

FAQs about Certificate of Recognition (COR™)

If you can't find the answer to your question here, please contact us at cor@ihsa.ca or call our COR™ Customer Service Team at 1-800-263-5024.

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1. What is COR™?

The Certificate of Recognition (COR™) program is often required for contracts with both public- and private-sector construction projects *in provinces outside of Ontario*. For example, *municipalities including...* in (province) expect their contractors to be registered with the COR™ program in order for them to work.

2. What is an audit?

An audit is a comprehensive and detailed review of the employer's health and safety management system. The audit will typically cover the basic elements of a health and safety management system and will include interviews, documentation review and observation techniques.

3. What is a health and safety management system?

A health and safety management system (HSMS) is a framework put in place by employers to manage risks, establish controls, and minimize the incidence of injury and illness to their workers. This is accomplished through identifying, assessing, and controlling risks to workers in all workplaces. The scope and complexity of the management system vary according to the type of workplace and the nature of business.

4. What are the benefits of COR™?

- By achieving COR™, employers are able to demonstrate to buyers of construction that their health and safety management system has been developed, implemented, and evaluated on an annual basis through comprehensive internal and external audits.
- Audits will typically include interviews, documentation review, and observation techniques to evaluate how well the employer is able to identify, assess, and control risks to workers.
- The audit criteria used by COR™ are recognized by industries throughout Canada. Your company will be part of a nationwide network participating in and promoting health and safety excellence.
- In a situation where you have to demonstrate that you have an active health and safety management system, participation in COR™ is an asset.
- Firms that are registered in the COR™ program may qualify ahead of others for certain jobs. Buyers of construction can make COR™ a requirement for contractors bidding on jobs in order to be more confident in the contractor's health and safety performance.
- Protecting the health and safety of all workers at all times is the right thing to do. Effective development and maintenance of a health and safety management system is a proactive approach to eliminating workplace injuries and illnesses.
- A firm's corporate image will be enhanced within the industry and community. Commitment to a strong culture of safety will attract safety-conscious workers.
- Providing immediate proof that you have an effective health and safety management system in place will give your organization a competitive advantage. Buyers of construction can be assured that you will bring superior safety practices to the workplace.
- Your program will comply with COR™ national standards, since all stipulations have been endorsed by participating members of the Canadian Federation of Construction Safety Associations (CFCSA).

5. What's involved?

A representative from senior management and one designated permanent full-time employee must take prescribed training offered by IHSA. The training is conducted to help the employer understand and commit to the program, and for the full-time employee to become the designated Internal Auditor. The mandatory courses that must be taken can be found at www.ihsa.ca on our COR™ web page.

Once the training is complete, the employer is required to conduct an internal audit of their HSMS using IHSA's COR™ Audit Tool. The internal audit is reviewed by IHSA, and is then followed up with an external audit from IHSA staff. Upon successful completion of the internal and external audits, the employer is issued the **Certificate of Recognition**, and a **Letter of Good Standing** (good for one year). The employer is required to conduct and successfully complete annual internal audits for each of the next two years using IHSA's COR™ Audit Tool in order to receive a Letter of Good Standing for years two and three.

6. What are the elements of IHSA's COR™ Audit Tool?

There are 19 elements in the COR™ Audit Tool. Thirteen are common to all of the provinces that participate in COR™.

1. Policy Statement
2. Hazard Analysis
3. Safe Work Practices
4. Safe Job Procedures
5. Company Rules
6. Personal Protective Equipment
7. Preventive Maintenance
8. Training & Communication
9. Workplace Inspections
10. Investigations & Reporting
11. Emergency Preparedness
12. Statistics & Records
13. Legislation

Six supplemental elements are specific to Ontario.

