

Applying for a joint work site health and safety committee or health and safety representative approval

OHS information for employers and prime contractors

Key information

- The *Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act* allows employers and prime contractors to request an approval to vary from legislated requirements for joint work site health and safety committees (HSCs) or health and safety (HS) representatives.
- Work site parties who want an approval must submit a written application to a Director of Inspection.

What is an approval?

OHS legislation gives statutory directors authority to grant approvals to work site parties for variations to HSC and HS representative practices and procedures.

A statutory director is an employee of the Government of Alberta who has the legislative power to issue an approval. Directors include the Director of Inspection, Director of Occupational Hygiene and Director of Medical Services.

In considering approval requests, a director takes into account applicable information such as:

- the nature of the work performed at the work site
- the level of support from workers and/or unions representing workers present at the work site
- the injury or illness frequency at the work site or for the industry
- any additional criteria set out in the OHS Regulation or Code

Employers and prime contractors who want to request an approval must submit an application in writing to a Director of Inspection.



A Director issues an approval based on the criteria described in section 16(5) of the *OHS Act* and Section 43 of the OHS Regulation.

How to apply

Step 1 – Complete the HSC/HS Representative Approval application form at the end of this bulletin and attach:

- documentation of support from workers, worker representatives and/or unions representing workers
- terms of reference (HSC approvals only)
- any other supporting documentation related to the request

Step 2 – Mail or email the application to:

Director of Inspection – HSC Approvals
600, 727-7 Avenue SW
Calgary, AB T2P 0Z5
lbr.hscapprovals@gov.ab.ca

While an approval request is being processed and reviewed, work site parties must continue to meet all legislated OHS requirements.

Processing and review

Alberta OHS typically acknowledges receipt of application within three business days.

Applications are reviewed individually. A director or their representative may contact an applicant if they need additional information during the review. Directors may also consult with subject matter experts, if required, during the review.

Review timelines vary and may take weeks. Submit approval requests well in advance of critical project deadlines when possible.

Missing or incomplete information will delay processing.

A director may grant or deny an approval, in whole or in part, after considering all the information provided.

Granted approvals

If an approval is granted, the director provides their decision in writing. The decision:

- may include terms and conditions that must be met as part of the approval, and
- is in effect only during the time period specified in the Director's granting letter.

An approval is specific to the work site party or group of work site parties to which it is granted and applies to the work site(s) listed in the director's granting letter. The approval is not transferable to parties and locations other than those listed in the granting letter.

Alberta OHS officers may visit the work site(s) to confirm that work site parties are complying with the terms and conditions of the granting letter.

Validity

An approval is in effect for a maximum of five years from the date it is granted, subject to the terms and conditions listed in the granting letter.

Applicants are responsible for re-applying for an approval before the original granting letter expires. The written request should explain the reason(s) for re-applying and include a copy of the director's original granting letter.

Changing circumstances

Terms and conditions of the approval may require applicants to notify the director of any key changes.

Depending on the nature of the change(s), the director may amend, suspend or revoke the approval. Revised terms of reference is an example of a key change.

Denied requests

The director must provide the applicant with written reasons for a decision to deny an approval request. Applicants can revise their proposal to address any stated concerns and re-apply.

Contact us

OHS Contact Centre

(Complaints, questions, reporting serious incidents)

Anywhere in Alberta

- 1-866-415-8690

Edmonton & area

- 780-415-8690

Deaf or hearing impaired

- 1-800-232-7215 (Alberta)
- 780-427-9999 (Edmonton)

Online Reporting Service

(PSIs, mine or mine site incidents)

oir.labour.alberta.ca

Website

alberta.ca/OHS

For more information

Health and safety committees and Representatives (LI060)

ohs-pubstore.labour.alberta.ca/li060

Mandatory health and safety committee and representative training (LI054)

ohs-pubstore.labour.alberta.ca/li054

Applying for a joint work site health and safety committee or representative approval (LI030-2FRM)

ohs-pubstore.labour.alberta.ca/LI030-2FRM

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Occupational Health and Safety

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