



Working in Yukon

A guide for foreign workers

Employment rights and responsibilities



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About this guide

Workers from other countries come to Yukon every year. This guide tells foreign workers what they need to know about working in Yukon. It has information on:

- employment standards
- workplace safety
- workplace culture

Foreign workers have the same basic workplace rights and responsibilities as workers who are Canadian citizens.

Use the Table of contents at the front of this guide and the Index at the back to find the information you want to know. Use the Glossary (before the Index) to learn more about some of the words in this guide. Words in green are explained in the Glossary.

If you need more information about any of the topics in this guide, contact the organizations listed on page 5 or in the “Community contacts” section on page 28.

In this guide, the term “foreign worker” includes temporary foreign workers and Yukon nominees.

- Temporary foreign workers work in specific jobs for specific lengths of time. When their employment contracts are over, they usually return to their home countries. Temporary foreign workers who want permanent residence may be eligible for the Yukon Nominee Program. The Government of Canada administers the Temporary Foreign Worker Program.
- Yukon nominees work for Yukon employers in permanent, year-round, full-time, jobs. The Yukon Nominee Program leads to permanent residence. The Government of Yukon administers the Yukon Nominee Program in partnership with the Government of Canada.

Disclaimer: The information in this guide was correct at the time of printing. Changes to immigration programs, employment standards and workplace safety rules can occur at any time. To be sure that you have the most up-to-date information, visit the websites listed in this guide or call the offices responsible for those programs, standards and rules.



Important contacts

You can get help from the offices listed on this page. **You do not need your employer's permission to call these offices or to visit their websites. Your employer cannot punish you, and you cannot be fired or deported for using these services.**

Immigration Unit, Economic Development

For information and questions about the Yukon Nominee Program, foreign qualifications recognition, settlement services, language testing and language programs, or any other aspect of Yukon immigration
Location: 303 Alexander Street

Mailing Address:
Box 2703 (F-1)
Whitehorse, YT
Y1A 2C6

Telephone: 867-667-5131, or 1-800-661-0408
extension 5131
Fax: 867-393-6228
Email: yukon.nominee@gov.yk.ca

Employment Standards, Community Services

For information and questions about employment standards such as **minimum wage** and overtime pay

Location: 307 Black Street

Mailing Address:
Box 2703 (C-7)
Whitehorse, YT
Y1A 2C6

Telephone: 867-667-5944, or 1-800-661-0408
extension 5944

Fax: 867-393-6317

Email: employmentstandards@gov.yk.ca

Yukon Human Rights Commission

For information and questions about the promotion of equality, diversity and/or questions about discrimination

Location and mailing address:

215-305 Main Street
Whitehorse, Yukon
Y1A 2B4

Telephone: 867-667-2662, or 1-800-661-0535 or collect calls

Email: info@yukonhumanrights.ca

Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board

For information and questions about workplace safety and workplace injuries and illnesses

Over-the-telephone service is available in 170 languages.

Location and mailing address:

401 Strickland Street
Whitehorse, YT
Y1A 5N8

Telephone: 867-667-5645, or 1-800-661-0443

Fax: 867-393-6279

Email: worksafe@gov.yk.ca

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

For information and questions about Government of Canada matters (for example, permanent residence, work permits, Temporary Foreign Worker Program, changes of immigration status)

Telephone: 1-888-242-2100

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship.html>

Service Canada

For information and questions about employment-related services from the Government of Canada (for example, Social Insurance Numbers and [Employment Insurance](#))

Location: Suite 125, 300 Main Street (Elijah Smith Building)

Telephone: 1-800-622-6232

A note about telephone numbers:

- to call a local phone number in Whitehorse, enter the seven-digit number (for example, 667-1234); you do not need to enter the 867 area code.
- From outside Whitehorse, you can call many of the organizations listed in this guide for free using the toll-free numbers. For Government of Yukon numbers, call 1-800-661-0408 (press 1 for English; press 2 for French). Wait for someone to answer the phone or enter the four-digit extension of the office or person you want to talk to, if you know it (for example, 1-800-661-0408 extension 1234).
- If you are calling from outside Whitehorse and there is no toll-free number, enter 1-867 and the seven-digit number (for example, 1-867-123-4567). You will have to pay long distance charges for these calls.



Help for foreign workers

Settlement services

Moving to a new country can be difficult. The Multicultural Centre of the Yukon and the Association franco-yukonnaise (for French speakers) can help. These organizations offer settlement services to newcomers. These services help newcomers learn how to become a part of their new community. For example, you can:

- get information about community services (shopping, banking, doctors, hairdressers, etc.);
- get maps and bus schedules;
- get help obtaining a Social Insurance Number, a driver's licence, and a Yukon Health Care Insurance card;
- take English classes or French classes;
- get information about courses at Yukon College to improve your English, or your work skills.

Multicultural Centre of the Yukon

4141-D – 4th Avenue
Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 1J1

Telephone: 867-667-6205, or 1-844-667-6205
Website: www.mcyukon.com

Association franco-yukonnaise

302 Strickland Street
Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 2K1

Telephone: 867-668-2663 ext. 234
Fax: 867-668-3511
Website: www.afy.yk.ca



Employment standards

Yukon employers must follow employment standards (rules). These rules apply to foreign workers and to workers who are Canadian citizens. These rules include:

- **minimum wage;**
- hours of work and overtime pay;
- paid vacation;
- general holidays;
- time off for illness, or a death in the worker's family.

