Introduction

These Terms of Reference will serve as a guideline document and provide both the employer and Committee members with the rules and procedures needed for implementing a Health and Safety Committee (the Committee), fulfilling expectations, replacing members, resolving a committee dispute should one arise, and in ensuring legislative duties are being met.

1. Role of a Health and Safety Committee (HSC)

An HSC is a group of management and worker delegates working together to promote proactive resolve workplace health and safety issues and concerns. The HSC is an effective and meaningful way for employees to participate in health and safety.

The Committee is not a decision-making body, however will formulate and escalate recommendations to the Senior Leadership Team for consideration and resolution. Committee members are expected to champion workplace health and safety in the areas and with those they represent.

1. Committee Membership Structure
   1. The Committee will be comprised of both employer (manager/supervisor or anyone with supervisor responsibilities) and worker delegates with equal voting rights. The committee will be made up of a total of 12 members and the distribution from each department/area or union is as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Department/Area or Union** | **Worker** | **Employer** |
| Administration Departments | 1 | 1 |
| Nursing Units | 2 | 1 |
| Support Services | 2 | 0 |
| Maintenance | 1 | 1 |
| Recreation | 2 | 1 |
|  |  |  |
| Standing Meeting Guests   * Administrative Assistant (Record Keeper) * Health and Safety Advisor (SME Advisor) |  |  |
|  |  |  |

Members can be permanent or casual employees.

2.2 Standing meeting guests and special requested guests have no voting rights. Standing meeting guests provide support or advice to the Committee or attend as observers.

1. Member Selection Process
   1. Worker members
      1. Non-union workers

The non-union members will be selected through a nomination process as outlined in the detailed procedures in the appendix.

Information Session

An information session will be held for all employees to help ensure the most appropriate nominees are brought forward and anyone accepting a position is fully informed. The information session will focus on:

* The available position
* Committee purpose and function
* Member duties and responsibilities
* Traits of an effective member
* Potential time commitment
* Term of office

Nominations

Each non-union worker will nominate candidates for available positions. Workers can nominate themselves and/or another peer. Nominees will have an opportunity to discuss the role and decide whether they will let their name stand for the position. Depending on the number of nominees:

* If there is no nominee, the area manager will choose a worker to fulfill the role.
* If there is one nominee, they will be acclaimed into the position.
* If there are multiple nominees, a closed ballot election will take place among the workers being represented.
  + 1. Union members

Union members will be chosen according the union policy and/or collective agreement. The union must ensure those chosen are not involved in the management of work. The names of those chosen must be presented to the Health and Safety Advisor within one week of the call for a Committee delegate(s).

If the union fails to forward the name of the delegate the manager of the area will choose the worker member and advise both the Senior Leadership Team and the union of the employee chosen. The manager must ensure those chosen are not involved in the management of work.

* 1. Employer Members
     1. The employer delegates will be chosen by their respective department management team.
  2. Co-chair Selections
     1. Employer Co-chair

The employer members on the committee will choose their Co-chair by nomination. If needed, a closed ballot election can be facilitated by the worker Co-chair or if no worker Co-chair is in place, then by the Health and Safety Advisor. If the election does not result in a Co-chair, the Senior Leadership Team will choose the Co-chair.

* + 1. Worker Co-chair

The worker members on the Committee will choose their Co-chair by nomination and acceptance of the role. If needed, a closed ballot election will be facilitated by the employer Co-chair or if no employer Co-chair is in place, by the Health and Safety Advisor. If one or more attempts at an election does not result in the selection of a worker Co-chair the Senior Leadership Team will choose the worker Co-chair.

1. Terms of Office
   1. Committee members will serve for two (2) years from January 1 to December 31.
   2. If a Committee member is not able to fulfill the two year commitment, the Committee will use the Member Selection Process within 1 month of receiving the member’s resignation. In the event of a mid-year replacement the new Committee member will assume their role immediately upon acclamation or election.
2. Committee Meeting Effectiveness, Frequency, Schedule and Quorum
   1. Meeting effectiveness is a success measure for the Committee and will be evaluated annually for continual improvement of the Committee performance. To facilitate the most effective meetings, all meetings will adhere to the detailed procedure outlined in the Appendix, and expectations apply equally to all Committee members, Standing Meeting Members, and invited guests. Meetings will:

* Start and end on time.
* Follow the meeting agenda unless there is agreement to modify it.
* Allow for open discussion and differences of opinions to be expressed in a respectful manner.
* Maintain the confidentiality of information discussed.
* Follow standard rules of order for making and approving motions.
  1. Meetings will be held monthly on the third Thursday at 10:00 AM.
     1. Either Co-chair can call a special meeting of the Committee if they first get approval from the other Co-Chair.

