

Supporting Ontario's Safe Employers

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Supporting Ontario's Safe Employers is a voluntary program that recognizes employers across Ontario who successfully implement an occupational health and safety management system (OHSMS) in their workplace. Successful employers will be accredited by Ontario's Chief Prevention Officer (CPO).

The CPO is appointed by the Minister of Labour, Training, and Skills Development and oversees the ministry's Prevention Office. The CPO has a wide range of responsibilities, including working with Ontario's health and safety system to prevent workplace injuries, illnesses and fatalities.

The program is the first of its kind in Canada. Led by the Office of the CPO, this ministry program was developed to promote and recognize excellence in occupational health and safety in Ontario workplaces. Employers can begin applying for the program in the new year. More information will be made available online soon.

The CPO held broad public consultations and worked with various employer and labour stakeholders, as well as subject matter experts, to develop the program.

This program is open to any employer in Ontario, regardless of size or sector. Participation in the program:

- Promotes a positive health and safety culture in the workplace.
- Encourages ongoing improvement in health and safety.
- Helps reduce workplace injuries and illness.

The program is made up of two parts:

- Accreditation of an occupational health and safety management system (OHSMS).
- Recognition of employers who have implemented an accredited OHSMS and met other criteria set by the CPO, including third-party audit, Occupational Health and Safety Act compliance, and worker participation.

Employers who have received CPO recognition may be eligible to receive premium rebates from the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB). The WSIB will invest an estimated \$140 million in rebates over the next three years.

In addition, the names of recognized employers will be posted on the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development's website. These employers will be able to brand themselves as CPO-recognized.

The program was developed in response to a 2010 recommendation by an expert advisory panel. Industry has also made a longstanding request for acknowledgement and rewards for employers who successfully promote health and safety in their workplaces.

What is an OHSMS?

An occupational health and safety management system (OHSMS) is a tool that provides an employer with a systematic approach to managing health and safety in the workplace. Like other management systems, an OHSMS uses a "plan - do -check - act" cycle to implement, maintain, monitor, evaluate and continually improve all aspects of a workplace's health and safety. The goal is to promote continuous improvement.

One option for employers who are interested in developing an OHSMS will be to use the WSIB's new Health and Safety Excellence program that launched in November 2019.

The Health and Safety Excellence Program has been created to help employers develop and implement an OHSMS. Employers who have successfully implemented an OHSMS may then choose to pursue accreditation and CPO recognition.

Applying for OHSMS accreditation

The province has set out a standard to guide employers in the development and implementation of an OHSMS for workplaces in Ontario. [This standard is available online.](#)

The CPO will accredit an OHSMS or an OHSMS standard if it meets the published requirements Organizations can:

- implement their OHSMS based on an existing standard that has been accredited by the CPO, or,
- develop their own OHSMS and apply to have it accredited.

At this time, the CPO has accredited the following national and international standards:

- ISO 45001:2018 - Occupational health and safety management systems - Requirements with guidance for use,
- CSA Z45001-19 - Occupational health and safety management systems - Requirements with guidance for use,

- BS OHSAS 18001:2007 - Occupational health and safety management system - Requirements,
- COR™ 2020 updated Standard to be available to implement in January 2020.

If an employer fully implements one of these standards, they do not need to apply for accreditation.

Other standards are currently under review and will be posted once accredited by the CPO.

If an employer has an OHSMS in place that is not yet accredited, they can apply for accreditation beginning in January 2020.

Applying for employer recognition

The CPO recognizes employers who are true champions of health and safety. To be considered, an employer must first successfully implement a CPO-accredited OHSMS.

Starting in the new year, employers can apply for CPO employer recognition.

To be eligible for recognition, employers must meet the CPO's Employer Recognition Criteria, including:

- Providing the CPO with verification of successful OHSMS implementation through a third-party audit.
- Meeting performance criteria demonstrating compliance with Ontario's workplace health and safety legislation.
- Demonstrating a commitment to worker participation and the internal responsibility system at the workplace.

Benefits

Research indicates organizations that successfully implement an OHSMS tend to have:

- lower rates of lost-time injuries and a decrease in workers' compensation premiums
- an improved safety environment
- increased hazard reporting by workers
- greater organizational interest in occupational health and safety
- improved health and safety practices in their workplace

Employers who are recognized by the CPO may be eligible for financial incentives for up to three years. Eligible employers may need to provide additional information to the WSIB to receive these financial incentives.

For more information about the program, please contact the Prevention Office at SOSE@ontario.ca.

LEARN MORE

- [Supporting Ontario's Safe Employers](#)
- [Ontario's new accreditation standard](#)
- [Employer recognition criteria](#)
- [WSIB Health and Safety Excellence Program](#)

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