For jobs in Yukon, these rules are written in two laws: *Employment Standards Act* and *Canada Labour Code*. The *Employment Standards Act* applies to most jobs in Yukon, but not all. The *Canada Labour Code* applies to anyone who works for the Government of Canada or a Yukon First Nation, and to anyone who works in a bank or at an airport, for example. (There are different employment rules for babysitters and live-in caregivers. Information about these jobs is at www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/tax/businesses/topics/payroll/payroll-deductions-contributions/special-situations/employing-a-caregiver-baby-sitter-domestic-worker.html

The *Employment Standards Act* and the *Canada Labour Code* apply to full-time and part-time workers. (temporary foreign workers work at least 35 hours per

week, as specified in their employment contracts.)

This guide does not include everything you may want to know. You can read the *Employment Standards Act* and get more information at www.community.gov.yk.ca/es.html. You can read the *Canada Labour Code* and get more information at laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/L-2/.

Employer expectations

Yukon employers expect you to:

- arrive at work on time, and be ready to start your shift;
- take only the allowed time off for breaks;
- do the best job you can;
- work safely.

Worker responsibilities

Yukon workers have employment responsibilities. For example, you must not take time off without permission, and you must dress and act appropriately for the type of work you are hired to do. You must also:

- report your work hours honestly;
- follow company rules and policies;
- take good care of your employer's equipment and tools;
- return things that belong to your employer when the job ends.

Worker rights

Yukon workers have employment rights. These rights are protected by law. These rights apply to both foreign workers and workers who are permanent residents, or Canadian citizens. For example, you have the right to the correct payment of wages, overtime, vacation pay, and general holiday pay. You also have the right to certain kinds of unpaid leave (time off)—for example, when you are sick, or if someone in your family dies.

Breaks

Employers must normally give workers a 30-minute meal break after 5 hours of work. If a worker's shift is longer than 10 hours, the meal break can come after 6 hours of work. Employers do not have to pay wages for meal breaks. Employers do not have to give workers coffee or cigarette breaks.

Shift work

Some employers need workers at night as well as during the day. For example, hospitals need workers 24 hours a day.

If you have to work shifts, your employer must give you a rest period of at least 8 hours between shifts. For example, if you worked from midnight until 7 a.m., your next shift cannot start before 3 p.m. that day.

You may have to work a split shift. This means that your work shift is divided into 2 parts. For example, you work for 4 hours, not work for 4 hours, and then work again for 4 more hours on the same day. Split

shifts must be completed within 12 hours. For example, if your first shift starts at 7 a.m., your second shift that day must be finished by 7 p.m.

Time off / Leave

Illness

Yukon workers earn 1 unpaid sick day for every month of employment, up to a maximum of 12 days per year. You should take sick days only when you are too sick or injured to come to work, your illness is contagious (easily given to someone else), or you need to see a doctor or other medical person.

Employers do not have to pay workers for sick days. Your employer can ask you for a **medical certificate** to prove that you were sick or injured.

Personal appointments

Your employer expects you to arrange medical and other personal appointments during non-working hours. Most employers understand that this is not always possible. If you have to take time off for a personal appointment, your employer does not have to pay you for the time you are not at work. Some employers allow workers to work extra hours at another time to make up the personal time off.

You should always check with your employer before arranging a personal appointment during working hours.

Family death

If someone in your immediate family* dies, your employer must give you up to one week off without pay. This is called “bereavement leave.” The person’s funeral must happen within that week. Check with your employer and the Immigration Unit before going to a funeral outside Canada.

*Immediate family means your spouse or common-law partner, your parent, or your child.

Family emergency

Your employer does not have to give you time off for family emergencies; you may have to use vacation time for a family emergency. If you must leave Canada to deal with a family emergency, make sure that you get your employer’s approval first. You should also check with the Immigration Unit to make sure that your employment or immigration status will not be affected.

Dress code

Your workplace may have a dress code. This means that your employer can tell you what kinds of clothes you may or may not wear at work, for safety or other reasons. Your employer may ask you to remove jewellery or to cover tattoos. In some workplaces, you may have to wear a uniform.

Seniority

Workers who have worked for an employer for a period of time usually have more seniority than new workers. Workers with more seniority may earn higher wages, get longer holiday breaks, or not have to work certain shifts. In Yukon, there are no laws about seniority. There may be rules about seniority in workplaces where the workers belong to unions.

Minimum working age

In Yukon, there is no law that says how old you must be before you can work. (There is a rule that you must be at least 16 years old to work in a mine, and at least 18 to work underground or at the working face of a mine.)

Everyone under 16 years of age must attend school and cannot work during school hours without special permission from the government.

Questions about employment standards?

You can call Employment Standards if you have any questions about employment standards or if you believe your employer is not following the rules. For example, your employer is not giving you a meal break or allowing you to take time off when you are sick. In Whitehorse, call 867-667-5944. Outside Whitehorse call 1-800-661-0408 extension 5944. *Your employer cannot punish you, and you cannot be fired or deported for calling Employment Standards.*



Wages and deductions

Social Insurance Number

Every worker in Canada must have a Social Insurance Number (SIN). You cannot work without a SIN. Your SIN is your personal identification number for employment purposes. It is used for **income tax**.

You do not have to write your SIN on a job application form, but you must give your SIN to your employer once you are hired. Your bank will ask for your SIN when you open a bank account or invest money. You may also have to give your SIN to get government benefits such as **Employment Insurance**.

You should not give your SIN to anyone else. For example, do not use your SIN as identification (ID); use your driver's licence or another piece of ID instead. You should keep your SIN card in a safe place and keep your number secret. If you want to know more about who can ask for your SIN, visit www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/sin/protect.html.

To get a Social Insurance Number, visit the Service Canada Centre, Suite 125, 300 Main Street (Elijah Smith Building). The office is open Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

TD1 form

Before your employer can pay your wages, you must fill out a TD1 form. You usually fill out the TD1 form on your first day at work. This form helps your employer choose the right income tax rate for you. Your income tax rate is the percentage of your income that you pay as tax. Your income tax rate is based on how much money you earn and whether or not you have any dependents.

