

Administrative Procedure 720 – Appendix 720-1

DIVISION JOINT WORKSITE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE (HSC) TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Committee Mandate

The Division *Joint Worksite Health and Safety Committee (HSC)* is a group of employees and management working together to address worksite health and safety matters that impact division staff. The mandate of the committee is to reduce losses from work related incidents and injuries and continuously improve workplace health and safety across the division by working with site worker safety representatives.

2. Duties of the Committee

Duties include but are not limited to the following:

- The receipt, consideration and disposition of concerns and complaints respecting the health and safety of workers;
- The participation in the identification of hazards to workers or other persons arising out of or in connection with activities at the work site;
- The development and promotion of measures to protect the health and safety of persons at the work site and checking the effectiveness of such measures;
- The cooperation with any officer exercising duties under this Act, the regulations and the OHS code;
- The development and promotion of programs for education and information concerning health and safety;
- The making of recommendations to the employer, prime contractor or owner respecting the health and safety of workers;
- The inspection of the work site at regular intervals;
- The participation in investigations of serious injuries and incidents at the work site;
- The maintenance of records in connection with the receipt and disposition of concerns and complaints and the attendance to other matters relating to the duties of the committee;
- Such other duties as may be specified in this Act, the regulations and the OHS code.

3. Guiding Principles of Committee Operation

- The Committee reports and makes recommendations to the Senior Leadership Team.
- The Committee has an *advisory role* and is not directly responsible for carrying out recommendations.
- Policy/procedure decisions, implementation of recommendations and monitoring for compliance remains the overall responsibility of NGPS management.
- The Committee does not replace the legal and job related health and safety responsibilities of the employer and worker such as the duty of workers to report hazards and the duty of the employer to address unsafe conditions at worksites in a timely manner.
- Committee members have the authority to participate in workplace inspections, incident investigations and work refusal investigations as required.
- The Committee structure and process will allow for meaningful involvement of front line staff (e.g. through posting of minutes, contributions to site safety meeting agendas and essential readings newsletters and links to site OHS reps).
- The Committee operates in a business-like fashion (i.e. agenda's, regular meetings, regular attendance and minutes).
- Sub-committees or task groups may be formed from time to time to carry out specific projects/tasks.
- All costs associated with committee participation shall be borne by the Division.

4. Worker Concerns, Quorum, Decision Making and Follow up on Recommendations:

Worker concerns will be reported using Division processes including Hazard Reporting, Near Miss Reporting and Incident Reporting as well, workers can directly report any concern to any committee member, their supervisor or their site worker safety representative verbally, in writing or via email.

The committee will make every effort to reach decisions through consensus. Where issues cannot be resolved through consensus, they will be noted in the minute's recommendations and majority will rule. For decision making, regularly scheduled meetings must have at least 50% attendance of members, with both worker and employer (management) members represented and that at least half of those present represent workers.

When recommendations or action items are identified by the committee, the employer (e.g. Senior Leadership Team) will either resolve the issue within 30 days, or respond in writing within the 30-day timeframe to state how the concern will be addressed and when. The response must include a timetable and if any interim control measures will be used. If management does not agree to the recommendation(s), they must give reasons why in writing.

5. Committee Membership and Term

The HSC committee shall consist of at least 4 members but no more than 14 at least half of which must represent employees or non-supervisory staff. Employee representatives reflecting a broad spectrum of division operations will be included. They will be recruited on a volunteer basis or appointed by their supervisor. Recommendations by the Alberta Teachers Association (ATA) and Employee Relations Group will be considered. Management representatives will be chosen by the Superintendent of Schools and Senior Leadership Team.

Members are appointed to a term of not less than one-year. Members may continue to serve on the committee for no more than 3 years unless re-appointed.

The Committee must have two co-chairpersons selected. The NGPS Health and Safety Coordinator will serve as a facilitator while the employee/worker co-chair and management co-chair will be assigned.

Committee members are expected to inform the co-chair at least 1 week in advance if they are unable to attend a scheduled meeting. Committee members liaise with front line staff and bring forward agenda items to the committee. Names of committee members must be posted at worksites with contact information.

