

How to improve safety in your workplace

Whether you're a TA or RA in lieu, a Sessional Faculty member, or a Post-Doc, you are protected under the Occupational Health & Safety Act. However, your safety at work is not just your employer's responsibility, it's yours as well. No one knows the risks and hazards in your workplace better than you do, so you are the ideal person to help make sure your workplace is a safe environment.

A workplace hazard is *anything that has the potential to harm the health, safety, or well-being of workers*. Hazards can be things (such as blocked exits or unguarded equipment), conditions (such as poor air quality or lack of heating), or procedures (such as methods of transferring chemicals, or ways of lifting a crate).

If you notice a hazard, report it. You can prevent an injury from happening.

If an injury has already occurred, you can still help by reporting the incident. You can prevent it happening again to someone else.

Reporting hazards and incidents is easy to do – just fill in this form, get your work supervisor to sign it, and return it to EOHSS (Environmental & Occupational Health Support Services).

[http://www.workingatmcmaster.ca/med/document/InjuryIncident-Report-\(Fillable\)-1-36.pdf](http://www.workingatmcmaster.ca/med/document/InjuryIncident-Report-(Fillable)-1-36.pdf)

If you feel uncomfortable about approaching your supervisor with your concerns, contact us and we can organise for a CUPE representative to accompany you when you meet with your supervisor.

If you need more information on different types of hazards, or would like to know what McMaster's policies are for different areas, visit the EOHSS site:

<http://www.workingatmcmaster.ca/eohss/index.php>

There are also some great external resources on health & safety:

The Workers Health and Safety Centre

www.whsc.on.ca

The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health & Safety

<http://www.ccohs.ca/>

The Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers

<http://www.ohcow.on.ca/>

The Canadian Standards Association

<http://www.csa.ca/>

Also feel free to email us at <healthandsafety@cupe3906.org> if you have any questions or concerns about health & safety in your workplace.