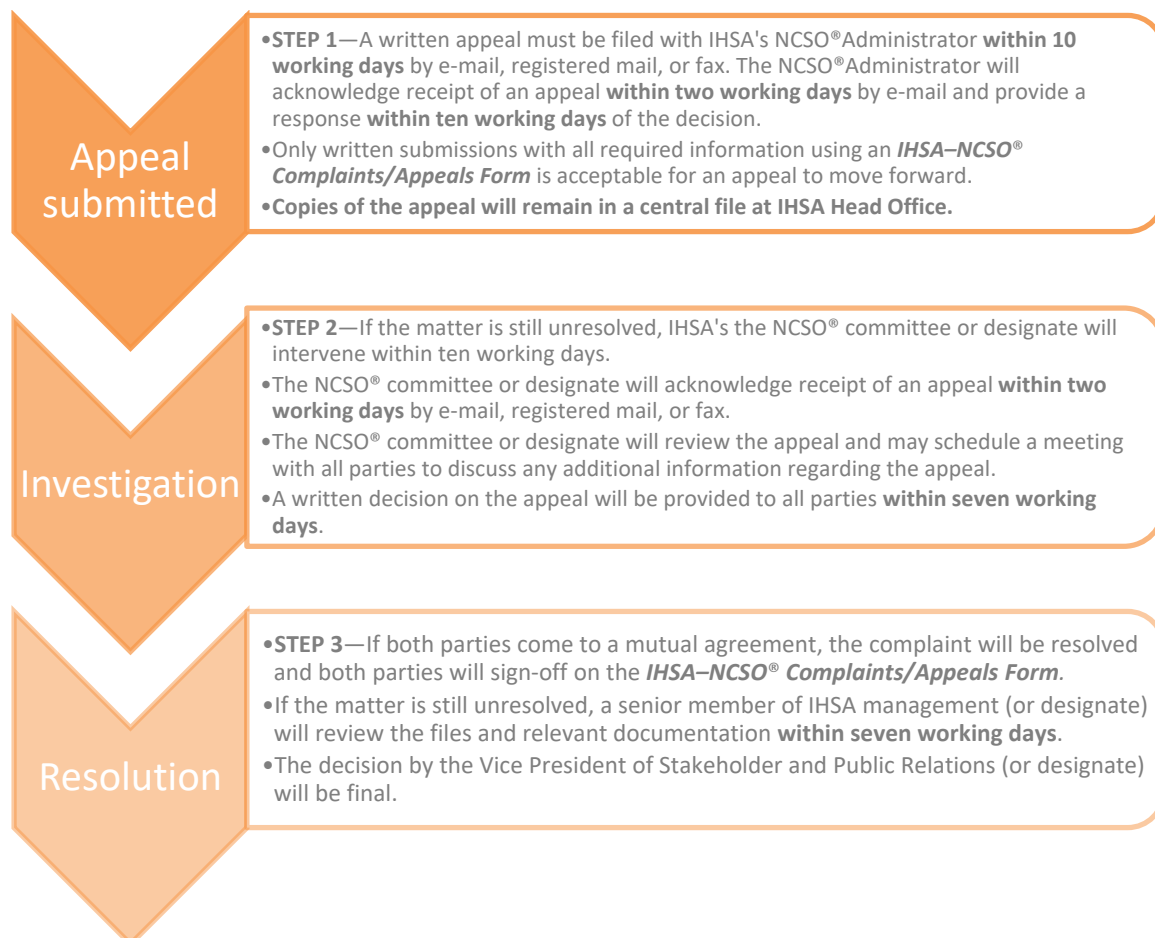
Appeals process

Anyone who is not successful in the process to become an NCSO®/NHSA™, does not receive a course credit, or provides proof of a maintenance course that is not accepted, has the right to appeal this decision. Only written submissions that include all required information using an [IHSA–NCSO® Complaints/Appeals Form](#) is acceptable for an appeal to move forward. **Copies of the appeal will remain in a central file at IHSA Head Office.**

The NCSO® administrator will respond to any appeal requests within two weeks of receiving the appeal form. If the appeal is unresolved at this level, the NCSO® committee or designate, will intervene within two weeks of this time. A consultation meeting with all parties may be held to discuss the outcome.

A written decision on the appeal will be provided to all relevant parties within ten working days of this event. If a mutually satisfactory agreement has been reached to resolve the appeal, both parties will acknowledge the agreement by signing the Appeal Form. If a mutually satisfactory resolution has not been reached, a senior member of IHSA management (or designate), will review the files and relevant documentation within seven working days. The decision by the Vice President of Stakeholder and Public Relations (or designate) will be final.

For specific details, please review the appeal process flowchart below.



Infrastructure Health and Safety Association National Construction Safety Officer/ National Health and Safety Administrator

NCSO®/NHSA™ Review Process

As part of the application process, all initial NCSO®/NHSA™ applications will be reviewed by the NCSO® Administrator. The administrator will review and approve or reject applications based on the documents received. Those who submit incomplete applications will be notified via email requesting any missing documentations. Please allow at two to four weeks for this process. Questionable applications will be forwarded to a review committee for a decision. The review committee will meet on a regular basis to review applications.