14. Occupational Health
15. First Aid
16. Health & Safety Representative/Joint Health and Safety Committee
17. Workplace Violence & Harassment
18. Return to Work
19. Management Review

7. How much does it cost to participate?

The price of the Certificate of Recognition program is based on a daily rate. These costs will vary depending on:

- the size of the organization being audited
- the complexity and availability of material presented to auditors
- the number of interviews to be conducted
- number of workplace locations for observation
- distance to workplace locations.
- Additional costs may apply

Review of Internal Audit: \$350.00

Member Auditing Services: \$1,210.00 (per day)

Non-member Auditing Services: \$1,210.00 + expenses (per day)

For more information regarding costs contact cor@ihsa.ca

8. How do I join?

COR™ is a voluntary program, and therefore requires you to undergo a specific process to become a participant. Please contact IHSA at 1-800-263-5024 for more information.

9. How long does it take to go from registration to certification?

The length of time required depends upon the state of your existing health and safety management system. Many employers are currently meeting all the COR™ requirements, while others may require up to 18 months to successfully implement all elements of the program.

10. How long is my certification valid after successfully completing an External Audit?

The COR™ certification is valid for three years from the date of certification, provided the employer performs and successfully completes internal maintenance audits in the second and third years and complies with the terms and conditions of the COR™ program. All internal audit results must be approved by IHSA. A **Letter of Good Standing** issued each year verifies that the training elements and auditing standards are maintained. In year four, the employer must reapply to the COR™ program and start the process over again.

11. As an Employer, how many COR™ certificates can I obtain?

All employers who are entitled to use the audit system must have an active Ontario WSIB account, and be in good standing. To obtain a Certificate of Recognition, each applicable WSIB account (employer number) held by an employer must independently achieve its own COR™.

In order to participate in COR™, the employer should have a functioning health and safety program in place for at least one year. The program must contain the 19 elements required for the COR™ audit,

although the elements may be listed under other headings. The auditor will take this into consideration when reviewing the audit.

12. As a “Senior Management Representative”, is my only obligation to attend IHSA’s prescribed training?

In addition to the prescribed training, employers (Senior Management Representatives) have the following obligations.

- Ensure audits are properly planned and scheduled.
- Provide access to facilities and supporting information as requested by IHSA.
- Actively participate in the COR™ audit process and maintain COR™ training requirements.
- Provide the IHSA with feedback on the audit process to assist with continuous improvement.
- Ensure maintenance of their COR™ status is achieved on an annual basis, always prior to their anniversary date.

13. What if the person who completed the training leaves my company?

The training certification belongs to the individual who completed the training. To continue to perform the maintenance audits internally, you must send another representative to attend the training and have them assigned as your “Full-Time Permanent Employee”.

The COR™ certificate belongs to the employer.

14. If my company has more than one WSIB account number, does it make a difference to the audit process? Can one audit and COR™ cover them all?

Each WSIB account (firm number) held by an employer must independently achieve its own COR™.

15. Our company has offices all over Canada, and we are participating in COR™ in various other provinces. Can we use COR™ from other provinces and bring it into Ontario?

COR™ must be achieved in the province where your office is located. Therefore, if you have an office in Ontario and work in this province, you must achieve COR™ through IHSA.

Employers that have attained an out-of-province COR™ and do not have a permanent office in Ontario may apply for interim equivalency to the IHSA by providing an email to cor@ihsa.ca, containing:

- confirmation from the host safety association that the employer’s COR™ is current (e.g., a Letter of Good Standing from the host association)
- proof of training from the home province that the COR™ Internal Auditor course was completed. Documentation to accompany this should be a course transcript from the host association.

Should the request be successful, IHSA will provide to the employer an interim **Letter of Good Standing**. This document can then be used to accompany the employer’s tender for the respective job bid.

*If the employer is successful in bidding on the job, they must enter into the process of an **Internal Audit, then an External Audit**, for the additional six elements in IHSA’s COR™ program.

16. What do I do if I have a complaint about COR™?

All complaints regarding the auditor, audit process, employer dissatisfaction, or the employer must be directed in writing to IHSA within one month of the occurrence.

Audit appeals must be filed within two weeks of the formal notification of audit results.