



# Health and Safety Representatives Meeting

Tuesday, January 20, 2026

Elizabeth Mitchell, Health and Safety Liaison, ETFO Provincial

Mike Thomas, President, ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local

Marnie Meloche, Vice President, ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local

Sue Varley, ETFO Health and Safety Specialist, ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local

# Health and Safety and Collective Agreement Rights

## **JHSC Certification Training**

- You are entitled to your prep
- Provisions regarding the instructional day (8:45 – 3:30)
- 40-minute lunch
- Mileage (still under discussion)

## **School Inspections**

- You are entitled to your prep
- Inspections come with Occasional Teacher Coverage – if you require more time, you are to inform your administrator
- If you are owed preparation time from your JHSC Certification Training, you can take this owed preparation time during the monthly inspection (the additional time, as the OT is in the school for a minimum of a ½ day, but can be pro-rated with additional time (i.e. 0.63 of a day if required))

# The Internal Responsibility System (IRS)

- Both workers and employers have a shared responsibility for health and safety in the workplace
- Workers have a duty to report all health and safety hazards to the employer/supervisor, follow safe work practices, use required PPE, and participate in established health and safety programs
- Employers are required to address worker health and safety concerns, put corrective measures in place, and acquaint workers with any hazards present in the workplace
- The employer must “take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of the worker” OHSA 25 (2)(h)
- Workers can address health and safety concerns/hazards through their worker site health and safety representative, the site JHSC, and monthly inspections
- Make formal recommendations to the employer to improve health and safety and prevent injuries and illnesses at the workplace
- Contact the Ministry of Labour for breaches of the OHSA or for enforcement if necessary

# Powers / Rights of the Site Joint Health and Safety Committee

- Worker members conduct monthly inspections to identify hazards and health and safety concerns
- One worker member and one management member of the site JHSC must be certified, (have taken Parts One and Two JHSC Certification Training)
- Investigate critical injuries
- Participate in the development, implementation and review of workplace health and safety policies and programs
- Review reports related to health and safety, including all employee accident and incident reports, Section 52 reports (health care and lost time), first aid, annual WSIB, and violence stats, any testing results, and Ministry of Labour orders/field visit reports, ensure that appropriate preventative or corrective actions are taken
- Accompany the MOL Inspector when conducting field visits
- Assist and investigate during work refusals
- Be consulted about workplace testing, and be present at the beginning of any testing
- Receive one hour of preparation time before quarterly JHSC meetings, and have one worker member co-chair the site JHSC meetings
- Make recommendations to the employer to improve worker safety

# 21-Day Recommendations

- If the JHSC cannot come to a consensus about a health and safety hazard or concern, either co-chair can write a written recommendation to the employer
- The employer then has 21 days to respond to the recommendation in writing
- If the employer agrees with the recommendation, the response must contain a timetable for implementing the recommendation
- If the employer disagrees with the recommendation, they must give reasons why they disagree with the recommendation
- A recommendation describes the hazard and suggests corrective measures and actions needed to control the hazard
- Recommendations should identify and include a description of the hazard and should quote any relevant articles in the OHS Act, provide suggestions for how the hazard risk can be resolved, and include a timeline for implementation
- Contact the Local for support in writing recommendations

# Site JHSC Quarterly and Monthly Inspections

- Monthly inspections must be completed by a worker member of the site JHSC, certified if possible
- Use the checklist provided to help you complete monthly inspections and site quarterly JHSC meetings
- Dates for quarterly meetings and monthly inspections should be set at the September quarterly JHSC meeting, arrange for coverage and release time as necessary
- Focus on identifying hazards during the inspection – slips, trips and falls, workplace violence, noise, heat and cold stress, chemicals and designated substances, electrical hazards, fire hazards, musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs), ventilation and air quality issues, biological hazards etc.
- Have documents available that need to be reviewed, review previous inspection reports and minutes to identify unresolved concerns
- Take photos to upload when documenting the inspection through eBase
- Take detailed notes during the inspection
- Talk to workers during the inspection about their specific concerns

# Health and Safety Resources

## ETFO Resources

- **Access in Local Website – Health and Safety – Workplace - Inspections**
- ETFO JHSC Quarterly Meeting and Monthly Inspection Checklist
- Violence Prevention Checklist for Health and Safety Representatives
- Violence Prevention Checklist for ETFO Members
- 21-Day Recommendation Form
- Violence Work Refusal Checklist
- ETFO Thames Valley Health and Safety Resources
- ETFO Health and Safety Reporting

# Health and Safety Resources

## Board Resources

- **Access in SharePoint – Departments - Health and Safety - Introduction or Site JHSC/Inspections**
- Site JHSC Terms of Reference
- Health and Safety Resource Manual 2025-2026
- Health and Safety Employee Handbook
- Health and Safety Policies and Procedures
- Emergency Response Booklet
- Safety Specialist School Divisions
- Health and Safety Monthly Workplace Inspections
- Health and Safety Bulletins
- Hazard Alerts
- EBase Tutorials

# Violence Prevention Checklist



## Violence Prevention Checklist – For ETFO Health and Safety Representatives

Worker health and safety representatives can use this checklist to ensure that appropriate policies, programs, and protections from violence are in place. The list can be reviewed during monthly inspections and brought to Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) meetings.

