



Community Services Sector Staff Safety

Newsletter #1: *Working to Ensure Safety in the Community Services Sector*

"As a Valued Member of Your Organization Your Safety Is Important"

AASP, ALIGN, and ACDS are very proud to be partnered in rolling out the Community Services Staff Safety Initiative to all agencies and service providers which contract for services from the ministries of Children's Services and Community and Social Services and are under WCB Industry Codes for Social/Community Support Services (89925) and Disability Rehabilitation (82806). We have been collaborating over the past several months and are pleased with how this Initiative is now taking shape.

Our main purpose is to assist these agencies and service providers to help prevent and reduce the incidence and severity of workplace injury, violence and psychosocial hazards experienced by the community services sector workers in Alberta.

A secondary purpose is to ensure that workers are aware of their rights and responsibilities regarding related Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) legislation and clearly understand that their safety is equally as important as is the safety of the people they support and to develop a culture of wellbeing within a safe workplace environment.

First, we began the Awareness Campaign in September of 2019 and you should by now have already started to receive via email infographics every couple of weeks. These infographics are intended to raise awareness regarding best practices related to OHS requirements and staff safety in general. We want to make sure this information reaches the right people within your organization. If you have been receiving these infographics and are not the person with designated responsibility for Health and Safety within your organization, we would ask that you provide us with the correct email address of the contact for your organization's Health and Safety program. Simply send the updated contact information to karla@aasp.ca.

Secondly, we highly encourage all health and safety personnel to forward these infographics to all staff that have an email address within your organization as everyone in your organization has their own role to play under the Internal Responsibility System (IRS). We would also ask you to print these Infographics and post them on all the Staff Communication Boards you have within your organization. Finally, we encourage you to use the safety topics in these infographics to inform your teams of just what they are responsible for under the OHS legislation.

Why should I share and post these Infographics?

*The answer is simple. Under the legislation for OHS that came into **effect June 1, 2018**, everyone and every organization has their own role to play in ensuring not only their own health and safety but also ensuring the health and safety of those they work with, which also includes client safety. This legislation can be found in [Part 1 of the OHS ACT under the Internal Responsibility System.](#)*

The Internal Responsibility System (IRS) is the model for the Alberta Occupational

Health and Safety Act. The IRS puts in place an employee-employer partnership to ensure a safe and disease-free workplace for everyone!

Every workplace party (worker, supervisor, manager, senior executive, etc.) is responsible for health and safety and has specific roles to maintain a safe and healthy workplace as well as improve unsafe working conditions if necessary. OHS obligations are identified in Part 1 of the OHS Act for the following parties that have a degree of control over the workplace:

- Employers
- Supervisors
- Workers
- Suppliers
- Service Providers
- Owners
- Contractors (Includes Subcontractors)
- Prime Contractors
- Self-employed

[Click this Link to the OHS ACT Part 1 on the IRS Obligations of worksite Parties](#)

Finally, If you have not read or have not seen the first 4 infographics that have already been distributed then simply click the link below which will take you directly to the **AASP dedicated website page for the Community Services Staff Safety Initiative** which has been set up specifically to assist your sector to become familiar, Knowledgeable and compliant with the new legislation. This is where you will also find a copy of the Launch Letter that went out to this sector on September 24, 2019 for the Project as well as the first 4 infographics that have already been distributed.

The first 4 infographics center around the following topics:

1. [Do you know the JHSC/HSR Requirements?](#)
2. [Is your Health & Safety Committee Effective?](#)
3. [Do you know how to conduct an JHSC Meeting?](#)
4. [Internal Responsibility System - Checklist](#)

Training

For any organization that requires a Health and Safety Committee (HSC) under the new legislation there is training that has been mandated by the Alberta Government for the Co-Chairs of every HSC. As part of this Initiative, we are pleased to offer this mandatory training at a reduced price. Information on this training opportunity can be found [here](#).

For your organization to become compliant under the new legislation our group have been working diligently to complete the ***Essentials to Health, Safety, and Compliance*** training program for this sector which will be released sometime before February 28, 2020.

We are looking to make this course available both In- class and online. Stay tuned for more details.

Some **Key Changes** announced in December 2019 by the Alberta Government regarding requirements for HSC's:

Health and Safety Committees.

- Employer-based rather than site-based requirements for HSCs and HS representatives. Employers have until January 31, 2020 to comply.
- Eliminating the Part 1 prerequisite HSC/HS representative training. This change is effective immediately.

Quick facts:

- Employers with 20 or more workers are required to have a committee.
- Employers with five to 19 workers are required to have a worker health and safety representative.
- Work sites with multiple employers where work lasts 90 days or more are required to have a site-specific committee or representative, depending on the number of workers.
- Employers have until Jan. 31, 2020 to comply with the changes.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to either Ray Gaetz at ray@aasp.ca or Carol Ross at carol@aasp.ca anytime.

On behalf of the Steering Committee for the Community Services Staff Safety Initiative,

Ray Gaetz; BComm., CPHR, QSR
Chief Operations Officer
Alberta Association for Safety Partnerships

[Click here to see the official launch notice..](#)

Joint Work Site Health and Safety Committee (HSC) / Representative (HSR) Training

[The AASP Alberta Labour Approved
Course is now Available in Classroom
and Online](#)



[Sign Up Now!](#)