Minimum wage

Minimum wage is the lowest hourly wage an employer can pay a worker.

Employers must pay their workers at least minimum wage, whether workers are paid by the hour, the week, or the month. Yukon employers must pay nominees the median wage which is slightly higher than the minimum wage. **Tips** and **gratuities** are extra income; they are not considered part of a worker's wage. Workers who earn tips and gratuities (restaurant servers, for example) must be paid at least minimum wage, not including their tips.

Overtime

In most jobs, your employer must pay overtime if you work more than 8 hours in a 24-hour day or more than 40 hours in a 7-day week. If there is a general holiday in the week, your employer must pay overtime if you work more than 32 hours in that week.

Your employer does not have to pay overtime if you are paid by commission or if you are:

- a manager;
- a live-in caregiver, or;
- a member of the employer's family.

Overtime pay

Overtime pay is 1.5 times your hourly pay rate. For example, if you normally earn \$15 per hour, your overtime pay would be \$22.50 per hour.

A worker can agree in writing to get time off with pay instead of getting overtime pay. In this case, the time off is calculated at straight time. For example, if you worked 8 hours of overtime in a week, you would get 8 hours off with pay at the regular pay rate.

24-hour clock

Overtime is calculated based on a 24-hour clock. The clock starts at the beginning of a worker's first shift. Calculating overtime can be confusing when you work on 2 different days within a 24-hour period. For example:

- your first shift started at 4:30 p.m. on Friday and ended at 9 p.m.;

- your next shift started at 10 a.m. on Saturday and ended at 6 p.m.;
- you took a 30-minute unpaid meal break at 3 p.m. on Saturday.

You worked 4.5 hours on Friday and 7.5 hours on Saturday. So, from 4:30 p.m. on Friday to 6 p.m. on Saturday, you worked a total of 12 hours. The Saturday morning shift started within 24 hours of the start of your Friday afternoon shift, so all of your Saturday hours are included in the overtime calculation:

Friday, 4:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.	4.5 hours straight time
Saturday, 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.	3.5 hours straight time
Saturday, 1:30 p.m. to 6 p.m. (minus unpaid meal break from 3 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.)	4 hours overtime pay

Averaging agreement

Some employers have averaging agreements with their workers. These agreements affect how overtime is paid. Ask your employer if there is an averaging agreement in your workplace.

Paid vacation

Yukon workers are entitled to two weeks of paid vacation leave for every year of work. This means that your employer must pay you at least 4% of your wages in addition to your regular pay. This is called vacation pay. For example, if you work 35 hours a week and you earn \$15 per hour, your wages for the year would be \$27,300 (\$15 x 1,820 hours). In one year you would earn \$1,092 vacation pay (4% of \$27,300).

Your employer can decide when to pay vacation pay: Some employers pay it on every cheque, some pay it at the end of your work year, and some pay it when you take your vacation leave. Workers normally take vacation leave within 10 months of the end of the work year. For example, if you started your job on January 1, 2015, you would earn 2 weeks of paid vacation by December 31, 2015. You would normally take your two weeks of paid vacation before October 31, 2016.

You can agree in writing not to take your 2-week vacation break but to work instead. In that case your employer must pay you the vacation pay you have earned in addition to your regular wages for those two weeks. Your employer cannot force you to work instead of taking vacation leave, but your employer may prefer that you not take your vacation at a particular time—for example, when the business is very busy.

General holidays

Government offices, banks, and most private businesses are closed on general holidays. Many stores and restaurants stay open, however. (Some people say “statutory holiday” instead of general holiday.)

Your employer may ask you to work on a general holiday. If you agree to work, your employer must pay you overtime plus general holiday pay. This means that you would earn 2.5 times your regular pay for working on a general holiday. For example, if you earn \$15 per hour, your employer must pay you \$37.50 per hour that day. (You must have worked for that employer for at least 30 days before the general holiday, and you must have worked your regular shift before and after the holiday.)

There are 9 general holidays in Yukon every year. Some general holidays always occur on a specific date; for example, Christmas Day is always December 25. Other holidays may occur on different days, usually Friday or Monday, to give workers a “long weekend.”

- New Year’s Day (January 1)
- Good Friday (the Friday of Easter weekend, in either March or April)
- Victoria Day (on or close to May 24)
- Canada Day (July 1)
- Discovery Day (on or close to August 17)
- Labour Day (first Monday in September)
- Thanksgiving Day (second Monday in October)
- Remembrance Day (November 11)
- Christmas Day (December 25)

Yukon government offices and many businesses are also closed on these days, but they are not general holidays in Yukon:

- Heritage Day (third Friday in February)
- Easter Monday (the Monday of Easter weekend, in either March or April)
- National Indigenous Peoples Day (June 21)
- Boxing Day (December 26)

Reporting pay

Your employer might send you home after you arrive at work for your shift. For example, there might be more workers than are needed for that shift. If that happens, your employer must pay you two hours’ reporting pay at your regular pay rate.

Your employer does not have to pay reporting pay if:

- the reasons for sending you home are beyond your employer's control. For example, very bad weather makes it impossible for you to do your job.
- You are unfit to do your work. For example, you are sick or **impaired** from drinking alcohol or taking drugs.
- Your employer tried to contact you before you came to work.

Pay period

All Yukon workers must be paid at least every 16 days—in other words, twice a month. This is true whether you are paid by the hour, the week, or the month. (If you are paid a monthly salary, your employer cannot wait until the end of the month to pay you; your employer must pay part of your salary in the middle of the month. This is called a mid-month advance.)

