

# ▶ CERTIFICATION TRAINING: THE PROCESS

## The Law

Most workplaces employing 20 or more workers or using a designated substance must have a joint health and safety committee (JHSC). Ontario health and safety law also requires at least two members of this JHSC to be certified – one who represents workers and another who represents the employer. This said, many Ontario employers choose to certify all JHSC members, helping to prepare each member for their significant legal obligations. To become certified and maintain Certification, a JHSC member must complete the following training programs:

1. *Certification Part I*
2. *Certification Part II*, and
3. *Certification Refresher*.

These training programs must be approved by the Chief Prevention Officer (CPO) of Ontario's Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development (MLITSD) and delivered by an approved provider, such as the Workers Health & Safety Centre (WHSC). Employers are required to secure and pay for this training, including wages for the time to participate in this training.

## Certification Part I

The first part of Certification training is applicable to any provincially-regulated workplace. The program must give participants an understanding of occupational health and safety legislation, including rights and responsibilities of the workplace parties in general and certified representatives in particular. Equally important, program participants must learn about general hazard control and prevention theory and best practices for administering workplace health and safety policies and programs. The law mandates this program to be a minimum of three days, which the WHSC offers. We also offer a more comprehensive, *Certification Part I* training program delivered over four days. Both are approved by the Ministry's CPO.

## Certification Part II

This training must address at least six hazards relevant to the JHSC member's workplace. The hazards to be addressed by *Certification Part II* training should be discussed and selected by the JHSC. This training is also applicable to all provincially-regulated workplaces. Though, compliance options exist. Workplaces can choose to customize their program or enroll in a general or sector program. The WHSC offers more than 40 WHSC hazard-specific modules for a more customized approach. Each module is designed to build on the knowledge gained in *Certification Part I* and is applied to specific workplace hazards with emphasis on measures to eliminate or control exposures. To help ease compliance, WHSC also offers a *Certification Part II – General* program which addresses six significant hazards common to most workplaces. Additionally we offer some sector-specific programs. Regardless, *Certification Part II* training must be a minimum of two days in duration. In most cases, it must be taken within 12 months of completing *Certification Part I* training.

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## Certification Refresher

To maintain certification status, a JHSC member must complete *Certification Refresher* training every three years. This training must involve a review of key concepts from *Certification Part I* and *Certification Part II* training, updates to legislation, standards, codes of practice and occupational health and safety best practices. The training must also give certified members an opportunity to share and discuss best practices and current occupational health and safety issues. *Certification Refresher* must be at least one day in duration.

## Testing and evaluation

WHSC does not advocate evaluating learning by written, exam-style tests as it creates artificial barriers for workers who perform poorly in these tests or have language or literacy challenges. However, at the end of *Certification Part I* training participants must complete a standardized test, required and created by the MLITSD. WHSC instructors must administer this test – including grading it. However, our goal is to ensure every participant gains the knowledge and skills they need to meet their extensive obligations as certified members of JHSCs. For those who do not pass the test, WHSC instructors will offer additional assistance to help develop the knowledge assessed by the test.

For *Certification Part II* and *Certification Refresher* training, the WHSC is permitted to use activity-based evaluation or assessment techniques, so central to effective adult education. Highly trained WHSC instructors assess participant learning throughout these programs. As participants engage in workgroup activities and group discussions, the instructor observes and ensures participants come away with the requisite knowledge and skills. Thus, WHSC program participants avoid the stress and learning hurdles presented by traditional testing methods.

## Administration of Certification paperwork

WHSC instructors ensure participants complete the WHSC student form and the MLITSD's class list form. Participants will also be offered the Ministry's personal information disclosure form. Those who complete and submit this form are giving authority to the Ministry to inform an employer or prospective employer if she or he holds a valid JHSC Certification card. The WHSC representative co-ordinating the training ensures the Ministry receives these forms in a timely manner. Within seven days of course completion, the WHSC submits a record of training electronically to the Ministry along with other forms completed in-class. As such, there are no administrative requirements for employers or workers who take WHSC Certification Training.

## Records of training cards and transcripts

Upon successful completion of WHSC *Certification Part I*, *Certification Part II* and *Certification Refresher* training, WHSC issues a record of training card to the participant and submits his or her information to the MLITSD. The Ministry will also forward a record of training card. The WHSC training card is valid to prove compliance.

## We can help

To learn more about WHSC Certification Training call 1-888-869-7950 and ask to speak to a WHSC training services representative. Also see WHSC product sheets *Certification Part I* and *Certification Part II* and *Certification Refresher* for additional details.

