

# **Lakehead University Career Services: Workplace Safety Awareness for Students**

## **Stay Safe in Your Future Workplace – Key Information & Resources**

As you begin your job search, internships, or part-time work, it's important to understand your rights and responsibilities regarding workplace safety. Whether you're entering a lab, office, retail environment, or any other type of workplace, knowing how to protect yourself and your colleagues is essential. This page provides you with the key information and resources to help ensure your safety on the job.

## **Key Workplace Safety Tips**

### **1. Know Your Rights**

In Canada, workers have the right to work in an environment that is free from recognized hazards. Understanding your rights as a worker is the first step in ensuring your safety.

- **Right to Know:** You have the right to be informed about potential hazards (See below) at the workplace and how to avoid them.
- **Right to Participate:** You have the right to participate in workplace health and safety activities, such as safety committees or meetings.
- **Right to Refuse Unsafe Work:** If you believe that a task is unsafe, you have the right to refuse the work without fear of retaliation.

Here are some links to resources to review:

[Office of Human Rights Lakehead University](#): The Office of Human Rights at Lakehead University promotes equity, diversity, and inclusion by addressing discrimination and harassment on campus. It supports a respectful and inclusive learning and working environment.

[Canada Office of Human Rights](#): Canada's Office of Human Rights upholds federal human rights laws, ensuring protection against discrimination based on race, gender, disability, and other factors. It works to advance equality through education, policy development, and dispute resolution.

[Employee Standards Act](#): The Employment Standards Act sets minimum standards for employment in Ontario, including wages, hours, and leave. It ensures fair treatment and protects workers' rights across various sectors.

### **2. Follow Workplace Safety Training**

Many employers are required to provide safety training to new workers. Always attend and take the safety training seriously, especially if it's required for your specific position. Common areas of training include:

- Emergency Procedures
- Hazardous Materials Handling
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Use
- Ergonomics and Safe Lifting Techniques

Ensure that you fully understand the training before starting any tasks, and always ask questions if you are unclear about any safety procedures.

### 3. Recognize Common Workplace Hazards

Different types of workplaces may have different risks, but there are general hazards to be aware of, such as:

- **Physical Hazards:** Slips, trips, and falls; heavy lifting; machinery risks.
- **Chemical Hazards:** Exposure to cleaning supplies, paints, or other chemicals.
- **Biological Hazards:** Exposure to bacteria or viruses in healthcare or food industries.
- **Psychosocial Hazards:** Workplace stress, harassment, or bullying.

Be aware of your environment, and always ask your employer or supervisor for information on any hazards you may face in your specific role. **Remember** that safety is a shared responsibility between employee and employer, and that employees have the right to refuse unsafe work.

### 4. Report Hazards and Unsafe Conditions

If you see unsafe conditions in your workplace, it's essential to report them immediately. This can prevent accidents and injuries.

- **Ask for a Safety Officer** or report it directly to your supervisor or manager.
- **Document the hazard** and follow up to make sure the issue is addressed.

### 5. Use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Correctly

Some jobs require specific PPE, such as gloves, helmets, masks, or goggles. Make sure you understand when and how to use these safety items, and always wear them as instructed.

### 6. Maintain a Safe and Organized Workspace

Keep your workspace tidy to prevent accidents, especially in environments where spills or clutter can lead to slips or falls. Ensure that equipment is stored properly and that all pathways are clear of obstructions.