



5-Steps to Managing Health and Safety

To manage an effective health and safety program in the workplace, a cycle of continuous improvement must be followed using the following structured 5-Step system:



The SGP is a five year program that runs on a calendar year. After five years, successful firms will have a health and safety program with 25 complete elements aligned with their workplace needs and legislation.

Incentive Criteria

Potential 6% maximum rebate of group premiums based on two group factors:

- Achievement** - Scores are subject to a performance improvement threshold
- Performance** - Improvement must be better than a pre-set target, reviewed annually.

Benefits to Participating in Safety Groups

- Keep Ontario workers safe
- Increase competitiveness
- Fewer WSIB claims
- More effective Return to Work
- Enhance employee morale
- Increase productivity and improve quality
- Access to health & safety resources
- Best practices through networking
- Structured approach for a sustainable health & safety program
- Create and nurture a safety culture in the workplace
- Earn financial incentive

To Join a Safety Groups Program a firm must:

- Have the owner or senior management commit to participate in the program
- Be a Schedule 1 firm paying premiums to the WSIB
- Be in good standing with the WSIB without charges or convictions under the WSIA
- Be committed to participating for at least one full calendar year
- Be in only one safety group at a time
- Not be a member of the Safe Communities Incentive Program (SCIP)

Next Steps:

1. Visit Safety Groups Program on the WSIB website at www.wsib.on.ca
2. Select and contact Safety Group Sponsor
3. Complete and sign Safety Group Application
4. Send Application to Sponsor by Dec 31.

For more information, contact the WSIB Prevention Division at: 416-344-1016 or 1-800-663-6639, or e-mail: prevention@wsib.on.ca.

The Safety Groups Program

The Safety Groups Program (SGP) is an innovative initiative the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) has implemented to help eliminate workplace injuries and illnesses in Ontario. The program is voluntary and rewards firms that implement effective health and safety and return to work measures into their daily business.

Safety Groups is based on the premise that a well-integrated workplace health and safety program is good for business. Firms from similar or different businesses or rate groups volunteer to join a safety group with a collective purpose: to learn from each other's experience in implementing injury and illness prevention programs. Firms that invest and implement effective health and safety programs can benefit from a WSIB financial incentive.

Each safety group has a sponsor. Sponsors are approved by the WSIB to administer the SGP and to facilitate and support workplace self-reliance in health and safety and return to work programs. Current sponsors represent over 40 employer groups which meet throughout Ontario.

The role of the sponsor is to oversee the group and regularly report to the WSIB. They promote the group's interaction and networking by organizing meetings and leadership workshops. They offer guidance on action plan development and track the individual firm's and the group's achievement and performance goals. The workplace should select a sponsor and safety group that best meets their company's needs.

Program at a Glance

- Eliminate workplace injuries and illnesses
- Reduce the burden of workplace injuries and illnesses when they do occur
- Achieve success by pooling resources, mentoring and sharing best practices in your group
- Manage your workplace health & safety risks
- Develop and implement an action plan that fits your company's needs
- Utilize the 5-Steps for Managing Health & Safety system to achieve success
- Comply with the Occupational Health & Safety Act (OHSA) and Workplace Safety & Insurance Act (WSIA)
- Attain a financial incentive by demonstrated achievement of your goals and improved injury and illness performance.

Research Findings

Over three consecutive years, the WSIB surveyed employer participants to gauge their perceptions about the SGP. In determining the perceived value of the SGP, employers, over time, have looked to the SGP more and more as a source of expert advice, and a venue for networking and developing a positive business image.

Overall satisfaction with program delivery has increased over the three years. Most notable increases in satisfaction were in the areas like sponsor assistance, sharing of resources and information, and program administration.

Safety Group Annual Cycle

At the beginning of each year, your firm selects five safety elements that it will initiate or improve upon from the Safety Groups' Achievement List provided by the WSIB. Your firm will learn how to implement these initiatives through attending meetings, sharing ideas and pooling resources with other firms in your safety group. At the end of the year, your group can receive a rebate based on the entire group's success in implementing their selected safety elements. In each subsequent year, firms are required to maintain their elements from the previous year and pick five new ones.

