

WorkSafeBC

Roles, rights & responsibilities

When it comes to health and safety, everyone in the workplace has distinct responsibilities. Whether you're an owner, employer, supervisor, prime contractor, or worker, you have a role to play in keeping the workplace safe. As a worker, you have rights to a safe and healthy workplace, which includes the right to refuse unsafe work.

Responsibilities for workplace health and safety

Everyone has a role to play in workplace safety. The following table shows the various role and responsibilities of all who are involved.

On a worksite, everyone has varying levels of responsibility for workplace health and safety. You should know and understand your responsibilities — and those of others. If you're a worker, you also have three key rights.

Your rights

- The right to know about hazards in the workplace
- The right to participate in health and safety activities in the workplace
- The right to refuse unsafe work without getting punished or fired

Your responsibilities

As a worker, you play an important role in making sure you — and your fellow workers — stay healthy and safe on the job. As a worker, you must:

- Be alert to hazards. Report them immediately to your supervisor or employer.
- Follow safe work procedures and act safely in the workplace at all times.
- Use the protective clothing, devices, and equipment provided. Be sure to wear them properly.
- Co-operate with joint occupational health and safety committees, worker health and safety representatives, WorkSafeBC prevention officers, and anybody with health and safety duties.
- Get treatment quickly should an injury happen on the job and tell the health care provider that the injury is work-related.
- Follow the treatment advice of health care providers.
- Return to work safely after an injury by modifying your duties and not immediately starting with your full, regular responsibilities.
- Never work under the influence of alcohol, drugs or any other substance, or if you're overly tired.

Refusing unsafe work

Workers have the right to refuse unsafe work. If you have reasonable cause to believe that performing a job or task puts you or someone else at risk, you must not perform the job or task. You must immediately notify your supervisor or employer, who will then take the appropriate steps to determine if the work is unsafe and remedy the situation.

As an employer, workers are your eyes and ears on the front line of workplace health and safety. When workers refuse work because they believe it's unsafe, consider it an opportunity to investigate and correct a situation that could have caused harm.

If a worker refuses work because it's unsafe, workplace procedures will allow the issue to be properly understood and corrected. As a worker, you have the right to refuse to perform a specific job or task you believe is unsafe without being disciplined by your employer. Your employer or supervisor may temporarily assign a new task to you, at no loss in pay.

Steps to follow when work might be unsafe

1. 1 Report the unsafe condition or procedure
 - As a worker, you must immediately report the unsafe condition to a supervisor or employer.
 - As a supervisor or employer, you must investigate the matter and fix it if possible. If you decide the worker's concern is not valid, report back to the worker.
2. 2 If a worker still views work as unsafe after a supervisor or employer has said it is safe to perform a job or task
 - As a supervisor or employer, you must investigate the problem and ensure any unsafe condition is fixed.
 - This investigation must take place in the presence of the worker and a worker representative of the joint health and safety committee or a worker chosen by the worker's trade union. If there is no safety committee or representing trade union at the workplace, the worker who first reported the unsafe condition can choose to have another worker present at the investigation.
3. 3 If a worker still views work as unsafe, notify WorkSafeBC
 - If the matter is not resolved, the worker and the supervisor or employer must contact WorkSafeBC. A prevention officer will then investigate and take steps to find a workable solution.

How workers report a workplace injury or disease

If you have a work-related injury or disease, we want to help you as soon as possible. Be sure to seek medical attention and report your injury to your employer. If you miss work or seek medical attention, be sure to contact us. We'll need some information from you to start your claim for services and benefits.

How to report an injury

Teleclaim (recommended if you've missed work)

1-888-WORKERS (1.888.967.5377)

See the information you'll need to make your report.

With an account

Log on or create an account

Without an account

Report without creating an account

Form (fax or mail)

Use Application for Compensation and Report of Injury or Occupational Disease (Form 6)

If your claim involves sexual assault or sexual harassment, please call Teleclaim so we can connect you with a specialist in that area. If your claim involves progressive hearing loss that is not associated with a specific incident or if you're a fisherman, please also call Teleclaim instead of reporting your injury online. We'll provide specific assistance for you.

What to do when you're injured at work

A work-related injury can be stressful and cause confusion, which is why we've created a simple process for you to follow as soon after the injury as possible. Before you call, please review the information you'll need to make your report. The steps are:

What to do when you're injured at work

1. 1 Report your injury immediately to your employer

Your employer is responsible for getting you any necessary first aid, and for transporting you to a medical facility if that's what you need. Be sure to keep in touch with your employer if you have to be off work.

2. 2 See your physician

You doctor will recommend treatment for your injury, and may refer you to other health care practitioners. Be sure to ask about what modified work duties, and activities at home, you can do to help your recovery. And always let your health care provider know that you were injured at work.

3. 3 Report your injury to us

If you've missed work, call Teleclaim. Our team will gather your information and answer any questions you may have about making a claim. If you haven't missed work but sought medical attention, we recommend reporting online. Before you report your injury, please review the information you'll need to provide.