Wage statement

Your employer must give you a written wage statement at least once a month. This statement may be attached to your cheque as a “pay stub,” or it may be on a separate piece of paper. The statement must show:

- pay period (dates you are being paid for);
- number of hours you are being paid for;
- rate of pay (for example, \$15 per hour or \$3,000 per month);
- deductions (for example, **income tax** and **Employment Insurance**);
- gross pay (amount you earn before deductions);
- net pay (amount you “take home” after deductions);
- vacation pay if your employer is paying it on every cheque.

You should always write down the hours you work to make sure that your employer pays you correctly. You should check your wage statements carefully and tell your employer immediately if you think there is a mistake. You should keep all of your wage statements so that you can compare them to the T4 slip your employer will give you in February.

T4 slip

Before the end of February, your employer must give you a T4 slip. The T4 slip shows the total wages you earned in the previous year and the money your employer deducted from your wages. You need the T4 slip to prepare your **income tax** return. You send one copy of the T4 slip with your completed return and you keep one copy for your own personal records. You must submit your income tax return by April 30 every year.

If you move, remember to give your new address to any previous employers so that you will receive your T4 slip(s).

You should keep all your wage statements until you get your T4 slip. When you get your T4 slip, you can compare your wage statements with the amounts on the T4 slip to make sure that they are correct. Tell your employer immediately if you think there is a mistake. (If for some reason you don't get a T4 slip, you can submit your wage statements with your income tax return instead.)

Deductions

Your employer deducts certain amounts of money from your wages. These deductions include:

- **income tax;**
- **Employment Insurance (EI);**
- **Canada Pension Plan (CPP);**
- union dues, if you belong to a union.

Your employer can deduct money from your wages for room and board (accommodation and meals), but only if you have agreed to this in writing and it is part of your employment contract.

Normally, you must pay for any food and beverages that you eat or drink, and any goods and services that you get from your employer. Your employer can deduct these costs from your wages if you agree in writing.

Your employer can deduct money for extended health care benefits (for example, Blue Cross), if they are part of the employment contract you have with your employer or if they are part of the collective agreement your union has with your employer.

Your employer cannot deduct money from your wages for Yukon Health Care Insurance. Your employer must pay for temporary health insurance coverage for your first three months of employment. After that, you will be covered by Yukon Health Care Insurance at no cost to you. Your employer cannot deduct money from your wages for workers' compensation.

Your employer cannot deduct cash register shortages if more than one person has control of the cash register. Your employer cannot deduct money from your pay if a customer doesn't pay for something at your workplace. Your employer cannot deduct wages for poor quality work or for damage to tools or equipment.

You can ask your employer to make certain other kinds of deductions. For example, you can ask your employer to give money to a charity every month or to pay private insurance premiums directly from your wages. You must ask your employer to make these kinds of deductions in writing.

Uniforms and equipment

You may have to pay for your work uniform and for certain kinds of personal protective equipment (PPE) that you need to do your work safely—for example, general-purpose work gloves or work boots.

Questions about wages and deductions?

You can call Employment Standards if you have any questions about wages and deductions or if you believe your employer is not following the rules—for example, your employer is not paying you overtime or vacation pay. In Whitehorse, call 867-667-5944. Outside Whitehorse call 1-800-661-0408 extension 5944. **Your employer cannot punish you, and you cannot be fired or deported for calling Employment Standards.**



Unions

Many workers in Yukon belong to unions. Unions are organizations that try to get the best working conditions for their members. Unions and employers make **collective agreements** that include things like wages, hours of work, hiring, seniority, and health benefits. In Canada, workers have the right to join or form a union.

Workers pay dues to cover the costs of operating their unions. If you belong to a union, your employer will deduct union dues from your wages.

When you start a job at a unionized workplace, you should:

- get a copy of the collective agreement;
- know who your union representative is. (A union representative is also called a “shop steward.”)

Unions are democratic organizations. This means that workers who belong to the union can vote for the people who manage the union. Unionized workers can also:

- participate in union meetings;
- run for election for union positions;
- vote on collective agreements and strikes.

If you are having problems at work, your union representative may be able to help you.



Foreign qualifications recognition

Many workers who come to Canada had professional jobs in their home countries. For example, they were doctors, nurses, accountants, teachers or electricians. Before they can work in these jobs in Canada, they have to prove that their qualifications—education, knowledge, skills, and work experience—are similar to Canadian standards.

There are two kinds of professions in Canada: regulated and non-regulated. For regulated jobs, there is usually a national organization that checks whether or not a worker's qualifications are acceptable in Canada. For non-regulated jobs, an employer can often decide whether the worker's qualifications are acceptable for the job.

For more information about foreign qualifications recognition, call the Immigration Unit. In Whitehorse, call 867-667-5131. Outside Whitehorse call 1-800-661-0408 extension 5131.



When a job ends

Being fired or laid off

Sometimes employers want to end a worker's employment because they are dissatisfied with the worker. They want to fire the worker. Sometimes, the business is not able to keep all of its workers because there is not enough work for all of the workers. They need to lay off the worker.

When you are fired, you will usually not be able to work for that employer again; you will have to look for another job. When you are laid off, there is a chance you will be re-hired if the business gets busy again. Workers who are fired or laid off might or might not be able to collect **Employment Insurance**.

If you get fired or laid off from your job, you must notify the Immigration Unit immediately to discuss your options for remaining in Canada and finding another job.

Whether you are fired or laid off, your employer must pay the vacation pay that you have earned up until then. Your employer must pay your vacation pay within 7 calendar days of your last day of work.

If you are fired or laid off, you must return tools, equipment and other items such as keys, credit cards and uniforms, unless you paid for these items and they belong to you.

If you belong to a union, you should check your **collective agreement** and talk to your union representative to find out if there is anything you can do about the situation.

Written notice or “in lieu” pay

During your probation period (usually 3 or 6 months) your employer can end your employment for any reason and without giving you any written notice.

