



Digital Government and Service NL

Advisory Council on Occupational Health and Safety

Annual Activity Report
2022-23

For more information:

Website: www.gov.nl.ca/dgsnl/

Digital Government and Service NL

P. O. Box 8700, Confederation Building

St. John's, NL A1B 4J6

Telephone: 709.729.4834 Fax: 709.729.4754

E-mail: servicenlinfo@gov.nl.ca

REFERENCE PERIOD

This report covers the period of April 1, 2022 through to March 31, 2023, the fiscal year of the Advisory Council on Occupational Health and Safety.

Table of Contents

Chairperson’s Message..... 1

Overview..... 2

Vision..... 3

Mandate..... 3

Highlights and Partnerships 3

Report on Performance 4

Opportunities and Challenges 5

Financial Statements..... 6

Chairperson's Message

As Chairperson of the Advisory Council on Occupational Health and Safety (Advisory Council), I am pleased to submit the Annual Activity Report for 2022-23.

This report is prepared in compliance with the **Transparency and Accountability Act**, which requires the Advisory Council to prepare a yearly report as a Category 3 Government entity. 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 reaffirm 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,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Travis White".

Travis White

Overview

The Advisory Council has 11 members, including the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, two ex-officio positions and a secretary. The remaining membership consists of equal representation from labour and management. Members are appointed for three-year terms and are eligible for reappointment for no more than two consecutive terms.

Where the term of a member expires, the member continues to serve until reappointed or replaced. As of March 31, 2023, the following is a list of active members serving on the Advisory Council.

Member	Representation
Travis White	Chairperson
Yvette Coffey	Vice-Chairperson
Kathleen King	Labour Representative
Kristy Reid	Labour Representative
Robert Richards	Labour Representative
Liz Palmera-Nunez	Management Representative
Rayna Luther	Management Representative
Vacant	Management Representative
Ann Martin - Ex-Officio CEO, WorkplaceNL	
Gail Boland - Ex-Officio ADM, Occupational Health and Safety, Digital Government and Service NL	
Heather Taylor - Secretary Manager, Standards and Regulatory Review, Digital Government and Service NL	

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 is established in accordance with section 12 of the **Occupational Health and Safety Act** (the 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, occupational health and safety matters and any matter relating to occupational health and safety that the Minister has referred to the Advisory Council for its advice.

Budget and Expenditures

The Advisory Council is funded through the Occupational Health and Safety Division of Digital Government and Service NL. Approximately \$25,000 is budgeted annually for the operation of the Advisory Council, which includes reimbursements as per Treasury Board Guidelines for Boards, Commissions and Agencies. From this total, approximately \$3,600 is reserved for reimbursing 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 \$1,030 during the 2022-23 fiscal year for reimbursement to 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. During the 2022-23 fiscal period orientation was provided to three new members appointed during the 2021-22 fiscal period. This included; the authority and business of Council, overview of Digital Government and Service NL and WorkplaceNL. The Advisory Council works with all key stakeholders on occupational health issues as they arise.

Report on Performance

This document outlines the Advisory Council's activities from April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023, towards the achievement of its objectives as outlined in the Advisory Council's 2020-23 Activity Plan.

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 Advisory Council for advice.

Results Achieved:

The Advisory Council met twice in the 2022-23 reporting period and provided recommendations on initiatives under review by Digital Government and Service NL.

The Advisory Council reviewed recommendations put forward by key stakeholder groups to amend the Act to raise the threshold for an occupational health and safety committee from 10 or more workers to 20 or more workers, and expand the threshold for a workplace health and safety representative from less than 10 workers to less than 20 workers. These recommendations were suggested by the Newfoundland and Labrador Employer's Council, supported by the Newfoundland and Labrador Labour Federation; and were proposed as a means to assist smaller workplaces who were struggling to comply with the Act because of high staff turnover, without compromising the health and safety of their workers. These recommendations also harmonize the requirements for occupational health and safety committees and representatives with other jurisdictions throughout the country and with the Federal Government. The

Advisory Council agreed with these recommendations and put them forward for ministerial consideration November 10, 2022.

The Advisory Council also considered the issue of supervisor training. Currently, there is no mandatory requirement for supervisor training; however, some key stakeholders are requesting that this training be mandatory. The Advisory Council will continue to engage with the Occupational Health and Safety Division and WorkplaceNL to put forward recommendations for ministerial consideration.

The Advisory Council was also asked to consider whether the definition of personal floatation devices in the **Occupational Health and Safety Act** was sufficient enough to clarify safety requirements. The Advisory Council subsequently advised Minister Stoodley on August 16, 2022 that Newfoundland and Labrador's provisions for personal floatation devices are sufficient and are similar to those of other jurisdictions.

Throughout the reporting period, the Advisory Council was also consulted on various regulatory and harmonization matters.

Opportunities and Challenges

The mandate of the Advisory Council is to advise the Minister on the administration of the Act and regulations, occupational health and safety matters, and those matters referred to the Advisory Council by the Minister. The Advisory Council will endeavor to stay abreast of new business, so that its advice to the Minister is of high quality and value. The Advisory Council also sees these issues as an opportunity to feed into the development and amendment of legislation and policy to ensure that government considers the varying perspectives related to occupational health and safety.

The Continued harmonization of occupational health and safety requirements and the various issues that arise when industries work to align their practices with other jurisdictions remains both a challenge and an opportunity for Advisory Council. Members must stay vigilant to ensure they are up to date on industry and safety

developments, while also ensuring the Minister is able to receive appropriate and timely advice on how these developments may affect or provide opportunities for safety in the province.

Financial Statements

Financial statements are not required to be provided by the Advisory Council.



Digital Government and Service NL