



Digital Government and Service NL

Advisory Council on Occupational Health and Safety

Annual Activity Report
2020-21

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REFERENCE PERIOD

This report covers the period April 1, 2020 through March 31, 2021,
the fiscal year of the Advisory Council on Occupational Health and Safety.

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Chairperson's Message

As Chair of the Advisory Council on Occupational Health and Safety (the Advisory Council), I am pleased to submit the Annual Activity Report for the activities of the Advisory Council for 2020-21.

This report is prepared in compliance with the **Transparency and Accountability Act**, which categorizes the Advisory Council as a Category Three entity and requires the Advisory Council to prepare an annual report. The Advisory Council is accountable for the preparation of this report and for the results reported.

On behalf of the members of the Advisory Council, I would like to re-affirm our commitment to working closely with all stakeholders in order to provide strategic advice to the Minister of Digital Government and Service NL in helping create safe and healthy workplaces throughout the Province.

Yours truly,



Travis White
Chairperson

Vision

People in Newfoundland and Labrador living and working in healthy and safe environments with access to efficient and responsive programs and services.

Mandate

The Advisory Council on Occupational Health and Safety is established pursuant to section 12 of the **Occupational Health and Safety Act**. The duties and responsibilities of the Advisory Council are established pursuant to section 17 of the Act. They include providing advice to the Minister on the administration of the Act and the regulations; on occupational health and safety; and on any matter relating to occupational health and safety that the Minister has referred to the Council for its advice.

Representation

The Advisory Council has 11 members, including the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, two ex-officio positions, secretary, and the remaining membership consisting of equal representation from labour and management. Members are appointed for terms not exceeding three years, and are eligible for reappointment for not more than two consecutive terms. Where the term of a member expires, he or she continues to be a member until reappointed or replaced. As of March 31, 2021, the following is a list of active members serving on the Advisory Council:

Member	Representation
Travis White	Chairperson
Yvette Coffey	Vice Chairperson
Robert Richards	Labour Representative
Kristy Reid	Labour Representative
Mary Kathleen King	Labour Representative
Derrick House	Management Representative
Lana Marie Collins	Management Representative
Cathy Ivany	Management Representative
Dennis Hogan	Ex-Officio – Chief Executive Officer, WorkplaceNL
K. Gail Boland	Ex-Officio – Assistant Deputy Minister, Digital Government and ServiceNL
Heather Taylor	Secretary – Manager, Occupational Health and Safety Division, Digital Government and ServiceNL

Budget and Expenditures

The Advisory Council on Occupational Health and Safety is funded through the Occupational Health and Safety Division of Digital Government and Service NL. The

Division operates on a maximum five percent of the annual assessment revenue paid to WorkplaceNL. Approximately \$25,000 is budgeted for the operation of Council on a yearly basis, which would include reimbursement as per Treasury Board Guidelines for Boards, Commissions and Agencies. From this total, approximately \$3,600 is reserved for the reimbursement of members; \$5,500 is reserved for meeting expenses; and the remainder, approximately \$15,900, is reserved for travel and per diem expenses. The Advisory Council spent \$1,210 over the 2020-2021 fiscal year for reimbursement of members. There were no further expenditures.

Highlights and Partnerships

The Advisory Council worked with representatives of labour and management to provide advice to Government on Occupational Health and Safety. The Advisory Council works with all key stakeholders on occupational health and safety issues as they arise.

Report on Performance

Objective: By March 31, 2021, 2022, and 2023 the Advisory Council will have advised the responsible Minister for Occupational Health and Safety.

Indicators:

As requested, provided advice to the Minister on:

- The administration of the Act and its regulations
- Occupational health and safety
- On any matter relating to occupational health and safety that the Minister has referred to the Council for advice.

Results Achieved

For the current reporting period 2020-21, the Advisory Council was successful in achieving one meeting, via Skype. During this meeting, information was provided to the Council on all amendments being proposed to the **Occupational Health and Safety Act** and Regulations, including amendments to the Occupational Health and Safety First Aid Regulations, which came into force on January 1, 2021. An update was also provided on the progress of the review of the **Radiation Health and Safety Act**.

WorkplaceNL provided a detailed presentation on the Psychological Health and Safety Standard and how this standard promotes good mental health and can protect employees from psychological harm. The presentation included information on the cost of psychologically unhealthy and unsafe workplaces in comparison to the benefits of a psychologically healthy and safe workplace. Given the issue of COVID-19 and the impact upon workplaces, employers and employees, this information was very helpful for members of Council.

Also, during this reporting period, WorkplaceNL provided members with updates and

status reports on initiatives undertaken by Prevention Services, such as the 2018-22 Prevention Strategy, certification training standards, workplace violence, construction zone safety and the issue of increased powerline contacts and the work of the Contacts Prevention Working Group.

As per section 17(c) of the **Occupational Health and Safety Act**, the council may advise the minister on those other matters relating to occupational health and safety that the minister has referred to the council for its advice. The Council was not asked by the Minister to provide specific advice during the reporting period.

Opportunities and Challenges

The mandate of the Council is to advise the minister on the administration of the Act and regulations; occupational health and safety, and on those matters referred to them by the responsible Minister. With this in mind, there are a number of new and emerging issues which present both a challenge and an opportunity for the Council. The Council will be challenged to stay abreast of new and evolving issues so that its advice to the Minister is of high quality and value. However, the Council also sees these issues as an opportunity to feed into the development/amendment of government legislation and policy to ensure that such is considerate of the varying perspectives related to occupational health and safety.

- The Advisory Council will continue to provide advice on the administration of regulatory requirements around worker-on-worker violence and workplace harassment.
- The harmonization of occupational health and safety requirements in line with the National Building Code will provide opportunities and challenges for the Advisory Council, as industries work to align their practices with other jurisdictions.
- The **Radiation Health and Safety Act**, 2021 was introduced to the House of Assembly on April 19, 2021 and working has begun on the associated regulations. This will present both opportunities and challenges as we advance forward.

Financial Statements

Financial statements are not required to be provided by the Advisory Council on Occupational Health and Safety.