



Ontario Emergency Medical Services Section 21 Sub Committee

Emergency Medical Services Guidance Note #1:

Issue: Application of EMS Guidance Notes

Purpose

Guidance notes are intended to assist Emergency Medical Services (EMS) employers, supervisors, workers, joint health and safety committee members (or health and safety representatives) by explaining the minimum requirements of the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) and its regulations and promoting “accepted practices” in EMS to protect the health and safety of EMS personnel. The guidance notes are intended to assist the workplace in ensuring a healthy and safe workplace. Reference should always be made directly to the OHSA and regulations to determine the legal rights and duties of the workplace parties. It is the responsibility of all workplace parties to ensure compliance with the OHSA and the regulations.

Guidance notes are developed by the EMS (Section 21) Sub-Committee and distributed by the Ministry of Labour on behalf of the Committee and made available on the Public Services Health & Safety Association (PSHSA) website. The Sub-Committee is made up of members from OAPC, Unifor, the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU), and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 1 Canada.

Enforcement

Ministry of Labour inspectors may refer to these guidance notes and additional information such as alerts, standards, guidelines, etc. when they carry out their enforcement duties under the Occupational Health and Safety Act and its regulations. However, inspectors are not bound by the guidance notes. They may be considered, as one source of information, in determining if every precaution reasonable in the circumstances is being taken by employers as required under section 25(2)(h) of the OHSA to protect the health and safety of EMS personnel.

Note: It is recommended that EMS incorporate the principles set out in guidance notes into standard operating procedures/guidelines and/or workplace health and safety policies and programs where appropriate.

Additional Information

Guidance notes may be accompanied by, or make reference to, additional material to give more detailed assistance to the workplace parties for the development of workplace health and safety programs. This may include best practices and standards set by other organizations such as the Canadian Standards Association, or the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (e.g. Ontario Public Health Standards), etc.



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This document should be shared with the workplace Joint Health and Safety Committee or Health and Safety Representative, incorporated into the workplace occupational health and safety policy and program where appropriate and posted on the OAPC and PSHSA web-sites.

For additional information on the requirements under the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA), please contact the Ministry of Labour call centre at 1-877-202 - 0008, or visit the website at: <http://www.labour.gov.on.ca>.

This guidance note is developed for informational purposes only. Reference should always be made to the OHSA and regulations to ascertain one's rights and duties under the law. It is the responsibility of all workplace parties to ensure compliance with the OHSA and regulations, and to seek independent legal advice where questions remain.

The Public Services Health & Safety Association (PSHSA) may be contacted for assistance in the development and implementation of an occupational health and safety policy and program: www.pshsa.ca.