

**Operating Guidelines & Terms of Reference
Lakehead University**

**Joint Health & Safety Committee
Offices and Classrooms**

Approved 8 October 2025

“Working toward a safe and health environment for work and study.”

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1. **Goal of the Committee**

The goal of the committee is to protect and to promote the health and safety of workers and the university community.

2. **Objectives of Committee:**

The membership of the committee will promote the effective operation of the internal responsibility system of Lakehead University.

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90o01>

The membership of the committee recognizes that its efforts in protecting and promoting the health and safety of workers will have a positive effect on the health and safety of the Lakehead University Community.

3. **Principles**

3.1 Commitment to Teamwork

Committee members will work together as a team to achieve the goals and objectives of the committee.

3.2 Commitment to Training

The committee will promote and support the on-going education, (annual goal), of its members, (minimum one member) in topics related to the operation of the committee, and to occupational health and safety in general.

3.3 Confidentiality

Committee members will respect the confidentiality of personal information in all business which they conduct in relationship to the committee, including reports made to the constituencies whom they represent.

4. **Powers of the Committee**

4.1 To Identify Dangers and Hazards

The membership of the committee works together to identify situations which may be/are a source of danger or hazard to workers and the Lakehead University community.

4.2 To make Recommendations

The committee will make recommendations to the *Vice-Presidents (Administration and Academic)* for the improvement of the health and safety of workers.

The committee will make recommendations to the *Vice Presidents (Administration & Finance)*, and to workers, pertaining to the establishment, maintenance and monitoring of programs, measures and procedures respecting the health or safety of workers.

- 4.3 To Obtain Information
The committee will obtain information from the employer respecting the identification of potential or existing hazards of materials, processes or equipment, and health and safety experience, work practices and standards in similar or other industries of which the employer has knowledge.

5. Meetings

- 5.1 Frequency.
Committee meetings will take place at minimum four (4) time per year
- 5.2 Notice of meeting
Human Resources - Health and Safety will send a notice of meeting.
- 5.3 Quorum.
Three (3) worker members and one (1) management member will constitute a quorum.
- 5.4 Agenda for Meeting.
An agenda will be forwarded to all committee members in advance of each meeting. Committee members can submit agenda items in advance of the meeting to the Secretary or either the Worker Co-chair or the Management Co-chair.
- 5.5 Recording of Minutes.
The minutes of each meeting will be recorded. The Co-chairs will sign the minutes in advance of the following month's meeting. Any discrepancies will be recorded in the following month's minutes.
- 5.6 Distribution of Minutes.
Copies of the minutes will be distributed to all committee members and alternates.
- 5.7 Posting of Minutes.
In order to reach all constituents, minutes of the meetings will be posted on the university website and on specified bulletin boards.

6. Committee Membership

- 6.1 Members (Worker and Management)
The committee will be comprised of minimum seven (7) voting members including two (2) Management members and five (5) worker members.

A designated worker member and an alternate worker member will be selected by each of the following groups:

- a. COPE
- b. LUFA
- c. Schedule II Employees
- e. CUPE

Additional worker members can be elected to represent their building for under represented areas of campus.

Designated and alternate worker members “may not exercise managerial functions.”

Two (2) designated management members and two (2) alternate management members will be selected by the appropriate worker group.

Designated and alternate management members “must exercise managerial functions.”

6.2 Terms of Office: Committee Members

The term of office for a committee member is two (2) years. Membership is renewable at the direction of the applicable union or worker group.

6.3 Call for Selection or Appointment of Members

On notification that a member is no longer able to serve on the committee, or on the expiry of the term of office of a committee member, the committee will request that the applicable union or employee group to select or appoint a member to replace the retiring member. Worker members may serve more than one consecutive term with support of their union/employee group.

6.4 Entitlement to Time Off From Work

A committee member is entitled to such time as is necessary: (1) to prepare for and to attend meetings of the committee; and, (2) to conduct their work as a member or an officer of the committee.

6.5 Entitlement to be Paid

A committee member shall be deemed to be at work during the times described in 6.5 Entitlement to Time Off From Work, and the University shall pay the member for those times at the member’s regular or premium rate as may be proper.

7. **Committee Officers**

The committee will operate with three officers; two co-chairs and a secretary.

7.1 Co-Chairs

The committee will be co-chaired by members representing management and workers.

- 7.2 Election
Annually in September of each year, elections will be held to choose the co-chairs, and the secretary.

The worker Co-chair will be selected by the members representing workers.

The Management Co-chair will be selected by the members representing management.

The Secretary will be selected by the general membership of the committee.