- Workers confirm that protections in ETFO's violence prevention checklists for members are in place.

### Policy and program

- The school board has a policy and program for workplace violence that is accessible to all workers online and is posted on health and safety bulletin boards at every school.
- The policy is reviewed annually and the JHSC has the opportunity to make recommendations.
- There is a program to implement the workplace violence policy, which includes all components required by the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHS) Section [32.0.2\(2\)](#).

### Risk assessments/reassessments

- Risk assessments are done at all schools annually near the beginning of the school year.
- All risk assessments and reassessments done during the school year are shared with the JHSC.
- There is clear guidance on when a violence risk reassessment should be conducted that includes the [criteria](#) set out in *Workplace Violence in School Boards: A Guide to the Law*.
- Administrators have been given training and tools to conduct risk assessments/reassessments, and the JHSC has had the opportunity to make recommendations.

### Work refusals

- There is a written procedure that must be followed when a worker refuses unsafe work.
- A worker health and safety representative is called immediately and made available to attend the work refusal to support the worker involved.
- Administrators and workers receive annual training on the work refusal process, and the JHSC has the opportunity to discuss and make recommendations about the training.
- Administrators do not discourage work refusals and consistently follow the procedure.

### Reviewing violent incident data

- Reports of all health and safety incidents that result in medical care or lost time are sent to the JHSC and the union within four days, including all information required by OHS [Regulation 420/21](#).
- The JHSC receives regular aggregated reports of all violent incidents including visual analysis and the custom reports filtered according to requested criteria (e.g., school, student involved, location) and has the opportunity to make recommendations.

Health and safety representatives who find that these protections aren't in place should discuss their concerns with the ETFO Health and Safety Services staff person [assigned](#) to their local. It may be necessary to discuss the issue at the JHSC, make formal recommendations, and involve the Ministry of Labour (MOL) as needed.



# Work Refusal Checklist



## Violence Work Refusal Checklist

The law requires your employer to take **every precaution reasonable** for the safety of a worker. If you answered "no" to any of these questions, remember that you have the right to refuse if **you have reason to believe unsafe work is likely to endanger you**.

	Yes	No
<b>Notification of risk:</b> Has school administration provided you with information about the possibility of encountering someone with a history of violent behaviour from whom you may experience injury? (through the sharing of information from safety plans)		
<b>Risk reassessment:</b> Has your administrator/board assessed the risk of workplace violence in your school <u>this year</u> ? Has the risk of workplace violence been reassessed when there are changes or significant events?		
<b>Effective safety plans:</b> Have safety plans been developed for students whose behaviour poses a risk to your safety? Does following the existing safety plan protect you?		
<b>Summoning immediate assistance:</b> Have you been provided with the tools and specific plans to summon assistance in various circumstances? Does assistance arrive quickly?		
<b>Reporting violent incidents:</b> Have you been trained on how to submit online violent incident reports? Does your administrator ensure that all incidents are reported? Are summary reports of violent incidents shared with your health and safety committee?		
<b>Responding to violent incidents:</b> When you report violent incidents, does your administrator acknowledge the report, investigate, and take steps to prevent a recurrence?		
<b>Staffing:</b> Are there enough trained staff to support students to prevent escalations and follow safety plans? Are contingency plans in place in the event of an absence so that roles in safety plans and emergency plans are filled by other trained staff?		
<b>Resources:</b> Are all measures and procedures in place to control the risk of workplace violence such as adequate facilities, equipment, and student programming?		
<b>Training:</b> Have you and those around you been trained in the de-escalation of student incidents? Do you have the training to carry out any responsibilities in a safety plan?		
<b>Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):</b> Have you been provided with appropriate and adequate PPE to protect you from injury from violence? Is it checked and cleaned regularly? Have you been instructed on its care, use and limitations?		
<b>Psychosocial impact:</b> Are you kept safe from chronic or traumatic mental stress injuries due to violence?		

More information is available: [Your Rights & Your Employer's Duties](#) and [You Have the Right to Refuse Unsafe Work](#). You are protected against reprisals for exercising your rights under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHSA).

If you have questions or need support, contact your local ETFO office and your health and safety worker representative.



# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

