

Employees

- take every reasonable precaution to protect their own health and safety and the health and safety of others
- follow the OHS Act and Regulations and safe work procedures
- mitigate hazards within their control and authority
- use safety devices, equipment and clothing as required
- report any condition, device, equipment, machine or material which may be dangerous
- co-operate with the employer and other employees to protect their health and safety
- consult with the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee or the Health and Safety Representative

Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee/ Health and Safety Representative

- act as a resource for all workplace parties
- promote the Internal Responsibility System
- help resolve health and safety issues as required



For more information

Occupational Health and Safety Division
Department of Labour, Skills and
Immigration

Telephone: 902-424-5400 or

Toll-free: 1-800-9-LABOUR
(1-800-952-2687)

Fax: 902-424-5640

safetybranch@novascotia.ca

novascotia.ca/lae/healthandsafety/

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NOVA SCOTIA

Occupational
Health and Safety

**INTERNAL
RESPONSIBILITY
SYSTEM**



safetybranch@novascotia.ca

NOVA SCOTIA

DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR, SKILLS AND IMMIGRATION

The Internal Responsibility System (IRS) is the foundation of Nova Scotia's Occupational Health and Safety legislation.

The central message of the IRS is that every workplace party, which includes employers, employees, contractors, constructors, owners, and suppliers, share primary responsibility for the health and safety of persons at or near the workplace.

Key Principles

The responsibility to identify and address workplace hazards belongs to the people who work in the workplace.

The responsibility for creating and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace is shared by all parties to the extent of their authority and ability.

The IRS includes a plan for participation in safety matters and the flow of information about safety.



The Occupational Health and Safety Division plays a supporting role by:

- establishing and clarifying roles and responsibilities for all workplace parties
- offering support to meet these responsibilities
- intervening when the responsibilities are not met

The Internal Responsibility System helps to do the following:

- establish an information sharing system
- promote health and safety culture
- promote best practices
- help develop self-reliance
- ensure compliance

The Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act entitles all workers to three rights:

The **RIGHT TO KNOW** about anything that could affect your health and safety in the workplace

The **RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE** in decisions that could affect their health and safety

The **RIGHT TO REFUSE** work that could affect their health and safety and that of others



Internal Responsibility System (IRS) – YouTube



Responsibilities and duties

Employers must take every reasonable precaution to:

- ensure the health and safety of persons at or near the workplace
- provide and maintain equipment, machines, materials, or things that are properly equipped with safety devices
- provide information, instruction, training, supervision and facilities necessary for the health or safety of the employees
- ensure employees are familiar with any health or safety hazards in their workplace
- ensure that employees are familiar with the proper use of all devices, equipment and clothing required for their protection
- ensure that employees are not exposed to health or safety hazards
- consult and co-operate with the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee or Health and Safety Representative
- ensure all workplace parties comply with the OHS Act and Regulations
- establish an OHS policy or program, where applicable

Supervisors

- take every reasonable precaution to ensure the health and safety of employees
- ensure employees work in compliance with OHS Act and Regulations
- ensure the safe use of prescribed protective equipment and devices
- advise on potential and actual hazards
- provide written instructions on measures and procedures to protect the health and safety of employees