

Is your Health and Safety Committee effective?

Effective HSCs and HS Representatives have a few defining characteristics. Follow these best practices to support your workplace better!

Effective HSCs and HSRs...

Promote safety
According to the Alberta OHS Act, HSCs and HS Representatives have a duty to **develop** and **promote** health and safety **education and information** programs.

Model positive OHS attitudes, such as:

- Always being ready to **listen** to the **concerns** of other workers
- **Modelling safe work practices** and **obeying** all **safety rules**
- Ensuring they **don't pass by anything** that is **unsafe**
- Continuing to work on **resolving concerns**
- **Involving themselves in health and safety concerns**, and not in other matters
- **Maintaining**, but not exceeding, their **authority**
- Ensuring they **don't interfere with equipment controls**
- Asking for **assistance** in situations they don't understand

Cooperate with OHS Officers
HSCs and HS Representatives are **required by law** to **cooperate with an OHS officer** exercising their duties. At request that an HSC worker co-chair (or their designate) or an HS representative **accompany them on an inspection**. Employers must ensure these representatives have the **time they need to attend that inspection**.

Manage meetings by:

- Meeting at a **set frequency**
- Setting a **meeting time** that's **convenient** for all committee members
- Creating **agendas** to **organize** the **discussion** and ensure members come prepared
- Trying to have **full attendance at each meeting**
- **Postponing meetings for emergency reasons only**
- Meeting at **locations** that are **free from interruptions**
- Running a **well-organized** meeting that **stays on schedule**

Maintain records
HSCs and HS Representatives must **maintain confidentiality**. They cannot disclose a worker's personal information unless the disclosure is required by law. They also must ensure that **all OHS documentation is retained for the required time period**, and that all documentation is retained for **at least two years**.

Evaluate their own effectiveness by asking:

- Do workers **know who their representative is** or who the members of their committee are?
- Are the **duties and authority** of the HSC or HS Representative **known to workers**?
- Is the committee or representative **seen by the workforce** and the **employer** as being **useful** in providing **leadership in safety**?
- Are members or representatives seen as **enforcers or advisors**?
- **Do workers make suggestions** to the committee members or representative?
- **How many** recommendations have been **implemented**?

These best practices help create a foundation of safety in your workplace. Provide your HSC or HSR with the training they need, so they can be at their best.

Enroll them in the AASP Module 3: Joint Worksite Health and Safety Committee and Health and Safety Representative Training Course, today!