



COR Toolkit:

An Employer Guide to
COR Certification



OVERVIEW

A joint health and safety committee is required at every workplace and is an integral part of an effective occupational health and safety program. A joint committee is a key facilitator of communication, and its meeting minutes are often excellent documentation of larger-scale safety initiatives. Such a committee often interacts directly with inspections, investigations and system administration. The audit will measure the following:

- The presence of a functioning joint committee, with clearly defined membership, function and duties.
- Joint committee members' active involvement in health and safety activities.
- A process that ensures joint committee minutes are maintained and communicated, with recommended actions followed up by the employer.

KEY CONCEPTS AND IMPLEMENTATION TIPS

In order to meet the above objectives, the audit checks whether:

- The employer has written terms of reference for the joint committee.
- The joint committee has been trained appropriately to those terms of reference.
- The joint committee actually performs its duties to according to legislation, Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Regulation and company policy.
- The joint committee routinely meets and then publishes minutes so everyone knows:
 - The importance of safety in the workplace.
 - The names of the joint committee members.
 - How workers can take safety issues to the joint committee.

RELEVANT REGULATION AND LEGISLATION

Searchable versions of the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Regulation and the *Workers Compensation Act* are available online at <https://link.go2hr.ca/cor-E1-001>.

Occupational Health and Safety Regulation (WorkSafeBC)

Joint Health and Safety Committees — Sections 3.26–3.27
<https://link.go2hr.ca/cor-E8-001>

Workers Compensation Act (BC Gov't)

Joint Committees and Worker Representatives — Sections 31–44
<https://link.go2hr.ca/cor-E8-002>



GUIDELINES FOR USING THE COR AUDIT TOOL

Question 8.1

Is there a joint health and safety committee?

Auditor Guideline

Review documentation (joint committee meeting minutes) to confirm there is a joint committee.

Employer Guideline

There need to be meeting minutes demonstrating that there is a joint committee in place and that it is functioning. This question deals solely with the existence of a joint committee. Other questions in this element deal with whether the joint committee is properly constituted and performing useful safety duties so as to meet company and legal requirements.

Types of Documentation to Review

Joint committee meeting minutes

Question 8.2

Does the joint committee have written terms of reference?

Auditor Guideline

Review documentation (terms of reference) to verify that it sets out the joint committee involvement, membership, function and duties.

Employer Guideline

The terms of reference for a safety committee should stipulate:

- Equal representation of management and workers.
- Responsibilities of members.
- Attendance criteria.
- Frequency of inspections.
- Frequency of meetings.
- Investigation procedures.
- Work refusal procedures.

These are requirements set by the *Workers Compensation Act* and the OHS Regulation.

Types of Documentation to Review

Joint committee terms of reference



Question 8.3

Are committee members aware of the terms of reference and carrying out their roles and responsibilities as identified?

Auditor Guideline

Interview joint committee members to determine their level of knowledge and understanding of their roles and responsibilities on the committee and the terms of reference.

Employer Guideline

The interview aims to verify that the joint committee members are aware of their key responsibilities, which are a combination of regulatory responsibilities and any additional responsibilities assigned by the company. The results of this question are independent of question 8.2. Joint committee members could be aware of their regulatory duties even if the joint committee does not have any formal terms of reference.

Question 8.4

Are joint committee meetings held regularly?

Auditor Guideline

Review documentation (meeting schedules and minutes) to ensure meetings are held as outlined in the terms of reference.

Employer Guideline

The company needs to be able to show that a joint committee met during every operating month, or more often if company policy requires meetings to be more frequent. For seasonal companies, there does not need to be a formal meeting if there are fewer than 10 people working that month. This is an all-or-nothing question, so all required months must have a recorded meeting.

Question 8.5

Are minutes kept for the meetings and made accessible to all employees?

Auditor Guideline

- Review documentation (copies of minutes) from the meetings.
- Observe that the minutes are made accessible to all employees.

Employer Guideline

This question anticipates that all required meetings are recorded with official, formal minutes. The documentation portion is looking to verify that the minutes do exist somewhere, and the observation portion is looking to see that the minutes of at least the last three meetings are accessible by all employees. These minutes can be in paper or electronic form, but if the company relies only on electronic means, all workers must have the ability to access them.



Question 8.6

Does the joint committee have a process for ensuring recommendations are presented to and followed up with management?

Auditor Guideline

Review documentation (terms of reference or meeting minutes) to determine if a process for the committee to submit and follow up on recommendations made to management.

Employer Guideline

Auditors are looking for some kind of tracking system for corrective actions. This can be done within the joint committee meeting minutes, which should clearly show that action items are addressed in a timely manner or by the established due date. A separate corrective action log can track all identified deficiencies, including joint committee meeting items, but it needs to also show the date, item deficiency, person responsible, due date and the actual completion date.

Question 8.7

Do workers know how to find out who their representative on the joint committee is?

Auditor Guideline

Interview workers to determine if they are aware of how to find out who their safety representative on the joint committee is.

Employer Guideline

This question is looking to see whether workers know who their representatives are on the joint committee or know how to find out who they are. Many companies have a representative from every department; some have a select number of workers on the joint committee. It is not a requirement that the workers actually know who their representative is, but they need to know how to find out.



SUPPORTING RESOURCES

Joint Health and Safety Committee

Templates and Resources for Joint Health and Safety Committees (WorkSafeBC)

<https://link.go2hr.ca/cor-E8-003>

Joint Health and Safety Committee Fundamentals: Participant Workbook (WorkSafeBC)

<https://link.go2hr.ca/cor-E7-002>

FORMS, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES

go2HR has sample forms, policies, and procedures you may find helpful for developing your safety management system. You can download and modify the following Word documents to suit the specific needs of your operation:

- Joint Health and Safety Committee
<https://link.go2hr.ca/cor-E8-004>
- Joint Health and Safety Committee Members
<https://link.go2hr.ca/cor-E8-005>