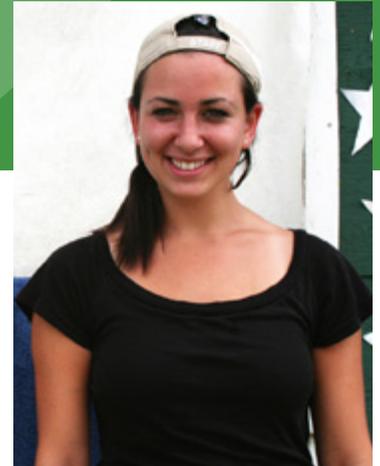


# New and Young Workers

**Safe At Work Ontario**  
Enforcement > Compliance > Partnership >



Workers new to a job are three times more likely to be injured during the first month on the job than more experienced workers.

“Young workers” are under the age of 25. “New workers” can be of any age who are on the job for less than six months or who are assigned to a new job.

Between 2009 and 2013, 30 young workers aged 15 to 24 died in work-related incidents, according to Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) statistics.

During the same period, 30,000 young workers received injuries resulting in lost time at work, according to WSIB claims.

In 2013, more than 6,000 young workers received injuries resulting in lost time at work. Of those, about two-thirds were male.

In 2013, many of the injured young workers aged 15 to 19 years old were food counter attendants and kitchen helpers. For injured 20 to 24 year olds, many were labourers in processing, manufacturing and utilities.

The most common work-related injuries involving young workers were sprains and strains.

The majority of lost-time claims approved by the WSIB involved young workers being struck by objects and equipment.

Most injuries and fatalities can be prevented.

## Some general duties of workplace parties

### Employers

Employers are required to provide supervision, information and instruction to all workers, including new and young workers, on how to protect their health and safety in the workplace. This includes information about safe work policies, measures and procedures specific to the workplace and the duties the worker will perform.

It is recommended employers carry out any instruction and provide information to new and young workers in late spring, a common time of year for young people to enter the workforce.

The following are some examples of employers' duties under the [Occupational Health and Safety Act \(OHSA\)](#).

Employers are required to:

- take every reasonable precaution in the circumstances for the protection of workers [OHSA s. 25(2)(h)]
- ensure workers meet sector specific minimum age requirements (industrial regs. section 4)

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- ensure that equipment, materials and protective devices as prescribed are provided, used and maintained in good condition (OHSA section 25 (1)(b))
  - provide workers with information, instruction and supervision and personal protective equipment where required (OHSA section 25 (2)(a))
  - prepare and review, at least annually, a written occupational health and safety policy, and develop and maintain a program to implement that policy if there are more than five workers in the workplace (OHSA section 25 (2)(j))
  - post a copy of the OHSA in the workplace (OHSA section 25(2)(k))

## Supervisors

Supervisors are required to:

- ensure that workers work in compliance with the OHSA and its regulations (OHSA section 27 (1)(a))
- ensure any equipment, protective device or clothing required by the employer is used or worn by workers (OHSA section 27 (1)(b))
- advise workers of any potential or actual health or safety dangers known by the supervisor (OHSA section 27 (2)(a))
- where prescribed, provide workers with written instructions about measures and procedures to be taken for the workers' protection (OHSA section 27 (2)(b))
- take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of workers (OHSA section 27 (2)(c))

## Workers

Workers are required to

- work in compliance with the OHSA and its regulations (OHSA section 28 (1)(a))
- use or wear equipment, protective devices or clothing required by the employer (OHSA section 28 (1)(b))
- report to employer or supervisor the absence of or defect in any equipment or any protective device of which the worker is aware (OHSA section 28 (1)(c))
- report any known workplace hazards or OHSA violations to the supervisor or employer (OHSA section 28 (1)(d))
- be aware of their rights under the OHSA (section 43), such as the right to refuse unsafe work, except in specified circumstances.

## Protecting workers

It is the responsibility of employers, owners, constructors and supervisors to ensure all workplace parties comply with the OHSA and its regulations.

The employer is required to ensure that the basic mandatory health and safety awareness training for all supervisors and workers in the workplace is done.

For more information on legal responsibilities please visit: [E-Laws: Occupational Health and Safety Act](#).

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## Health and safety considerations and best practices

Employers, supervisors and trainers should emphasize the need for new and young workers to communicate any questions or concerns they may have about workplace hazards.

Supervisors, or others who will be involved in training new workers, should be familiar with some of the unique health and safety concerns faced by new and young workers.

**Employers must provide workplace-specific training to all workers to protect their health and safety. It is recommended that the training focus on:**

- new hires with or without experience in the industry
- existing workers starting a new job, being transferred and/or returning after an extended absence
- workers who will benefit from retraining after an injury or “near miss” (incident in which they are almost injured or killed)
- workers who will be working on a new or different work process or with new machinery
- seasonal workers
- student workers and co-op students
- temporary workers, regardless of their experience in the industry

## Further information on new and young worker safety:

- Young worker portal on the Ministry of Labour’s website:  
[www.ontario.ca./YoungWorkers](http://www.ontario.ca./YoungWorkers)
- Young worker safety tips:  
[www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/atwork/yw\\_tips\\_youngworkers.php](http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/atwork/yw_tips_youngworkers.php)
- Parenting young workers:  
[www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/atwork/yw\\_tips\\_parents.php](http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/atwork/yw_tips_parents.php)
- Supervising young workers:  
[www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/atwork/yw\\_tips\\_workplaces.php](http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/atwork/yw_tips_workplaces.php)
- WorkSmartOntario:  
[www.worksmartontario.gov.on.ca/scripts/default.asp](http://www.worksmartontario.gov.on.ca/scripts/default.asp)
- WorkSmartOntario: Minimum Age Requirement Information:  
[www.worksmartontario.gov.on.ca/scripts/default.asp?contentID=2-2-4&mcategory=health](http://www.worksmartontario.gov.on.ca/scripts/default.asp?contentID=2-2-4&mcategory=health)
- Workplace Safety & Insurance Board young workers resources:  
[www.wsib.on.ca/en/community/WSIB/ArticleDetail?vgnextoid=220948db92e0c210VgnVCM10000469c710aRCRD](http://www.wsib.on.ca/en/community/WSIB/ArticleDetail?vgnextoid=220948db92e0c210VgnVCM10000469c710aRCRD)
- WorkSmartCampus:  
[learn.vubiz.com/chaccess/worksmart/Default.asp](http://learn.vubiz.com/chaccess/worksmart/Default.asp)
- Institute for Work & Health – Vulnerable workers:  
[www.iwh.on.ca/vulnerable-workers](http://www.iwh.on.ca/vulnerable-workers)
- Workers Health & Safety Centre:  
[www.whsc.on.ca/Home](http://www.whsc.on.ca/Home)

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## Toll-free number

Call toll-free 1-(877)-202-0008 any time to report critical injuries, fatalities or work refusals.

Call Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. for general inquiries about workplace health and safety.

**Always call 911** in an emergency.

**Note:** *This document does not constitute legal advice. To determine your rights and obligations under the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) and its regulations, please contact your legal counsel or refer to the legislation at <http://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90o01>.*

This fact sheet has been prepared to assist the workplace parties in understanding their obligations under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHSA) and the regulations. It is not intended to replace the OHSA or the regulations and reference should always be made to the official version of the legislation.

While this fact sheet will also be available to Ministry of Labour inspectors, they will apply and enforce the OHSA and its regulations based on the facts as they may find them in the workplace. This fact sheet does not affect their enforcement discretion in any way.