Membership:

Membership of the Central committee will be comprised of representation from the following areas:

Employee/Worker Reps (non-supervisory, non-management staff):

- Educational Assistants and other Support Staff
- School teacher/certificated staff
- Facility and Information Technology Services
- Division office staff
- Union staff

Employer/Management Reps (Supervisory, Leadership or Management staff):

- Safety Coordinator
- Division Office Leadership Member
- School Administrator

These areas may not all be represented in the makeup of the committee at all times, but will be observed as a reasonable cross section of the organization's staff pool when determining committee participants. The HSC may recommend representation adjustments going forward.

6. Committee Co-Chairs:

The co-chairs will schedule/facilitate meetings, participate in decision making and ensure meeting minutes are recorded and distributed. Co- chairs alternate in serving as chair of the committee. First year of Committee formation will have co-chairs assigned. Thereafter, they will be elected by the committee members. Duties of the Co-Chairs include:

- Scheduling meetings and notifying members
- Preparing the agenda
- Inviting specialists or resource people, as needed
- Chairing and leading the meetings
- Reviewing and signing the minutes
- Acting on behalf of the committee between meetings
- Accompany OHS officer on inspections

7. Secretary:

The committee will appoint a secretary from the membership to prepare agendas, take minutes of the meeting. And assist with committee correspondence. Committee members will submit agenda items to the secretary or chairperson at least 3 days prior to the next scheduled meeting.

8. Safety Coordinator

The Safety Coordinator's role is to create and administer a safety management system within NGPS. The HSC will work as an employee voice in conjunction with the Safety Coordinator to ensure a positive and effective approach to safety in the organization. This role is fulfilled by the Division Health and Safety Coordinator.

9. Site Worker Safety Representative

Each school and other worksite of more than 4 staff shall have a designated Worker Safety Representative who shall be nominated from the population of worker's at that site. Should no nomination present itself, a worker may be appointed. They shall serve voluntarily as an unbiased recipient of worker concerns at the site. All concerns shall be directed to the central committee for resolution. This will ensure that workers can report any concern without fear of reprisal.

10. OHS Committee Reps

The Committee shall have designated OHS representatives. Reps shall take part in an internal training/competency program on the duties and function of the occupational health and safety (OHS) representative. Reps will attend the JWHS meetings 4 times per year.

11. Training

The employer will provide HSC co-chairs and site OHS reps with orientation and training on the duties and functions of the committee and their respective roles and responsibilities. The costs are covered by the Division.

Administrators shall permit the HSC members and OHS representatives to take the greater of 16 hours or the number of hours the worker normally worked during two shifts, to complete online orientation and/or attend work site health and safety training programs, seminars or courses of instruction.

12. Committee Minutes/Communication:

Accurate minutes including meeting dates and members present at each meeting will be kept by the secretary and distributed to Senior Leadership team within 7 business days following a meeting. Minutes will identify topics discussed, recommendations and assigned actions. Copies of minutes are distributed to the site OHS reps electronically within seven days after meeting is held for posting on the staff bulletin board. Copies of minutes will be maintained by the HSC for a minimum of 2 years and be readily available for inspection by an auditor or OHS Officer. The HSC may also communicate with staff through contributions to site safety meeting agendas and email.

13. Meetings and Frequency

The Committee will meet at least quarterly. Meetings will occur during normal working hours. HSC members are deemed to be working while performing committee work and entitled to take the time away from their regular duties for meeting preparation, meeting attendance, and associated training and to carry out assigned committee duties.

14. Inspections

Planned inspections of the worksite at regular intervals are conducted each site following the process outlined in the NGPS Health and Safety Manual. Inspections results are submitted regularly to the Safety Coordinator and will be made available for HSC meetings.

15. Incident Investigations and Work Refusals

HSC committee members may participate in the investigation of work refusals and investigations as per the processes outlined in the NGPS Health and Safety Manual and accompany OHS officers during investigations at the request of the Safety Coordinator. Written reports will be provided to committee Co-chairs for review as needed.

16. Confidentiality

All members will be bound by confidentiality except where disclosure of information is specifically required by legislation.