If you have worked beyond your probation period (usually for more than 6 months), your employer must either give you written notice or pay you “in lieu” (instead of giving notice). The amount of notice or in lieu pay depends on how long you have worked for that employer. For example, if you have worked for more than 6 months but less than 1 year, your employer must give you either 1-week's-notice or pay you 1-week's-wages.

If your employer gives you notice, you will work until the last day of your employment and you will be paid for your time as usual. If your employer pays you in lieu of notice, you will get your wages but not have to work for them. If your employer can prove that there was a very good reason to fire you, your employer doesn't have to give you either notice or wages. For example, if you don't follow company rules or you are often late for work, your employer might be able to fire you without notice or in lieu pay.

Quitting your job

Occasionally, a work situation becomes very difficult for a worker. You may feel that you have to quit your job. You have the right to quit a job, but you must call the Immigration Unit before you quit. Unit staff can often help to solve workplace problems by talking about them with the worker and the employer.

Record of Employment

When your employment ends (whether you quit or were fired or laid off), your employer should give you a Record of Employment (ROE). This form shows the dates when you started and finished working for that employer. You need this form if you are going to apply for [Employment Insurance](#).

If your employer doesn't give you an ROE, you should ask for one. Keep it with your personal records. You can use it to update your resume, and you can show it to future employers to prove your work history.

Reference letter

If your employment contract is ending soon, or you are being laid off, you can ask your employer for a reference letter. (If you are being fired, your employer probably won't give you a reference letter.)

A reference letter can help you get another job. You can attach it to your resume. It usually includes:

- the dates you worked for the employer;
- your job title and duties;
- your special skills;
- comments about the quality of your work;
- a recommendation.

Exit interview

When a job ends, your employer might ask you to do an exit interview. In an exit interview you usually discuss:

- the kind of work you did;
- what you learned;
- what was good about the job;
- any problems you had and what you did to solve them.



Workplace health and safety

Workplace safety

Workplace safety is very important in Canada and Yukon. Canada has strong laws to help keep workers safe at work. Employers and workers must follow these laws. These laws may be very different from the laws in your home country. In Canada, employers and workers work together to make workplaces safe.

Employer and supervisor safety responsibilities

Employers and supervisors are responsible for the safety of their workers. Supervisors must:

- teach you how to do every part of your job safely;
- give you any necessary **personal protective equipment (PPE)**—for example, a hard hat or safety glasses—and make sure that you know how to use it properly. (Yukon employers do not have to pay for basic safety footwear and general-purpose work gloves for their workers. Workers must pay for this PPE themselves.);
- tell you about anything in your workplace that could hurt you or make you sick—for example, a chemical used for cleaning that could hurt your lungs if you breathe it in or burn your skin if you don't wear special gloves;

- not allow workers to work if they are **impaired** from drinking alcohol or taking drugs;
- report **incidents** immediately to the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board;
- report workplace injuries and illnesses immediately to the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board.

Safety orientation

When you start a new job, your employer will give you an orientation to show you around the workplace and to explain what you will do in your job. The orientation should happen on your first day of work before you begin working.

Workplace safety is an important part of your orientation. Your employer should answer all of these questions before you start working. If not, ask!

- what **hazards** (dangers) are there in my job?
- do I have to wear any **personal protective equipment (PPE)**? Where do I get this PPE? Who will train me to use this PPE correctly and safely?
- what should I do in an emergency—for example, if there is a fire?
- where are the first-aid kits, fire extinguishers, and other emergency equipment?
- who should I ask if I have a safety question?
- what should I do if I get hurt at work?

Worker safety rights

All workers in Canada have three basic safety rights at work. You have:

- The right to know how to do your job safely. This includes the right to proper training and the right to use any necessary **personal protective equipment (PPE)**. You have the right to know about anything in your job that could hurt you or make you sick. You have the right to know how to protect yourself from getting hurt or sick at work.
- The right to participate in health and safety programs at your workplace. This means that you can ask questions, ask for more training, and join a safety committee.
- The right to refuse to do work that you believe is not safe for you or for another worker.

You may come from a country where there are different and perhaps fewer workplace safety rules than in Canada. You may have to learn to do your job differently here than how you did it back home—for example, you may have to use PPE that you did not have to use in your home country. To work safely here, you may have to read information about chemicals or equipment or tools.

Your right to know how to do your job safely is very important, but it is more than a right: it is your responsibility. You may be afraid or embarrassed to ask questions about safety at work or to admit that you don't understand the instructions you read or hear. You may be afraid to tell your supervisor about a dangerous situation—a broken piece of equipment, for example. You may be afraid to refuse to do work that you think is unsafe. You may not want to report that another worker is

doing his or her work unsafely. But in Canada, the law says that you must report **hazards** and unsafe work. If you don't say anything, you or another worker could get hurt or even killed.

Your employer cannot punish you, you cannot be fired or deported, and your employment or immigration status will not be affected if you:

- ask questions about safety at work;
- report unsafe equipment or procedures;
- refuse to do work that you believe is not safe.

If you are afraid to say something about safety at your job, you can call the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board (WCB) at 867-667-5450, or 1-800-661-0443. You do not have to give your name. WCB can send a safety officer to your workplace to look at the situation and tell your employer to fix any safety problems. WCB does not need to tell your employer that someone called them.

Worker safety responsibilities

Workers have workplace safety responsibilities. You must:

- Follow all health and safety procedures and instructions.
- Ask your supervisor if you don't understand how to do something.
- Use **personal protective equipment (PPE)** and safety clothing.
- Immediately report broken or unsafe equipment or other **hazards** to your supervisor. You cannot ignore a problem or wait for someone else to fix it; you must fix it if you can. For example, you should clean up spills, remove broken glass, or put a "do not use" sign on a broken ladder or other piece of equipment.
- Not play jokes on other workers or fight on the job.