* 1. In the event an Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Officer requests a special meeting, the following process will occur:
     1. The person who is receiving the direction from the Officer will notify the Co-Chairs.
     2. The Co-Chairs will agree upon a date and time that is within the requested parameters of the Officer’s request.
     3. Attendance is **mandatory** for any Committee members requested to attend such a meeting.
  2. Quorum

A quorum is required for a decision made by the Committee to be valid and where a quorum is not present, the meeting is not considered valid. A quorum is one-half of the members if:

* + 1. Both worker and employer members are present, and
    2. At least one-half of those present are worker members.

1. Committee Member Training Requirements

All Committee members are be eligible for up to 16 hours of training per year, and must consider operational needs when scheduling training.

The following are the training requirements for a Committee member.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Position** | **HSC Course** | **Hazard assessment & control** | **Inspections** | **Incident investigation** | **Emergency Response** | **OHS legislation awareness** | **Writing meeting minutes** |
| Co-chairs | Y |  |  |  |  | Y |  |
| Members | Y | At least two of these 4 courses | | | | Y |  |
| Administrative Assistant(s) | Y | - | - | - |  | - | Y |

1. Committee Member Duties and Responsibilities
   1. Co-Chairs
      1. Encourage participation of all Committee members.
      2. Involve Committee members in problem solving and making recommendations.
      3. Ensure the maintenance of an unbiased viewpoint.
      4. Prepare the agenda for distribution fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting.
         1. Canvas members for agenda items to be included up to 24 hours prior to distribution.
      5. Facilitate the Committee meetings. The Employer and Worker Co-chairs will alternate chairing the meetings.
      6. Review previous meeting reports and material prior to the meetings.
      7. Review incident statistics.
      8. Review work site inspection reports.
      9. Invite special guests to attend meetings when appropriate.
      10. Prepare meeting reports.
      11. Ensure the meeting minutes are distributed appropriately.
      12. Prepare recommendation(s) and forward to the employer, with supporting documentation. Follow up until resolved.
      13. Prepare all correspondence.
      14. Accompany an Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Officer while on site if requested.
   2. Administrative Assistant
      1. Assist the Co-Chairs as required, during and outside of the Committee meetings.
      2. Distribute the agenda as set by the Co-Chairs, fourteen (14) days before the meeting.
      3. Issue updates to meeting times and locations if necessary, as soon as they are known.
      4. Manage the preparation and distribution of meeting minutes.
         1. Prepare the meeting minutes for approval by all Committee members. Confidentiality is to be maintained by including Committee member names only to record attendance and responsibility for action items. No other member or employee names are to be included.
         2. Ensure the minutes are marked ‘unadopted’ before they are approved.
         3. Promptly prepare and distribute electronic copies of the approved minutes within 7 days of the meeting. Distribution is to all Committee members (including Standing Meeting Members), department Directors, and the Senior Leadership Team.
      5. Maintain the master lists of Committee members and contact information.
      6. Post the names and contact information of Committee members on each area’s Safety Bulletin Board.
      7. Maintain electronic records of the Committee members on the Teams folder titled: HS Committee Records / Committee Members.
      8. Ensure all necessary documents, correspondence and information are available for the meetings.
      9. Disseminate health and safety information to Committee members; promptly circulate reports and information to members.
      10. Retain records and meeting minutes.
          1. Meeting minutes will be electronically retained for a period of two (2) years on the Teams folder titled: HS Committee Records / Meeting Minutes.
   3. Committee Members
      1. Ensure that all employee information is kept confidential.
      2. Participate in the process regarding the receipt, consideration and disposition of concerns respecting the health and safety of workers. Maintain an open communication channel for employees to raise issues and concerns.
      3. Participate in the hazard assessment process by promoting the process within their departments and facilitating working sessions as required.
      4. With an unbiased viewpoint, actively participate in making recommendations to the Senior Leadership Team respecting the health and safety of workers.
      5. Review the work site inspections documentation, looking for trends in identified deficiencies and outstanding corrective actions.
      6. Attend and actively participate in all Committee meetings.
      7. Post Committee meeting minutes on each area’s Safety Bulletin Board.
      8. Assist with new Committee member orientation.
      9. Review previous meeting reports and material prior to the meetings.
      10. Complete assigned tasks outside of regular Committee meetings.
   4. Committee Member not Fulfilling Duties

