

On the website of the Occupational Safety & Health Authority, www.vinnueftirlit.is, the laws and regulation the institute uses as guidelines can be found as well as other information on occupational safety and health.

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Occupational Health and Safety in Iceland

Instructions for Foreign Employees



Administration of Occupational Safety and Health (AOSH)

Icelandic workplaces are subject to the Act on Working Environment, Health and Safety in the Workplace, No. 46/1980, commonly known as AOSH laws. These laws apply to all workplaces in the country where one or more persons work.

A dedicated institution, the Administration of Occupational Safety & Health, is charged with the task of enforcing the AOSH laws and the pertinent standards/regulation. Anyone can contact AOSH, as AOSH employees shall hold all reports of workplace violations in strict confidence. The primary duties of the institution include:

- Supervising workplaces
- Instructions, educational programs, and publishing information
- Inspections for noise, pollution, ventilation, etc.
- Evaluations for machinery, technical equipment, and construction vehicles
- Research
- Making comments on new or altered work premises

Obligations and Responsibilities

The supervisor has the responsibility of ensuring that work is executed in compliance with the laws and regulations of occupational health and safety, and that there are no risks of accidents or health hazards. For example, he or she must see to it that employee areas (break rooms, restrooms, etc.) are kept in order, that equipment and materials are used according to regulations, and that stipulations on periods of rest are enforced. He or she shall ensure that the working environment and workplace health and safety are satisfactory, including social aspects of work accommodation. He



or she must also make employees aware of common work hazards or diseases associated with the work, and see to it that all employees receive the appropriate guidance and training to complete their tasks in a safe manner, e.g. the use of equipment, tools and hazardous materials.

The supervisor must see to it that:

- Laws and regulations are followed
- Organisation at the workplace is sufficient
- Risks of accidents and health hazards are prevented
- Employees receive guidance and training
- Equipment is in a good condition

The employee must follow all safety regulations, e.g. on the use of equipment, materials, personal protective equipment, and work methods. For this reason you must familiarise yourself with the regulations that apply to your workplace.

If you notice anything that constitutes a violation or that may put you or other employees in danger, you are obligated to report this to your supervisor or safety steward so that the situation may be rectified.

The employee must:

- Be familiar with regulations
- Comply with regulations
- Report anything that requires attention

Use of Personal Protective Equipment

Personal protective equipment includes items like hardhats, protective ear wear, safety shoes, safety masks, reflective clothing, and protective clothing for weather.

Employees must use personal protection equipment when it is not possible to prevent or limit a safety risk sufficiently with preventative measures or other arrangements.

The employer must supply employees with personal protective equipment at no charge as well as inform the employees about the dangers the protective equipment is meant to guard against.