



# How to request your paid health and safety education leave

**S**ection 135 of the **Workers Compensation Act** says that joint health and safety committee members and worker representatives are entitled to eight hours of educational leave each year for courses conducted by or with the approval of the Workers' Compensation Board of British Columbia (WCB). **Joint health and safety committees are required in workplaces with 20 or more workers. Worker health and safety representatives are required in workplaces with more than 9 but fewer than 20 workers.**

## Joint health and safety committee members

If you are a committee member, this is what you need to do to get approval to take a course as your educational leave:

- Bring your request to the committee.
- If the committee agrees, the committee will forward the request to the employer.
- If the committee does not agree, or is unable to come to a decision within a reasonable time, you may forward the request to your employer.
- The employer must make a decision within a reasonable time upon receiving the request from the committee or you. In making its decision, the employer must act in a manner consistent with the purpose and intent of the **Act**. Permission to attend a course must not be unreasonably denied.

## Worker health and safety representatives

If you are a worker representative, you must make your request directly to your employer.

## What to do if the request is denied

If you believe that your employer unreasonably denied your request for leave, you may complain to the WCB. The WCB will investigate the complaint. Contact your union if you need help with this process.

## The entitlement is a paid leave

Your employer must provide your educational leave without loss of pay or other benefits and must pay (or reimburse you) for the costs of the course and any reasonable costs of attending the course.

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This bulletin was produced by the B.C. Federation of Labour's Occupational Health and Safety Education Project which is funded by the WCB. Through this Project, the Federation will be offering courses for health and safety committee members, worker health and safety representatives, workers, and students throughout British Columbia. For more information, contact the Project at 604-430-1421, e-mail [fed\\_ohs\\_ed@telus.net](mailto:fed_ohs_ed@telus.net), or check our website at [www.bcfed.com](http://www.bcfed.com) and follow the links.



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