

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Policy

The Board of School Trustees, School District No. 79 (Cowichan Valley), recognizes that the health and safety of all employees is an important concern and is, therefore, committed to providing a safe and healthy working and learning environment.

The Board will develop standards and procedures, in addition to its legal and regulatory responsibilities, when and where necessary, in an effort to protect staff against health and accident hazards.

Administrative Procedures

1. Health and safety is every employee's responsibility, regardless of their specific job task. All employees shall:
 - (a) work safely, establishing safe working habits and conditions;
 - (b) perform their job only if it is safe to do so, and will not be disciplined for refusing to work in an unsafe environment;
 - (c) be encouraged to promote positive attitudes toward accident prevention and to suggest improvements for safe working conditions.
2. The School Board will:
 - (a) endeavour to provide and maintain a safe and healthy work environment;
 - (b) be responsible for the adequate training, direction and instruction of employees in the safe performance of their job tasks;
 - (c) ensure that safety inspections are completed at regular intervals throughout the District, including buildings, grounds and equipment to identify workplace conditions that are or may be hazardous to the health or safety of employees; and that work practices are carried out in an environment conducive to health and safety.
3. The School District Administration shall:
 - (a) establish and maintain the necessary standards, policies, procedures and work practices, buildings, grounds and equipment, to ensure a safe and healthy work environment;
 - (b) identify and investigate hazardous working conditions, implementing necessary procedures to guard against or eliminate such hazards;

- (c) develop health and safety programs and procedures relating to concerns identified by employees or safety committees;
 - (d) ensure that safeguards, safety appliances and devices, including personal protective equipment, required for the protection of employees are available and used accordingly;
 - (e) enforce regulations and proper work procedures, correcting any unsafe or hazardous condition.
4. Supervisors/Department Heads are responsible to:
- (a) ensure that each employee is properly instructed to do his/her work safely;
 - (b) ensure employees follow proper work procedures and regulations;
 - (c) continually monitor the workplace and activities in it, ensuring employees are safe and working safely, correcting all unsafe activities of employees when required;
 - (d) initiate investigations on all accidents to determine probable cause and recommend remedial action to reduce a possible reoccurrence, completing necessary documentation on the incident;
 - (e) liaise with the District and/or appropriate Site Joint Health and Safety Committee concerning the disposition of unsafe conditions or actions that have been found and offer suggestions concerning the development of safer work practices or conditions.
5. School District employees are expected to:
- (a) work safely and model safe working habits;
 - (b) know and follow proper work procedures;
 - (c) report health and safety hazards to their supervisor, completing necessary documents if required;
 - (d) know and comply with all work regulations applicable to them;
 - (e) adopt a responsible attitude towards occupational health and safety;
 - (f) wear clothing, footwear and equipment consistent with safe work practices and appropriate for the task to be performed.
6. The School District Health & Safety Advisory Committee shall have, as its mandate, a responsibility to:
- (a) hold regular meetings once per month, properly recording the proceedings;
 - (b) review safety and health reports received from Site Joint Health and Safety committees regarding concerns raised, recommending to management measures to correct unsafe conditions and procedures to ensure compliance with the Occupational Health & Safety Regulations;

- (c) recommend to management any appropriate action regarding unsafe equipment, working conditions or practices, which pose a potential hazard;
 - (d) encourage a safe environment for staff, promoting an awareness for safe work habits in the workplace;
 - (e) recommend education and training that would enhance the overall health and safety program of the School District and its employees;
7. Site Joint Health & Safety Committees/Worker Representatives are to be established at each school complex, and the School Board Office complex, representing all employees *in* accordance with Division 4 of the Workers' Compensation Act. The Site Joint Health and Safety Committees/Worker Representatives shall complete the following functions and duties as identified in Section 130.W.C. Act.
- (a) Identify situations that may be unhealthy or unsafe for workers and advise on effective systems for responding to those situations.
 - (b) Consider and expeditiously deal with complaints relating to the health and safety of workers.
 - (c) Consult with workers and the employer on issues related to occupational health and safety and occupational environment.
 - (d) Make recommendations to the employer and the workers for the improvement of the occupational health and safety of workers and compliance with the regulations, and monitor their effectiveness.
 - (e) Make recommendations to the employer on educational programs promoting the health and safety of workers and compliance with the regulations, and monitor their effectiveness.
 - (f) Advise the employer on programs and policies required under the regulations for the workplace and monitor their effectiveness.
 - (g) Advise the employer on proposed changes to the workplace or the work processes that may affect the health or safety of workers.
 - (h) Ensure that incident investigations and regular inspections are carried out as required by regulation.
 - (i) Participate in inspections, investigations and inquiries as provided by regulation.
 - (j) Carry out any other duties and functions prescribed by regulation.

Reference: Workers Compensation Act
WCB Occupational Health and Safety Regulations