

Five steps to health and safety for small businesses



If you are a small company with only a few employees, it can sometimes be a challenge to incorporate health and safety into your business. However, the following five steps will help get you on your way.

STEP 1

Register your company with the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB).

As an employer, you're legally required to do so. You will gain immediate benefits:

- No-fault health and safety insurance
- Protection from lawsuits
- Coverage for lost wages and health care costs
- Help in returning injured workers safely to work
- Access to products and services from the Infrastructure Health and Safety Association (IHSA) or one of the other health and safety associations in Ontario's prevention system.

STEP 2

Report injuries to the WSIB, Ministry of Labour (MOL), or Federal Labour Program, as prescribed.

As an employer, you're legally required to do so. Being more accountable for injuries means:

- Investigating injuries to keep them from happening again
- Following the regulations
- Creating a more safety-conscious company
- Demonstrating due diligence by setting up an effective health and safety program.

STEP 3

Know your health and safety responsibilities as an employer and as a supervisor.

Register for IHSA's *Basics of Supervising* course. You can take it in the classroom or at home. This course covers the following topics:

- Supervising health and safety
- Motivating your employees and communicating with them
- Knowing your legal responsibilities
- Developing health and safety programs
- Investigating incidents and near misses.

STEP 4

Train your employees—or arrange training through IHSA.

When your workers know essential health and safety practices, their rights, and their responsibilities, you'll enjoy these benefits:

- Lower injury rates
- Lower compensation costs
- Better worker morale
- Fewer stop-work orders
- Competitive advantage in bidding on jobs.



How IHSA can help

IHSA has a number of health and safety resources specifically designed for smaller firms.

The IHSA *My Health and Safety Program* is a web-based health and safety management system that covers 19 elements for effective health and safety administration. The program lets you build on your health and safety program, share it within your company, and adapt it to your own needs.

For people who have little or no experience with health and safety, there is an e-learning course called *Health and Safety Program Essentials*. It will give you a foundation for managing health and safety for your business.

IHSA also offers two health and safety e-learning certificates, one for independent operators and one for small businesses that employ up to 19 workers.

These certificate programs allow you to take health and safety awareness training at your own pace and at your location (at home or in your office). Whether you're an independent operator or a small business owner, you will benefit in two ways from having this awareness training. It will ensure that you and your workers are aware of the common workplace hazards and how to control them, and it can give you a competitive edge on bidding for jobs.

When you visit ihsa.ca/smallbusiness you will find links to all of the programs listed above as well as many free checklists and documents that will help you build your small business safety program.



STEP 5

Provide workers with the equipment, materials, and protective devices as required by law.

The best option for protecting workers is to eliminate the hazard altogether. If that's not possible, protective equipment can reduce the risk and severity of injury. It also:

- Shows your commitment to health and safety
- Demonstrates that you are obeying the law
- Sets an example for your employees. Workers are legally required to use or wear the equipment, protective devices, or clothing required by the employer.

Important contact information

Infrastructure Health and Safety Association ihsa.ca
 Ontario Ministry of Labour labour.gov.on.ca
 Workplace Safety and Insurance Board wsib.on.ca
 Federal Labour Program labour.gc.ca