If a situation should arise of a Committee member not fulfilling their duties the following will occur:

* The applicable Co-chair will send notification to the member reminding them of their obligation to fulfill their duties.
* Should a member still continue to not fulfill their duties, the Committee will make a recommendation to address the issue, up to and including a recommendation to the Senior Leadership Team that the member be replaced.
  1. New Member Orientation

To assist new members and help the Committee during the transition, all new members will receive an orientation that prepares them to make informed decisions and take appropriate actions before attending a meeting or becoming involved in Committee work.

* A pre-meeting orientation package is provided by the appropriate Co-chair and includes:
* Location of a copy of the Alberta OHS legislation;
* A list of Committee duties and responsibilities;
* Committee process documents (e.g. Terms of Reference);
* If applicable, workplace health and safety materials/ documents/ reports (including the health and safety management program);
* A conversation with the Co-chairs about the Committee’s role, activities and current topics/issues/plans;
* A list of other Committee members and how to reach them;
* Training requirements; and
* If applicable, information about upcoming health and safety workshops.

1. Employee Concerns and Complaints

All information related to an employee’s concern or complaint will be maintained in the strictest confidence by all Committee members and Standing Meeting Guests. All concerns or complaints will be considered in an unbiased manner.

* 1. Receipt

Employee concerns or complaints can be verbal or in written format and brought to the attention of either a worker or employer member.

* 1. Consideration

The member receiving an employee’s concern or complaint will immediately notify the Co-chairs and request time on the next meeting’s agenda.

If an item is deemed to be urgent, the Co-chairs may call a special meeting of the Committee.

* 1. Disposition

The Committee member bringing forward the concern or complaint will personally follow up with the employee to notify them of the decision or recommendation regarding the concern or complaint.

1. Dispute Resolution Process

The Committee will come to agreement on discussions using the following methods:

* Using a consensus to make decision on solutions and recommendations and/or
* Negotiating mutually accepted compromises.

The following dispute resolution processes may be required on a case by case scenario, if agreement cannot be reached through consensus or negotiation:

* Using a sub-committee and/or Subject Matter Expert to recommend options to solve difficult technical problems.
* Asking a neutral third party to mediate. This can include an external organization such as AMHSA or the matter can be referred to Alberta Occupational Health and Safety.

1. Making Recommendation(s)

Recommendations to the Senior Leadership Team will follow the detailed procedure outlined in the Appendix, will be in written format and will meet these guidelines:

* Will be directly related to health and safety.
* Will be doable (reasonably capable of being done from both cost and technology perspectives).
* Will be complete (SLT will not need more information to decide outcome).

The written recommendation request along with any supporting documentation will be forwarded to the Senior Leadership Team by the Co-chair(s) within seven (7) days of the meeting where the recommendation was agreed upon.

1. Senior Leadership Team Response to Recommendation(s)

If the Committee brings a health and safety matter to the attention of the Senior Leadership Team and makes recommendations to remedy the matter:

* If the matter can be resolved within 30 days, the SLT will do so and inform the Committee in writing that it has been addressed.
* If the matter cannot be resolved within 30 days, the SLT will respond in writing within 30 days of receiving the recommendation(s) stating how the concern will be addressed in the short term and when the concern will be addressed in full, including:
  + Any interim control measures that the SLT will implement to address the matter.
  + A timetable for implementing changes to address the matter.

If the SLT disagrees with any recommendations or does not accept or believe there are any health and safety concerns, they will give reasons why this is the case.

Where the parties cannot resolve a problem or address a concern after the provision of written reasons from the Senior Leadership Team, either party may refer the matter to Alberta Occupational Health and Safety.

1. Committee Participation in Key Health and Safety Processes
   1. Hazard Assessment Process

The process to identify, assess and control hazards is a foundation of the health and safety management system. This includes formal job hazard assessments and field level hazard assessments.