- 7.3 Terms of Office: Committee Officers
The co-chairs and the secretary will serve for a period of one year.
Co-chairs are eligible to stand for re-election for an additional two terms.

8. Designated Members

- 8.1 Accident Investigation
A roster of designated worker and management members will be made available to conduct accident investigations on behalf of the committee in the event of a critical injury or fatality. One management member and one worker member will be called in. If that worker member is unavailable, the next worker member on the list is to be contacted. A certified worker member of another JHSC will also be called in to assist in the investigation.

- 8.2 Workplace Inspections.
8.2.1 Legal Requirements
Legal requirements for scheduling of inspections at least some portion of the workplace monthly, and entire workplace is to be inspected over the course of the year.

8.2.2 Inspection Teams
Inspection teams will consist of two committee members. Alternates will be actively involved in carrying out inspections. Every effort will be made to notify departments in advance of any inspections and a departmental representative with access keys will be requested to accompany inspectors.

- 8.3 Testing

The types of tests or evaluations that could be, but not limited to, forwarded to this committee include ergonomic and indoor air qualities which are the most common assessments conducted in office and classroom space.

- 8.4 Refusal to Work
A roster of certified members will be available to conduct work refusals.

9. Certified Members

- 9.1 Certified Worker Member.
Worker members shall select at least one worker member to become the certified worker member of the committee.
- 9.2 Certified Management Member.
Management members shall select at least one management member to become the certified management member of the committee.

10. Duties of the Committee Members

- 10.1 Identify Safety Concerns or Hazards.
Committee members will consider such reports or information as are presented to the committee. Based on their review of the reports, or information, committee members will identify those situations which may be a source of danger or hazard to workers.
- 10.2 Concern and Complaint Resolution.
Committee members will facilitate the concern and complaint resolution process, as it pertains to health and safety concerns and complaints made by workers. Committee members will encourage workers to discuss and resolve their concerns/complaints through the internal responsibility system of the University. Should a worker feel that their concern or complaint has not been adequately addressed through discussions with their supervisor, a committee member is authorized to raise the issue for consideration at a meeting of the committee.
- 10.3 Make Recommendations.
Based on their evaluation of danger or hazards, committee members will make recommendations to the Associate Vice President - Human Resources.
- 10.4 Responsibility to Alternates.
Committee members, particularly worker members, are expected to keep their alternates fully advised of all committee business. Should a committee member be unable to attend a committee meeting, they must advise their alternate to attend the meeting in their place.

11. Duties of the Co-Chairs.

The worker co-chair and the management co-chair will chair the committee meetings on alternate months.

The co-chairs will review the minutes of the last meeting. The co-chairs will advise the secretary of any errors noted in the minutes.

The co-chairs will sign the corrected minutes prior to the next meeting.

Prior to the next meeting, the co-chairs will advise the secretary of:

- (1) any items which are to be added to the agenda of the following meeting
- (2) which reports or correspondence are to be circulated to the membership in advance of the meeting, and

Annually in September, the co-chairs will draft correspondence to the unions or employee groups requesting confirmation of the names and terms of the designated and alternate committee member whom they have selected or appointed.

On the retirement of a committee member, the co-chairs will advise the applicable union or employee group that a replacement member must be selected or appointed.

12. Duties of the Secretary.

The Secretary will type, duplicate and circulate such material (i.e. minutes, agendas, correspondence, reports) as is required by the co-chairs for the conduct of the committee.

13. Duties of the Designated Members.

13.1 Accident Investigations.

Accident investigators will conduct investigations on behalf of the committee in the event of the occurrences of critical injury or fatality.

Accident investigators will determine, to the best of their ability, the causes of accident.

Accident investigators will make recommendations for the prevention or recurrence of similar injuries or fatalities.

Accident investigators are empowered to interview all individuals either directly or indirectly involved in accident.

13.2 Workplace Inspections.

Workplace inspectors will conduct workplace inspections on behalf of the committee. Inspectors will recommend remedial action which addresses the sub-standard conditions, and will recommend time frame in which the remedial action is to be undertaken. Refer to the Bilateral Work Stoppage Guidelines.

13.3 Testing.

Committee members designated to be present at the start of testing will report the following information to the committee:

1. the reason that testing is to be conducted, and
2. on receipt of the testing report, the findings of the testing agency.

13.4 Refusal to Work.

Committee members designated to be present when an employee invokes their right to refuse work will:

1. attempt to determine, on behalf of the committee, the reasons that the right to refuse was invoked;
2. advise the worker and the supervisor, on their obligations pertaining to the right to refuse, as outlined in the Occupational Health and Safety Act.