

Company Policy: The Basics

Company policies are written guidelines that establish the practices and procedures of a business and the code of conduct within an organization. Company policy and procedures protect the rights of workers as well as the interests of employers.

Why is Policy important?

- Policy establishes a company's culture, values and standards, provides clarity and guidance on operational procedures, and presents important safety protocols.
- **Comprehensive and transparent policy improves efficiency, ensures employee safety & security, and creates an overall positive, productive work environment**

Am I a federally or provincially regulated company?

Whether a company is federally or provincially regulated is fact-specific, industry related and legally based, however, most businesses in Canada are provincially regulated. Federally regulated businesses can include transportation, telecommunications, most federal crown corporations / public sector, postal and courier services.

I am a federally regulated company. Do I need different policies?

Yes, for example federally regulated employees are subject to the Canada Labour Code rather than the Employment Standards Act (Ontario). Even if a company is Provincially regulated, their employees may be subject to different legislation based on their location in Canada. Occupational Health and Safety regulations may differ by jurisdiction and industry.

What policies should a company have in Ontario?

- *Accessibility (AODA – Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act)*
- *Protection Of Employee Information*
- *Pay Equity (if 10 or more employees)*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Policy (5 or more employees)*
- *Workplace Violence and Harassment Policy (5 or more employees)*
- *GHS Policy (formerly WHMIS)*
- *Emergency Preparedness and Response (if more than 20 employees)*
- *Joint Health and Safety Committee (if more than 20 employees)*
- *Hazard Specific Policies*
- *Workplace Code of Conduct*
- *Disconnecting from Work Policy (over 25 employees)*

What information must I post for employees?

Every employee should have access to known or likely hazards, job-specific instructions, training, health and safety supervision, as well as a code-of-conduct and workplace guidelines. Some provinces require employers to provide employees with one or more posters and documents. For example, in Ontario, employees covered under the ESA must receive an Employment Standards Poster. By law, the WSIB's "In Case of Injury" poster (Form 82) must be prominently displayed in every workplace covered by the WSIB. A copy of the Occupational Health and Safety Act, and any explanatory material prepared by the Ministry such as "Health & Safety at Work: Prevention Starts Here" must also be available to all employees.

How do I create policy?

Drafting company policy can be challenging as its basis is legislation, regulations and industry standards.

Professionals are key to creating these policies as their expertise assists companies with understanding and navigating complex legislation and regulations specific to their industry, thus ensuring corporate compliance, a safe and efficient workplace, as well as a fair and inclusive corporate culture.

Accordingly, it is recommended that, although their input (and that of their employees) is invaluable, employers should reach out to professionals when creating, amending or expanding corporate policy.

Do my Employees need Training?

Yes, once the Policy is created, employees will require training to ensure the policy is effectively implemented. Every employee has the right to a safe work environment, and accordingly, certain training is mandatory in Ontario including the following:

- *Worker Awareness Training (all employees) and Supervisor Competency Training (Supervisors) provides information about worker rights and responsibilities and the importance of safety in the workplace.*
- *Violence and Harassment Training (all employees)*
- *JHSC (Joint Health and Safety Committee) certification is required for 1 employee in workplaces with 20 or more employees. 2 employees are to be certified in workplaces with 50 or more employees.*

CONTACT BIZWIZE

For additional information and guidance, contact Bizwize Inc.

Policy is a complex and meticulous task, and BizWize can help and work within your budget!

We will assist in drafting policy that

- reflects your corporate culture and ideology,
- minimizes business disruptions by reducing the risk of workplace injury and illness,
- increases employee efficiency and productivity through clearly established operational procedures and
- protects your business reputation by demonstrating a commitment to safety, fairness and equity.