The Committee will support this process by:

* Promoting the process within their work areas.
* Reviewing newly developed formal job hazard assessments for completeness.
* If requested, facilitate a working session for a team to develop or review their formal job hazard assessments.
  1. Inspection and Incident Report Review

The Committee meetings will have standing agenda items to review workplace inspection reports and incident reports. The objectives of the review are to:

* Identify trends in deficiencies identified through facility inspections and to ensure that corrective actions are completed by the assigned due date.
* Identify trends in incidents (including near misses and hazardous conditions) so that corrective actions can be recommended to the Senior Leadership Team.

Coordinating with Other Health and Safety Representatives or Committees

The Committee Co-chairs will meet with another employer’s Health and Safety Representative(s) or Health and Safety Committees on an as needed basis. This need could arise when contractors are engaged to perform work for instance.

1. Evaluating the Health and Safety Committee

In October of every year, the Committee will use the self-evaluate its effectiveness.

A copy of the completed self-assessment is to be sent to the Senior Leadership Team by the end of October of each year.

The Senior Leadership Team will provide comments and suggestions for improvement by the end of November each year and the Co-chairs will include a review of the assessment on January’s agenda so that modifications can be made for the upcoming year.

1. Amendments

These Terms of Reference, including the Appendix of Detailed Procedures will be reviewed on a yearly basis and may be amended by vote of the Committee members. Final approval of the proposed changes will require approval by the Senior Leadership Team.

1. Terms of Reference Approvals

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

CAO (Chief Administrative Officer) Date

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Employer Co-Chair Date

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Worker Co-Chair Date

APPENDIX

Health and Safety Committee

Detailed Procedures

1. Member Selection Process

These detailed procedures support the Committee process to select members as vacancies arise.

A brief information session and an infographic campaign will take place two weeks prior to a nomination process. The information session will be developed by the Health and Safety Advisor and delivered by each area/department manager or an applicable union representative or designate. The purpose is to help ensure the most appropriate nominees are brought forward and anyone accepting a position is informed. The information session will focus on:

* The available position
* Committee purpose and function
* Member duties and responsibilities
* Traits of an effective member
* Potential time commitment
* Term of office

Nominations

Each non-union worker will be provided a nomination ballot one week prior to the nomination cut-off date. Completed ballots are to be returned to the Health and Safety Advisor within 3 business days.

Workers can nominate themselves and/or another peer.

Once nominations are completed, each nominee will be asked by the Health and Safety Advisor in a brief interview/discussion if they understand the role and are willing and able to represent their area/peers. One of three scenarios will occur:

* No nominee to move forward

If an area does not nominate a worker delegate or if there are no remaining candidates after being asked if they are willing and/or able to represent an area, the area manager will hold a team meeting to see if any would like to take the role. If the position remains empty the area manager will then choose an employee not involved in the management of work to fulfill the role.

* If there is one nominee, they will be acclaimed into the position.
* Multiple nominees per position (more nominees than positions)

If there are multiple nominees for a position, the following will occur:

A closed ballot election will take place among the workers being represented. The election will be facilitated by the Health and Safety Advisor and take place within 1 week of nominations closing.

* + 1. Union members

Union members will be chosen according the union policy and/or collective agreement or binding contract. The union must ensure those chosen are not involved in the management of work. The names of those chosen must be presented to the Health and Safety Advisor within one week of the call for a Committee delegate(s).

If the union fails to forward the name of the delegate by the end of the week, the organizer will reach-out to the union with a reminder either by email or a telephone call and/or subsequent voicemail. If the union fails to forward the name of the delegate within 24 hours the manager of the area will choose the worker member. The manager has 48 hours to choose the delegate and to advise both the organizer and the union of the employee chosen. The manager must ensure those chosen are not involved in the management of work.

* + 1. Employer- The employer delegates will be chosen by the management team as per each department’s set standards.

1. Process to Develop Committee Recommendations

The Health and Safety Committee is not a decision-making body; their role is to research issues and make recommendations to the Senior Leadership Team. The following will be the process undertaken by the health and safety Committee to make recommendations.

Before any recommendation can be made, the problem needs to be fully understood. A problem is defined as:

* A deviation from a standard for which the cause is not known,
* A question to be considered, solved or answered,
* A situation, matter, or person that presents perplexity or difficulty, or
* A situation and/or event that interrupts work, causes variation or results in decreased quality of service and increases costs and time.

The following is a 5-step process on making effective recommendations.

**Step 1**: Define/Describe the problem

*(include location and workers affected by it)*

Turn the problem into a serious of questions. Questions should be measurable, clear, and concise. Design questions to either qualify or disqualify potential solutions to the specific problem or opportunity.

