

A supervisor is someone who instructs, directs, and controls workers in the performance of their duties. You do NOT have to have the title supervisor in your job description to be a supervisor. A journeyman, lead hand, manager, director, or coordinator could have responsibilities that required instructing, directing, and controlling workers.

Why is it important?

In B.C., a supervisor must ensure the health and safety of all workers under their direct supervision. You could be held legally responsible should one of your workers get injured.

You are also legally responsible for complying with the Workers Compensation Act (Act), Occupational Health and Safety Regulation (Regulation) and any orders issued by WorkSafeBC. Knowing your legal responsibilities is the first step towards compliance. As a supervisor, you are also legally responsible for ensuring your workers comply with the Act, the Regulation, and any orders issued to your company.

Key characteristics of supervisor responsibilities

You must understand the Act and the Regulation as they relate to the work you are supervising. Your employer should provide training and instruction so that you can adequately supervise your workers.

Supervisors are also legally responsible for consulting and cooperating with the safety committee or worker representative.

A worker representative or the safety committee members may approach you regarding hazards identified in the workplace. You will need to act to either eliminate or mitigate the hazard and inform your workers of those hazards. The safety committee member will also participate in inspections and investigations with the assigned supervisor.

Preventive next steps

Information is vital to being an effective supervisor.

- Be familiar with the Worker Compensation Act and the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation (a copy of these documents must be available in your workplace – either in print or electronically)
- Get instruction and training on your supervising duties
- You should also have training in Workplace Inspections, Incident Investigation, and Hazard Identification and Control

- Get instruction and training on the activities in the areas you supervise. For example – if you supervise forklift operators, it is essential to understand health and safety requirements to operate this equipment and their basic operating procedures.
- Ensure your workers comply with all health and safety requirements related to their tasks and duties

In addition to your legal responsibilities, learn the responsibilities that your employer requires of you. Start with your company's Occupational Health and Safety Program if it is available.

**For additional resources visit:**

Workers Compensation Act, Part 2, [OHS Provision](#)

Occupational Health and Safety [Regulations](#)

[Roles, rights and responsibilities](#)

[Supervising for Safety online course](#) for supervisors

Manufacturing Safety Alliance of BC [training courses](#)

WCA Part 2 Division 4, section 23 General duties of supervisor

(1) Every supervisor must

(a) ensure the health and safety of all workers under the direct supervision of the supervisor,

(b) be knowledgeable about the OHS provisions and those regulations applicable to the work being supervised, and

(c) comply with the OHS provisions, the Regulations, and any applicable orders.

(2) Without limiting subsection (1), a supervisor must

(a) ensure that the workers under the supervisor's direct supervision

(i) are made aware of all known or reasonably foreseeable health or safety hazards in the area where they work, and

(ii) comply with the OHS provisions, the regulations and any applicable orders,

(b) consult and cooperate with the joint committee or worker health and safety representative for the workplace, and

(c) cooperate with the Board, officers of the Board and any other person carrying out a duty under the OHS provisions or the regulations.