- Not come to work if you are **impaired** from drinking alcohol or taking drugs.
- Report all **incidents** and injuries immediately to your supervisor.
- Report serious injuries to the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board. Tell the truth about what happened.

Workers' compensation

Sometimes workers get hurt at work. Most injuries are not serious, but sometimes a worker has to see a doctor and take time off work to get better. Canada has a special kind of insurance to help injured workers when they cannot go to work. It is called workers' compensation.

Workers' compensation is for all workers in Yukon, no matter what kind of work you do, and whether you work full-time or part-time. Workers' compensation pays your medical costs, including prescription drugs, medical fees and hospital expenses. Workers' compensation also pays part of your wages while you are off work getting better.

Employers pay 100% of the costs of workers' compensation. Employers are not allowed to deduct money from workers' wages to pay for workers' compensation.

Workplace injuries

If you are hurt at work:

- Tell your supervisor immediately.
- Get medical help. Get first-aid at work and then decide if you need to go to the hospital or see a doctor. At the hospital or doctor's office, you must say that you got hurt at work.
- Write down what happened. Even if you are not badly hurt, write down what happened in your workplace first aid or incident book. Do this as soon as possible so that you don't forget anything. If your workplace doesn't have a first aid or incident book, write it on a calendar or a piece of paper and put it in a safe place. Some injuries don't seem bad at first, but they can get worse in a few hours or a few days. For example, a cut or a burn can get infected, and you might have to see a doctor or take time off work later. It's important that you write down what happened, when it happened, so that you have proof.
- Fill out a Worker's Report of Injury and send it to the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board. Your employer will fill out a different form, but you must fill out the Worker's Report of Injury yourself. (You can get someone to help you if necessary.)
- After a few days, call the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board to make sure that they have your report and that they don't need any more information from you.



Success at work

Teamwork

Teamwork is important in most Canadian workplaces. Employers expect workers to work together for success. Teamwork is about cooperating with other workers, helping other workers, and doing what's best for everyone, not just for you.

To be a good team member at work:

- have a positive and helpful attitude;
- co-operate with your supervisor and coworkers;
- be polite and respectful to your supervisor and coworkers;
- be honest;
- be reliable. If you say you will do something, do it;
- listen carefully to others;
- do not gossip;
- arrive on time and ready to work before the beginning of your shift. Work your full shift;
- respect time limits for breaks;
- ask questions when you need to know something;
- ask for help when you need it;
- do the best job you can do.

Starting a new job

When you start a new job, you will probably feel unsure of yourself. You may wonder if you are doing a good job. This is especially true for foreign workers in Yukon. You have to learn how to do your job, and you may have problems using English, adjusting to a new community, and getting used to the cold Yukon weather. You might be experiencing “**culture shock**.” Organizations like the Multicultural Centre of the Yukon and the Association franco-yukonnaise (for French speakers) can help you with some of these problems. They offer settlement services to newcomers to help them learn about their new community so that they can feel at home.

Orientation and training

At the start of a new job, your employer will give you an orientation. The orientation normally happens on the first day of work. An orientation includes information about the workplace and about the work you will be doing. An important part of the orientation is safety information about the workplace and your job.

Orientation is only the beginning of your on-the-job training. Most good employers continue to offer training to their workers. They must offer training when there are changes in the job or there is new technology to learn. You should always take any

training your employer offers you. It will help you improve in your job, and it will show your employer that you care about your job. Training must be for less than six months and non-credit.

Some employers allow their workers to take time off for extra training. If this training is related to your job, your employer might be willing to pay the costs of the training and possibly pay your wages as well.

Keep records of all your training. Write down the type of training you take and the dates when you take it. Keep any certificates you receive. Include your training on job applications and on your resume. Be ready to talk about your training in job interviews.

Probation

In Yukon workplaces, there is a probation period—a time when you are learning how to do your job. This period is usually 3 or 6 months. At the end of the probation period, you will normally meet with your supervisor to talk about the job and your work. But you do not need to wait until the end of your probation period to ask your supervisor how well you

are doing. Most employers appreciate workers who ask for feedback before the end of the probation period. It shows that they really care about their jobs.

Promotion

Many workers want more responsibility as they continue to work for the same employer. Jobs with more responsibility usually pay higher wages and may have other benefits. Tell your employer if you want to be promoted to a higher position. If you are promoted, you must tell the Immigration Unit because you will need to change your employment contract to show your new position, wages, etc.

If you become a supervisor, make sure that you know your new responsibilities. For example, supervisors have special responsibilities for workplace safety.

Solving problems

Everyone has problems at work sometimes. Problem solving is a normal part of everyday work. Foreign workers may have special problems because of their English language abilities or because of cultural differences.

A problem could be a simple disagreement with another worker, or it could be something serious like **harassment** or **discrimination**.

There are two common kinds of workplace problems: problems that are part of your work and problems with other people.

Problems that are part of your work are usually easier to solve than problems with other people. If you are having problems with supervisors or coworkers, you will have to talk to the person you are having the problem with. Before you do that, you should take some time to think about the problem so that you can talk about it calmly.

Here are some questions to ask yourself:

- What is the problem? Why is it a problem?
- How does this problem make me feel? How is it affecting me?
- What are some things I can do to solve the problem?
- What can I say to the person I'm having the problem with?

Some problems may be too serious for you to solve by yourself. You may need help from your supervisor or perhaps from someone outside your workplace. If you have a problem that is affecting your work and you cannot solve it by yourself, contact the Immigration Unit. If they can't help you, they will tell you where to go for help.

