

September 25, 2024

Subject: Upcoming improvements to the NCSO® and NHSA™ program and new application portal launch

Dear National Construction Safety Officers (NCSO®s), National Health and Safety Administrators (NHSA™s), and valued stakeholders,

We are excited to announce that IHSA is improving the NCSO® and NHSA™ process and requirements to incorporate valuable feedback and ensure continued alignment with the Canadian Federation of Construction Safety Associations (CFCSA). These enhancements will make it easier for applicants to complete the application process, provide more support to employers, and prioritize compliance.

By simplifying the process and elevating the competency of these designations, we are also acting on our commitment to provide members with world-class service and the knowledge and skills needed to prevent injuries, illnesses, and fatalities in the construction, transportation, and electrical utilities industries.

New application portal

We have partnered with the British Columbia Construction Safety Alliance to launch a new application portal in early 2025. This portal will allow applicants to:

- Access real-time updates on their application status
- Easily communicate with approvers through the dedicated platform
- Complete the process faster with a more user-friendly interface
- Make easy and secure online payments

The portal will also enable all exams to be scheduled weekly and conducted online through a Learning Management System saving you time and travel. This system will use a tool that improves the integrity of the online learning and testing process.

COR® audit requirement

To meet the updated requirements under IHSA's memorandum of understanding with the CFCSA, NCSO® applicants will be required to complete a COR® audit using AuditSoft. The options for meeting the requirement include the following:

- Submit an internal or external audit conducted within the last 12 months OR;

- Submit a four-element COR® audit on the applicant's company, if their employer does not participate in COR®

This new requirement will help applicants identify gaps in their company's health and safety management system, offer corrective actions, and ensure compliance with legislative and regulatory standards. It will also provide an opportunity for the applicant to demonstrate and enhance their auditing skills.

Employers will also find NCSO®s to have a higher level of auditing skills, which will help them to guide continuous improvement in their organization, provide clear recommendations for corrective actions, and support companies in better understanding their workers' knowledge of workplace policies and procedures.

Workplace inspection requirement

Those who have achieved the NCSO® or NHSA™ designation will now be required to submit a workplace inspection as part of their renewal process. This inspection must be conducted at their own workplace to demonstrate practical competency in identifying hazards, ensuring compliance, and promoting a safe working environment.

This process allows applicants to apply their knowledge in a real-world setting and provides tangible proof of their ability to assess workplace safety conditions. By incorporating this hands-on component, IHSA can ensure that NCSO®s and NHSA™s are both proficient in theory and skilled in the practical application of workplace safety standards—ultimately contributing to a safer work environment across the industry.

Digital badge certification

We will continue to use BadgeCert to offer digital badges that allow NCSO®s and NHSA™s to showcase their designations and achievements online.

Application fees

In April 2024, IHSA announced a modest price increase to some of its programs and services. While this increase did not include NCSO® and NHSA™ application fees at the time, the application price will increase on February 1, 2025, to \$209 per application. This is the first time the application fee has been increased since 2016.

In addition, there will be a \$75 fee for NCSO®s to use AuditSoft to complete their COR® audit every three years.

Timeline for changes

IHSA will be working to implement these changes and launch the new requirements on **February 3, 2025**.

To facilitate the transition, our application intake will be closed from December 15, 2024, to January 31, 2025. During this period, we will transfer data to our new system and make other preparations to ensure a smooth transition. IHSA will send out further information directly to individuals whose designation will be expiring during the transition period.

Next steps

We will keep you informed as we approach the launch date of **February 3, 2025**, by providing additional resources and information to assist you with the transition.

You can find regular updates on the [NCSO® and NHSA™ webpage](#). There will also be a session to review the upcoming changes and answer your questions at the NCSO®/NHSA™ Educational Conference 2024. You can register for the conference [here](#).

If you have any questions, please review [the FAQ](#) or reach out to IHSA's NCSO® Administrator by email: ncsoadministrator@ihsa.ca.

We appreciate your patience as we work to improve our processes and are committed to ensuring that your experience is as smooth and efficient as possible.

Thank you for your continued commitment to workplace safety.

Best regards,