



**TIP SHEET:**  
**Workplace Health and  
Safety Links**

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## Purpose of Resource

The purpose of this resource is to provide learners with a range of links to appropriate information and legislation relating to workplace health safety to support effective planning, development and implementation of population health initiatives and programs.

## Units of Competency

This resource supports learning and completion of assessments for the following units of competency:

- CHCORG506D Coordinate the Work Environment
- HLTWHS300A Contribute to workplace Health and Safety Processes
- HLTWHS501A Manage Workplace Health and Safety Processes

## Introduction

Workers in Australia are protected by both Federal and State health and safety legislation. Anyone who is working full-time or part-time, or has a permanent, temporary or casual job is covered. This legislation also includes home-based workers and volunteers who work in connection with a trade or business.

The legislation is designed to protect people by establishing safe systems of work to eliminate or minimise the risks to health, safety and welfare. Employers, employees and others, such as manufacturers and suppliers of machinery or substances used at work, all have an important role to play.

## National Harmonisation

In 2008, Workplace Relations Ministers from around Australia agreed to nationally harmonise work health and safety (WHS) laws. Under harmonisation, each state and territory will still have its own health and safety legislation, which will be administered by its own WorkSafe / Workcover type body. There should only be very slight variations to that legislation between jurisdictions.

The Australian Work Health and Safety Strategy 2012-2022 (the Australian Strategy) sets four outcomes and three national targets to be reported on annually with a progress review in 2017.

The four outcomes to achieve the vision of *healthy, safe and productive working lives by 2022* are:

- reduced incidence of work-related death, injury and illness, *achieved by*
- reduced exposure to hazards and risks, *using*
- improved hazard controls, *and supported by*
- an improved national work health and safety infrastructure.

The three targets to measure the progress towards achieving the vision are:

- a reduction of at least 20 per cent in the number of worker fatalities due to injury
- a reduction of at least 30 per cent in the incidence rate of claims resulting in one or more weeks off work, and
- a reduction of at least 30 per cent in the incidence rate of claims for musculoskeletal disorders resulting in one or more weeks off work.

More information on this strategy is available via Safe Work Australia <http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/SWA>

## Roles and Responsibilities of Employers and Employees

Both employers and employees have a role in preventing work related injury or illness.

### Employee responsibilities

Employees have responsibilities under work health and safety law. They must act responsibly, take care of themselves and others and cooperate with their employer in matters of health and safety. This applies to all employees, whether they have a disability or not.

Under the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992, and employee's ability to work safely is an 'inherent' or essential requirement of any job.

### Employer responsibilities

Employers are required to provide a safe and healthy workplace to protect employees against potential health and safety risks. Employers has a responsibility to ensure that all employees are covered by workers compensation insurance and, in the event of a workplace injury they must assist an injured employee return to work safely.

## Workplace Health and Safety Legislation Links

Safe Work Australia. <http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/SWA>

Queensland Government. *Work health and safety laws*. November 2013. <http://www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/law/whslaws/index.html#.UqAQgMQW2uM>

Workplace Health and Safety  
Queensland. <http://www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/#.UqATU8QW2uM>

Australian Government. Occupational Health and Safety. <http://australia.gov.au/topics/health-and-safety/occupational-health-and-safety>

Work Cover Queensland <http://www.workcoverqld.com.au/forms-and-resources/workplace-health-and-safety-resources>