

YUKON
CANADA

Whitehorse, Yukon

WORKERS' COMPENSATION
HEALTH AND SAFETY BOARD
CODE OF PRACTICE 2009/01

YOUNG AND NEW WORKERS

Pursuant to section 25(1) of the Yukon *Occupational Health and Safety Act* R.S.Y. 2002, the Board of Directors orders as follows:

1. This Code of Practice explains the minimum orientation, training, and supervisory requirements of employers towards their young and new workers. It provides practical guidance to help employers meet the requirements of the *Yukon Occupational Health and Safety Regulations*, section 1.06, Training for Workers.
2. This Code of Practice applies to all workplaces as established in section 2 of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*.
3. This Code of Practice recognizes the need to pay special attention to the orientation and training of young and new workers as they are at greater risk of injury than their older more experienced counterparts and as such, the following measures should be considered.

Definitions

“*young worker*” means any worker who is under 19 years of age.

“*new worker*” means any worker who is:

- a) new to the workplace;
- b) returning to the workplace where the hazards in that workplace have changed during the worker’s absence; or
- c) relocated to a new workplace where the hazards in that workplace are different from the hazards in the worker’s previous workplace.

“*hazard*” means any source of potential damage, harm, or adverse health effects on someone or something under certain conditions.

“*hazard assessment*” means a written, formal appraisal of the safety risks that exist within a workplace.

“workplace” means the physical location or locations where a worker or workers can be reasonably expected to perform their work duties.

Hazard assessment and mitigation

4. Before employing young or new workers in a workplace, an employer must conduct a hazard assessment to ensure that any hazards to which the young or new workers are exposed have been mitigated to the degree possible, through such means as elimination, substitution, administrative controls, engineering controls, and/or selection and provisioning of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).
5. Issues to consider in conducting this hazard assessment could include, but are not limited to:
 - a) potential for robbery, confrontation, and violence in the workplace;
 - b) the role peer pressure may play in young worker injuries; and
 - c) hazards of working alone, especially at night.

Young and new worker orientation and training

6. An employer must ensure that before a young or new worker begins work in a workplace, he or she is given health and safety orientation and training specific to that worker's workplace and job tasks.
7. The following topics must be included in the young or new worker's orientation and training, at a minimum:
 - a) name of and contact information for the young or new worker's supervisor;
 - b) contact information for the occupational health and safety committee or the worker health and safety representative, as applicable to the workplace;
 - c) location of first aid facilities and means of summoning first aid;
 - d) reporting of illnesses and injuries;
 - e) emergency procedures;
 - f) the employer's and the young or new worker's responsibilities and rights under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* and regulations, including the responsibility to correct or report unsafe conditions and the right to refuse to perform work the worker believes is unsafe, and procedures for doing so;
 - g) workplace health and safety rules;

- h) instruction and demonstration of the young or new worker's work tasks and work processes, followed by observation of the worker's performance of the tasks or processes and correction/enforcement of health and safety rules and procedures if necessary;
- i) Hazards to which the young or new worker may be exposed, which have been identified through a hazard assessment process.
- j) Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) information requirements set out in the *Yukon Occupational Health and Safety Regulations*, as applicable to the workplace; and
- k) use, care, and maintenance of any required personal protective equipment.

Additional orientation and training

- 8. An employer must provide a young or new worker with additional orientation and training when:
 - a) workplace observation reveals that the young or new worker is not able to perform work tasks or work processes safely, or
 - b) reasonably requested by a young or new worker who does not fully understand how to perform work tasks or processes safely.

Supervision

- 9. Under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, employers must ensure that supervisors of workers (this includes young and new workers) are competent to train these workers and to supervise their work.

- 10. "Competent" means that supervisors must:
 - a) be qualified because of their knowledge, training, experience and suitability (e.g. maturity to organize the work and its performance, judgement, behaviour and appropriate decision making);
 - b) be familiar with the provisions of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations*, as they apply to the work;
 - c) have knowledge of actual and potential dangers to health and safety in the workplace; and
 - d) demonstrate safe work practices and procedures in their own work.

11. Supervisors of young and new workers must provide a level of supervision to these workers that takes into account the inexperience, possible reluctance to ask questions, and other factors that contribute to a higher risk of injury for these workers. Supervision must also take into account the hazards (actual and potential) associated with the young and new workers' work.
12. Supervisors must:
 - a) encourage young and new workers to ask questions about safety and be readily available to answer questions and provide safety advice; and
 - b) check regularly to ensure that young and new workers are following appropriate safe work practices and procedures, including the use of PPE if required.

Documentation

13. An employer must keep records of all orientation and training provided under this Code of Practice.

A guidance document, sample orientation checklists, hazard assessment forms, and other pertinent documents are available at www.wcb.yk.ca.

This Code of Practice was approved by the Board of Directors to come into force January 1, 2010.