



Applying for an OHS acceptance or approval

OHS information for applicants

This bulletin explains what acceptances and approvals are as well as how and when to apply for them.

KEY INFORMATION

- The *Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act* gives an OHS statutory director authority to grant acceptances and approvals.
 - Incomplete applications, for example, missing or incorrect information, will delay processing.
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What are acceptances and approvals?

Acceptances and approvals are not exemptions to requirements of the OHS legislation.

Acceptances and approvals are tools in the *OHS Act* that allow an OHS director to grant permission for a work site party to do something different from a requirement in the OHS Code under specific circumstances.

Acceptances

An acceptance allows an alternative that offers workers equal or greater protection than required by the OHS Code.

If a director is of the opinion that an alternative to the OHS Code requirement provides equal or greater protection to workers, section 20 of the *OHS Act* allows the director to issue an acceptance for an alternative:

- tool
- appliance
- personal protective equipment
- equipment
- standard
- work process
- first aid service, supplies, or equipment

The work site party proposing the alternative must provide enough information and supporting evidence to show that the alternative offers equal or greater protection to workers

than the requirement in the OHS Code. The information provided can include photographs, technical reports, consultation with affected workers, sketches and drawings, and a statement of why the acceptance is appropriate.

Approvals

A director's approval or an option is required in some specific provisions of OHS Code. Section 22 of the *OHS Act* states that a director may, in accordance with the regulations or the OHS Code, issue an approval to any person provided the person meets any terms or conditions that the director considers necessary to maintain the health or safety of a person.

There are only certain provisions of the OHS Code that require or allow the issuance of an approval. These provisions use the words "as approved by a director". If you see these words in any specific provision of the OHS Code, it means that an approval can be issued.

Like acceptances, the director considers factors appropriate to the approval application. The director may request additional information needed to evaluate the approval application. These documents could include technical information, a statement of why the approval is requested and specific details about the work site.

Who can apply for an acceptance or approval?

A work site party or group of one or more of these work site parties can apply for an acceptance or approval.

How to apply

There are two ways to apply for either an acceptance or approval.

Option 1 (recommended)

Apply through the [OHS Acceptances and Approvals](#) secure online feature.

With this option, you can enter or upload all required information directly and track the status of your application.

Option 2

Complete an application form.

- [Application for OHS acceptance or approval](#)

Submit the completed form and all required information to OHS either by mail or email.

Send applications to:

OHS Specialized Professional Services
J. G. O'Donoghue Building
7000 113 Street
Edmonton, AB
T6H 5T6
lbr.ohsaccept@gov.ab.ca

Asbestos training agencies and first aid training have their own application approval processes. The following resources can help you with your application:

- [Asbestos worker training](#)
- [First aid training](#)

Approval applications for autonomous haulage systems have additional requirements, please contact [OHS mining](#) for more information.

Required information

An acceptance or approval application must include:

- the specific section(s), subsection(s), clause(s) or sub-clause(s) of the OHS legislation you are requesting for acceptance or approval
- the reason the acceptance or approval is requested, or necessary
- any applicable work site locations and a description of the work being performed:
 - provide longitude and latitude if there is no street address (for example, at an oil well site)
 - state if the acceptance or approval is for mobile equipment with no fixed work site
- the time period for the acceptance or approval you're requesting, include specific dates and time frames if known

Acceptance applications must also include:

- details of the alternative being proposed
- the rationale as to how the proposed alternative will provide equal or greater protection to the workers compared to the legislative requirement

Approval applications must also include:

- specific details about the circumstances and work site that a director needs to determine where the approval should be granted

Applicants for acceptances and approvals must provide all supporting information needed to assess the application.

This may include:

- photographs, technical reports, proposed work procedures, sketches and drawings, engineering certification
- if applicable, a copy of relevant hazard assessments, conducted with the involvement of the joint health and safety committee (HSC), health and safety representative (HS representative) or affected workers, and identifying the methods used to eliminate or control the identified hazards

A director may require an acceptance or approval application to include the results of consultation with other parties affected by the acceptance or approval as well as the HSC or HS representative. The director may also choose to consult directly with these parties.

When considering whether to issue an acceptance or approval, the director may require a person to provide any information that the director considers necessary for reviewing the matter.

Application processing

If you submit through the online feature, you will receive an acknowledgement of your application immediately.

Acknowledgement of a mailed or emailed application is typically sent to the applicant within three business days of receipt of the application.

You must continue to meet all existing requirements in the OHS legislation while your application is being processed and assessed.

Requests are considered on a case-by-case basis.

Timelines for application review vary and can take a number of weeks.

- make requests well in advance of critical project deadlines where possible
- you may be contacted during the assessment process to answer questions or provide additional information

Terms and conditions

A director may impose any terms and conditions on an acceptance or approval that the director considers necessary. These terms and conditions are part of the acceptance or approval and are legally binding and

enforceable under the authorities of the *OHS Act*. The terms and conditions can include:

- duration of the acceptance or approval
- recipient(s)
- applicable work site(s)
- specific conditions or terms which must be complied with

An acceptance or approval is not transferable to other work site parties and locations.

An OHS officer may visit the work site(s) to confirm that work site parties are complying with the terms and conditions of the acceptance or approval along with confirming general compliance with the OHS legislation. In cases of non-compliance, officers have the authority to issue compliance orders, stop use orders, stop work orders, violation tickets and administrative penalties.

Validity

An acceptance or approval is in effect only during the time period prescribed by the directors. Applicants are responsible for re-applying for acceptances or approvals, if needed, before the expiry date. It is recommended to re-apply at least three months in advance of the expiry of the acceptance or approval.

If circumstances change

The director may vary, suspend or revoke the acceptance or approval at any time.

If the circumstances of the original application change, the applicant must notify the director. Examples of changed circumstance include changes to a company name, altered work site conditions, new work site locations or project timelines that go beyond the expiry date in the granting letter. A director can issue a variance. Usually a variance is only issued if there is no significant change from the original application. In cases where there is a significant change, a new application may be required.

If the request is denied

The director will provide the applicant with written reasons for their decision. The applicant can revise their application to address any stated concerns and re-apply.

Contact us

OHS Contact Centre

Anywhere in Alberta

- 1-866-415-8690

Edmonton and surrounding area

- 780-415-8690

Deaf or hard of hearing (TTY)

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

Notify OHS of health and safety concerns

alberta.ca/file-complaint-online.aspx

Call the OHS Contact Centre if you have concerns that involve immediate danger to a person on a work site.

Report a workplace incident to OHS

alberta.ca/ohs-complaints-incidents.aspx

Website

alberta.ca/ohs

Get copies of the OHS Act, Regulation and Code

Alberta Queen's Printer

qp.gov.ab.ca

OHS

alberta.ca/ohs-act-regulation-code.aspx

For more information

Applying for an acceptance to demolish a building containing asbestos

ohs-pubstore.labour.alberta.ca/asb003

Application for an OHS acceptance or approval

ohs-pubstore.labour.alberta.ca/li030frm

Asbestos worker training

alberta.ca/asbestos-worker-training.aspx

OHS acceptances and approvals online application feature

ohsacceptances.labour.alberta.ca

First aid training

alberta.ca/first-aid-training.aspx

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