**Step 2**: Background Information/Research

Provide the background information/research into the problem. Is it legal? Risk management? Etc.

Provide consequences if problem is ignored.

**Step 3**: Option(s) for Addressing Problem

Provide a description of option(s) including times, technology, and required resources.

**Step 4: Solution(s)**

Provide short term (immediate interventions) and long-term solutions, if applicable.

With the questions clearly defined, define how solutions would be monitored and measured to achieve organizational priorities.

**Step 5: Vote and Recommendation**

Voting members will vote on solutions and develop a recommendation for the Senior Leadership Team. If members cannot agree on a solution and recommendation, the Committee’s Dispute Resolution Process will be used.

1. Meeting Effectiveness

The following will be HSC meeting etiquette followed by the members and any guest.

* 1. Meeting Ground Rules
* Be prompt and regular in attendance.
* Enter discussion enthusiastically.
* Give freely of your experience.
* Allow and encourage others.
* Listen attentively, take accurate notes.
* Ask questions.
* Appreciate other viewpoints.
* Provide constructive feedback.
* Receive feedback willingly.
* Keep confidences.
* Stick to the topic.
* Cell phones are either turned off or on vibrate during the meeting.
  1. Healthy Conflict Ground Rules

Healthy conflict is possible. Committee members should:

* Criticize ideas, not individuals.
* Treat people’s concerns seriously.
* Listen to what is said, not what you think is said (active listening).
* Allow everyone to have a say.
* Clarify facts and agree about getting more information if needed.
* Find out what you can agree on.
* Clarify any disagreement before trying to develop a solution.
* Try to understand the reasons for the differences.
* See if people will agree to try something before disagreeing about its use.
* Summarize where you are at, after everyone had a say, and avoid repeating the same argument.
* Take a break and caucus where necessary, returning with one suggestion about how to proceed.
  1. Chairing a Meeting
* The Co-chairs are responsible for conducting a well-organized and effective meeting of the Committee in accordance with the following rules of order.
  + 1. The Co-chairs shall conduct a meeting in a fair and impartial manner and give every member an opportunity to participate and speak at a meeting.
    2. Prior to every meeting, a Co-chair shall ensure that the person who is to record the minutes of the meeting is present or request a member present to record the minutes.
    3. Prior to the meeting, forward agenda to all members and provide an opportunity for members to submit any agenda items to the agenda within 24 hours prior the meeting.
* At the opening of every meeting, a Co-chair shall
* Call the meeting of the Committee to order;
* Note if a quorum exists, in accordance with these rules of procedure and if there is no quorum, decide whether to continue meeting considering that no decisions can be made at the meeting and the meeting is not considered valid;
* Call for a motion to adopt the previous minutes of the Committee, if any, after requesting if any corrections or additions are needed to the minutes;
* After a discussion of the motion to adopt the previous minutes, call for a vote to declare the minutes, with corrections or additions, if any, to be adopted;
* Proceed with the remaining agenda items;
* Call for a motion to adjourn the meeting if all the agenda items have been dealt with or no more time is available; and,
* After discussion of the motion to adjourn, call for a vote to adjourn the meeting.
  1. Motions
* A member may make a motion by
* raising a hand and,
* after being recognized by the Co-chair, by moving a proposal as clearly and as simply as possible.
* The Co-chair may rule the motion of a member in order or temporarily out of order if it does not conform to the order of business.
* For a motion which is in order, a Co-chair shall call for a second to the motion.
* If no member seconds the motion, the Co-chair shall state that the motion is dropped for want of a second.
* After a motion has been seconded, the Co-chair shall restate the motion and ask for discussion.
* The Co-chair shall allow adequate time for discussion before voting.
* A member may move an amendment to a motion on the floor.
* If seconded, discussion and a vote shall be held on the motion as amended prior to discussion and vote on the main motion.
* A member may raise a point of order involving these rules of procedure and the rights of a member at any time during the meeting.
* The Co-chair shall make a decision on the point of order before a motion or amendment to a motion is acted on.
* A member may make a motion
* to adjourn,
* to recess, or
* to raise a question of privilege at any time during the meeting.
* A motion to adjourn or to recess, requires a second, is not debatable and shall be voted on prior to any other motion pending.
* If more than one motion is made, it shall be acted on in the order received.
* The Co-chair shall declare the meeting adjourned if the motion to adjourn carries.