Discrimination

Canada has strong laws to help prevent **discrimination**. Everyone in Canada has the right to be treated fairly and equally regardless of race, religion, gender, age, etc. These rights are protected in the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and the *Yukon Human Rights Act*. If you are having a problem at work and you think it is because of your race or religion, for example, you can call the Yukon Human Rights Commission to get information and help. In Whitehorse, call 867-667-6226. Outside Whitehorse call 1-800-661-0535.

Harassment or violence

If someone is harassing you, if you feel threatened, or if someone has physically hurt you, call the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). In Whitehorse call 867-667-5555. In a community, call the local exchange for the community (for example, 993 in Dawson, 536 in Watson Lake) + 5555. If it is an emergency, call 911 (Whitehorse and area only).

Positive attitude

Whether you are here for 2 years or for the rest of your life, we want you to have a great work experience. We want you to enjoy your work, to feel satisfied at the end of the day, and to look forward to your next shift. We want you to succeed.

One of the best ways to succeed is to have a good attitude. Yukon employers want workers who are positive and who want to improve. Here are a few ways you can show your employer you have the right attitude for success:

- You are interested in your employer's business.

- You want to learn new ways of doing things.
- You are flexible and willing to change.
- You take on new challenges when your employer asks.
- You take extra training when your employer offers it.
- You listen carefully when your supervisor or a coworker makes a suggestion.
- You attend staff meetings and give your ideas.
- When your own work is done, you look for something else to do or someone to help.
- You are friendly to coworkers and customers, and you smile.
- You tell your co-workers when they have done a good job.
- You give more than you expect to get.
- You realize that Canada's workplace culture may be very different from the workplace culture in your home country. You accept the differences and you try to adapt to Canadian ways of working.

Community contacts

Yukon Immigration Unit

Yukon Nominee Program

303 Alexander Street, Whitehorse

867-667-5131, or

1-800-661-0408 extension 5131

Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board

Workplace safety and workplace injuries

401 Strickland Street, Whitehorse

867-667-5645, or

1-800-661-0443

Yukon Employment Standards

Employment laws and rules

307 Black Street, Whitehorse

867-667-5944, or

1-800-661-0408 extension 5944

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

Temporary Foreign Worker Program, permanent residence, work permits

1-888-242-2100

Service Canada

Social Insurance Numbers,

Employment Insurance

Suite 125, 300 Main Street (Elijah Smith Building), Whitehorse

1-800-622-6232

Canada Border Services Agency

Permanent residence and other immigration matters

110-300 Main Street Whitehorse,

Yukon Y1A 2B5

867-667-3944, or Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada:

1-888-242-2100

Multicultural Centre of the Yukon

English classes, settlement services

4141-D – 4th Avenue, Whitehorse

867-667-6205

Association franco-yukonnaise

French classes, settlement services for French speakers

302 Strickland Street, Whitehorse

867-668-2663

Motor Vehicles Branch

Drivers' licences and vehicle registration

Unit A, 2251 – Second Avenue, Whitehorse

867-667-5315, or

1-800-661-0408 extension 5315

Yukon College

IELTS or CELPIP testing

867-668-8800

Yukon Health Care Insurance

Yukon Health Care Insurance

4th Floor, 204 Lambert Street (Financial Plaza), Whitehorse

867-667-5209, or

1-800-661-0408 extension 5209

Yukon Human Rights Commission

215-305 Main Street, Whitehorse

867-667-6226, or

1-800-661-0535, or collect calls

Public Schools, Yukon Education

School enrolment

1000 Lewes Boulevard (Education Building), Whitehorse

867-667-5068, or

1-800-661-0408 extension 5068

Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)

Criminal matters

4100 – 4th Avenue, Whitehorse

867-667-5555

Emergency: 911

Glossary

Averaging agreement: An averaging agreement allows employers in certain workplaces (for example, mining camps) to pay overtime based on the number of hours worked in a 2-week or longer period, rather than the usual one week. Workers must agree to this arrangement in writing, or it must be part of the collective agreement between the union and the employer.

Canada Pension Plan / CPP: Most workers in Canada contribute to the Canada Pension Plan. Your employer deducts your CPP contributions from your wages. Workers receive CPP payments when they retire or become disabled. When people receiving CPP payments die, their spouses or dependents may receive an amount of money called a “death benefit.”

Collective agreement: In workplaces where workers belong to unions, there is a collective agreement between the union and the employer. This agreement includes such things as wages, working hours, seniority, extended health benefits (for example, a dental plan for workers), how overtime is calculated, and how problems in the workplace are solved.

Common-law partner: Your common-law partner is the adult man or woman you live with in a marriage-like relationship, but to whom you are not legally married. (Some people say common-law “spouse” instead of partner.) Your common-law partner is a member of your “immediate family.” Your common-law partner can be the same or opposite gender as you (for example, two men or two women can be common-law partners). (See also [spouse](#).)

Culture shock: When people move to a new country, they are often not prepared for how different and strange everything is and how they will feel about it. They may be excited, but they are usually also nervous and even afraid. The language, climate and food are unfamiliar; the job may be stressful; family members may be sad; children may have problems at school; and the local people may be very different from people at home. Most people go through four stages of culture shock: honeymoon (“I love it here.”), hatred (“I hate it here.”), homesick (“I want to go home.”) and home (“OK, I like it here. I can live here.”). It can take several months to go through all of these stages. Culture shock can be a serious problem for some people. It may help to talk about your feelings with someone who has experienced it.

Discrimination: If people treat you differently from other people because of your race, religion, gender (male or female), age, etc., it is called discrimination. Canada and Yukon have strong laws against discrimination. Our laws say that everyone is equal and must be treated in the same way. If you feel that someone is discriminating against you, you can call the Yukon Human Rights Commission (867-667-6226, or 1-800-661-0535) for information and help.

