



Health and Safety
Santé et sécurité

THE DOS AND DON'TS of Health and Safety Committees

Health and Safety Committees play a vital role in protecting workers and promoting safe workplaces. This factsheet outlines key dos and don'ts to help you navigate your responsibilities with confidence, solidarity, and clarity.

As a Health and Safety Committee member or representative:

- **DO** defend the health and safety interest of the membership.
- **DO** centre the worker and their experience and perspective in every decision.
- **DO** demand that employers provide a safe and healthy workplace.
- **DO** be proud and open about your role within your union when in meetings with the employer. Your union involvement and commitment to removing hazards and worker safety is an asset to health and safety meetings.
- **DO** remember you are a representative of your union and are accountable to your fellow union members.
- **DO** listen to your coworkers' concerns.
- **DO** consult with your local and members to resolve health and safety issues.
- **DO** treat health and safety as a union issue and escalate to a political issue, if appropriate.
- **DO** advise workers on their right to a safe and healthy work environment.
- **DO** keep all workers informed on any health and safety issues and their solutions.
- **DO** participate in all inspections and investigations.
- **DO** always insist that the employer provides you with all available relevant health and safety information, such as previous hazard reports and all government and employer reports, studies and tests relating to the health and safety of the employees.
- **DO** insist on being present when tests or measurements are being conducted.
- **DO** question employer health and safety rules or procedures that do not make sense to you.
- **DO** always try to build solidarity around health and safety issues.
- **DO** never hesitate to call a Government Health and Safety Officer when required.
- **DO** always inform the workers about health and safety outcomes.
- **DO** encourage members or representatives of the committee to make decisions by consensus whenever possible.



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As a Health and Safety Committee member or representative:

- **DO NOT** try to solve all health and safety issues alone.
- **DO NOT** behave like a management health and safety representative. Carrying out management's health and safety disciplinary policies are not your responsibility.
- **DO NOT** discourage members from voicing health and safety concerns.
- **DO NOT** ignore health and safety issues and hope that they will go away without intervention.
- **DO NOT** treat health and safety issues as an item that can be traded away at the committee table.
- **DO NOT** ignore health and safety issues just because they are controversial.
- **DO NOT** accept technical reports or solutions without questioning or analyzing them.
- **DO NOT** forget that Health and Safety Committees members or representatives must follow the bylaws of their local union.