Maintenance requirements

In today's ever-changing business environment, it is essential to maintain a competitive advantage and learn the necessary skills to improve your marketability. IHSAs has added the requirement of additional professional development courses as part of the maintenance process of the NCSO®/NHSA™ certificate.

Education

Part of the NCSO®/NHSA™ certificate involves a comprehensive maintenance program. This is intended to demonstrate that the NCSO®/NHSA™ is not only qualified, but also maintains a continuous process of professional development. The maintenance program consists of two components:

1. Renewal of the required certifications that have an expiration date
2. Completion of ongoing professional development courses.

Ongoing professional development must be demonstrated beyond the required courses. A total of 18 hours must be accumulated (any number of courses can be taken as long as the time completed amounts to 18 hours) and must be taken within three years of receiving the NCSO®/NHSA™ Certificate or last renewal. These courses must be in line with the competencies set out by the other courses in the NCSO®/NHSA™ Certificate or must enhance the working skills of an NCSO®/NHSA™. For specific details on maintenance hours, please see the Maintenance FAQ document.

In order to satisfy the maintenance requirements, an application form must be submitted along with the maintenance fee and both of the following.

1. A course outline, providing details on the course curriculum and objectives of the professional development courses
2. Proof of completion of the courses that includes the date, instructor, and location.

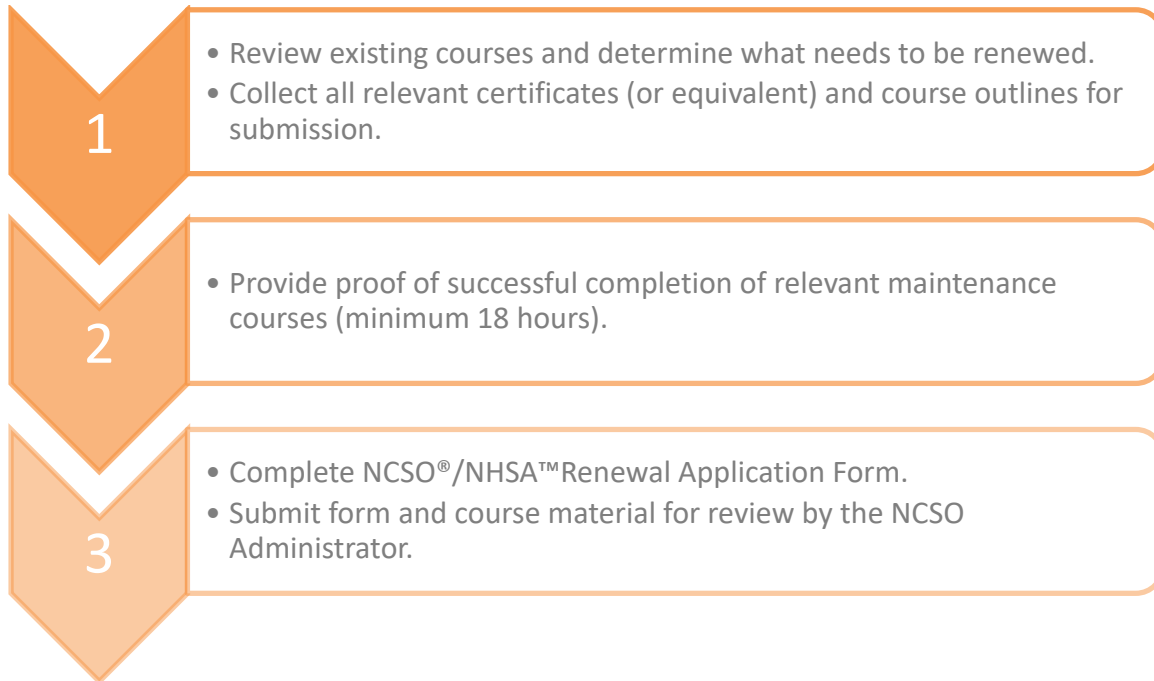
All courses submitted for the maintenance component will be subject to approval and verification.

Reminder: Working at Heights, Standard First Aid, and JHSC Certification after 2016, must be renewed and up-to-date for certificate renewal. All of these must have no less than six months left before expiry in order to successfully be accepted and are not included in the required maintenance hours.

Infrastructure Health and Safety Association National Construction Safety Officer/ National Health and Safety Administrator

Maintenance flowchart

The following chart outlines the process for the maintenance portion of the NCSO® Certificate.



Privacy and confidentiality

IHSA collects, stores, and uses information provided by applicants in accordance with IHSA's Privacy Policy. This information is collected solely for the NCSO® Certificate and will not be shared with any outside organizations. The information will be stored in accordance with relevant laws and guidelines.

All applications, certificates, records of training or equivalents, and supporting documentation are strictly confidential and kept on file with IHSA for a minimum of three years. This documentation will not be released to anyone except as outlined above or as legally required.

IHSA will not disclose any information obtained through the application process without the expressed written permission of the applicant.

Disclaimer: All applications must be completed in full. Any incomplete application will be returned. The names of successful NCSO®/NHSA™ applicants may be posted on the IHSA website. If you any questions about this please contact the NCSO® Administrator.