Employment Insurance / EI: Most workers in Canada contribute to the Employment Insurance (EI) program. Your employer deducts your EI contributions from your wages. This program pays money to workers who are temporarily not working. If you are fired or laid off and cannot find another job quickly, you might or might not be eligible to receive EI payments. You can get information about EI by visiting the Service Canada office in Whitehorse, or by calling 1-800-622-6232.

Gratuities: In some types of businesses (for example, restaurants and hair salons), customers may give gratuities to workers. Gratuities are usually 15% to 20% of the total bill. In workplaces where workers receive gratuities, employers must pay their workers at least the minimum wage, in addition to any gratuities they may receive. (Another word for gratuity is “tip.”)

Harassment: Harassment is a way of treating someone that demeans, embarrasses or frightens the person. Sometimes the harassment is sexual. For example, a male boss may make suggestive comments to a female worker or touch her inappropriately. Sometimes a person is harassed because of his or her race, religion, or age. In Canada and Yukon it is against the law to harass a worker or coworker. If you feel that someone is harassing you at work, you can call the Yukon Human Rights Commission (867-667-6226, or 1-800-661-0535) for information and help.

Hazards: A hazard is something in your workplace that can hurt you or make you sick. There are hazards in every workplace. For example, you may have to climb a ladder, use chemicals, handle blood or other bodily fluids, serve an angry or **impaired** customer, or work alone. By law, your employer must tell you about any and all hazards in your workplace, train you so that you know how to protect yourself from injury or illness, and give you any personal protective equipment (PPE) that you may need to do your job safely.

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC): formerly known as CIC - Citizenship and Immigration Canada, IRCC facilitates the arrival of immigrants, provides protection to refugees, and offers programming to help newcomers settle in Canada. It also: grants citizenship, and issues travel documents (such as passports) to Canadians.

Impaired: Alcohol and drugs can impair your ability to react quickly, concentrate on a task, or make good decisions. When you drink alcohol or take certain kinds of drugs, you may not be able to do your work properly. In Canada and Yukon it is against the law to work if you are impaired. It is also illegal to drive a vehicle at any time if you are impaired by alcohol or drug use.

Incidents: Sometimes something happens at work that could have seriously injured a worker. For example, a heavy object falls off a high shelf and almost hits a worker, or a toxic chemical is released into the air. Your employer must report these "near misses" or "close calls" to the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board (WCB) (867-667-5645, or 1-800-661-0443). If you are concerned about an incident that happened at work, you can call the WCB yourself. You do not have to give your name.

Income tax: All workers in Canada and Yukon pay income tax to the government. Taxes pay for government services such as health care, education, highways, etc. Your employer deducts income tax from your wages. The amount of tax deducted depends on your income tax rate. Your income tax rate is based on how much money you earn. For example, your income tax rate might be 15% or 22%. Every year before the end of April, workers must prepare an income tax return and submit it to the government. The income tax return is a form that includes how much money you earned that year; how much money was deducted for income tax, **Employment Insurance**, and **Canada Pension Plan**; and other information, such as how many dependents you have. When

you complete your income tax return, you might owe the government more money than was deducted from your pay during the year, or the government might owe you some money. The money you get back from the government is called an income tax refund.

Medical certificate: Your employer can ask you for a medical certificate after you have taken sick leave, to prove that you were sick or injured. You might be asked for a medical certificate when you do not come to work for several days in a row or if you take a lot of sick leave. A medical certificate must be signed by a doctor or other health professional.

Median wage: The wage such that half of the employees in the population under consideration earn less and the other half earn more.

Minimum wage: The lowest wage permitted by law or by a special agreement (such as one with a labour union).

National Occupation Code (NOC): the number the job is listed under in Canada's official job classification system.

Personal protective equipment / PPE: Many jobs require you to wear special clothing or use special equipment to do your job safely. For example, you may need to wear protective gloves to handle a chemical, you may have to wear ear plugs to protect your hearing in noisy situations, or you may have to wear a hard hat or a safety vest on a construction site. In Yukon, employers must give you the PPE you need

to do your job safely, and your employer must train you how to use it correctly, how to keep it in good condition, and when to replace it. Yukon employers do not have to give you general-purpose gloves or footwear such as steel-toed work boots; you may have to pay for these items yourself.

Spouse: Your spouse is the man or woman to whom you are legally married. Your spouse is a member of your "immediate family." Same-sex marriage is legal in Canada. This means that a man can marry a man or a woman can marry a woman. (See also **common-law partner**.)

Tips: In some types of businesses (for example, restaurants and hair salons), customers may give tips to workers. Tips are usually 15% to 20% of the total bill. In workplaces where workers receive tips, employers must pay their workers at least the minimum wage, in addition to any tips they may receive. (Another word for tip is "gratuity.")

Workplace culture: The Canadian workplace may be different from the workplace in your home country. For example, there may be more safety laws or more use of **personal protective equipment (PPE)** than at home. There may be a more informal relationship between bosses and workers than you are used to. For example, in most workplaces in Yukon, workers use their bosses' first names. Teamwork is an important workplace value in many Canadian workplaces; you are expected to cooperate with your co-workers and work together for everyone's success. Punctuality is important here; your boss expects

you to arrive at work on time or even a few minutes early for your shift. Participation in decision-making is important in many workplaces; your boss may expect you to ask questions and contribute your ideas. Most North Americans are not as comfortable with silence as people from certain other cultures; your co-workers may think that you are unfriendly if you don't talk with them. If you deal with customers, your boss will expect you to smile and be friendly and polite to them, and when there is a problem with a customer, your company may tell you that "the customer is always right." It takes time to learn the workplace culture in your job. Try not to get discouraged. If you are unsure about something, ask!

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