

Knowing Your Rights and Responsibilities in Canada



Youth in the Workplace

Starting a first or new job is an important milestone! In addition to meeting new people and learning new skills, you may be facing unique challenges including, using equipment you may not be familiar with or other work-specific routines and tasks.

Employment Responsibilities

Responsibilities at work are listed in your job description. These are the tasks that need to be completed at work and the skills and qualities required.

Some tips around responsibilities at work are:

- ✓ Be punctual and arrive on time daily
- ✓ Show up to meetings a few minutes early, and complete tasks by, or before, deadlines to show your respect and appreciation of others' time.
- ✓ Remain positive and solution-focused in your communication.
- ✓ Practice active listening by paying attention to what others say and following instructions.
- ✓ Motivate others by being encouraging and supportive.
- ✓ Be flexible if things change and work to the best of your abilities.
- ✓ Stay focused on your work tasks (for example do not use your phone).
- ✓ Be aware of and follow all workplace safety policies and procedures.

Human Rights

- In Canada, there are laws in place to protect you on your job and to secure everyone's human rights.
- In Canada, your human rights are protected by provincial, territorial, federal and international laws.
- Human rights define what we are all entitled to a life of equality, dignity, respect, and a life free from discrimination.
- You do not have to earn your human rights. You are born with them. They are the same.

Employment Rights

- The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety also provides protections for youth in the workplace <https://www.cchst.ca/youngworkers/>

Rights and Freedoms vs Etiquette in the Workplace

Rights and Freedoms are legally protected, while etiquette includes appropriate and considerate behaviours. Here are some examples to explain the concept.

Rights and Freedoms	Etiquette
You are free to follow the religion of your choice	If you talk about your religion, you need to be mindful of other people's experiences and opinions. Others have the freedom to have their own religious beliefs
You have the right to practice your religion in the workplace. You can request a reasonable accommodation . Ex. Being provided with short breaks to pray without interfering in your workload	Being mindful of your environment and spaces when practicing your religious beliefs. Ex. Making sure you are not interfering with others' workload
You have a right to have your pronouns and names respected in school, the workplace, and other areas covered by our human rights	Respect others' pronouns and ways of expression. If you make a mistake with someone's pronouns apologize, use the correct pronoun and move on
Other reasonable accommodations related to your identity, beliefs, and immigration status Ex. Requesting a reasonable shift change to accommodate family status	Be realistic in your request and ready to negotiate; Reasonable accommodation will not prevent you from accomplishing your tasks, lead to harming others, or create a proven financial burden

<p>Right to privacy (gender identity, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, and other protected personal and familial characteristics)</p>	<p>If you are curious and want to learn more about a colleague’s characteristics, and other personal information make sure they feel comfortable talking about personal information before asking questions. If the person refuses, then respect their decision and don’t ask the question. Ex. Employers cannot ask you questions about your protected personal characteristics.</p>
<p>According to the Canadian Human Rights Act you have the right to be provided with reasonable accommodations for disabilities.</p>	<p>Understanding that there is more to a person than their disability. The term ‘person living with a disability’ is used rather than terms like ‘a handicap person’ or a “disabled person”.</p>

Tip: How to be a supportive ally in the workplace

Appreciating we all have different backgrounds, upbringings, families, skills, experiences, goals and dreams. It’s important to value each other all the same. You can be an ally in the workplace by researching and learning about how to be supportive of others and treat everyone with kindness and respect.

Workplace Harassment

Harassment in the workplace can occur and can be upsetting and isolating. Examples may include when someone....

- offends or humiliates you physically or verbally.
- threatens or intimidates you.
- makes unwelcome remarks or jokes about your race, religion, sex, age, disability, etc.
- makes unnecessary physical contact with you.

Other workplace concerns to Be Aware Of:

- An employer asks to hold onto your work permit, passport, or other documentation
- An employer has not paid you within the mandatory pay period or refuses to provide a paystub
- An employer treats you unfairly and does not provide you with equal opportunities
- An employer makes you feel unsafe, or you feel your rights are not respected

What can I do? Talk to a trusted adult, a relative or a friend that you about the situation. Refer to the workplace human resource policies and provincial labour standards guides.

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I talk to my employer about work concerns (ex. problem with pay or work breaks):

1. Stay calm.
2. You can check an employee handbook or your employment contract for payment details (ex. bi-weekly payments) or break requirements.
3. If you believe there is a mistake on your pay, try doing the math before approaching your manager and have any documentation ready (pay stub, time sheet).
4. Schedule a private meeting with your manager to discuss your concerns.
5. Review your provincial or territorial employment standards. They should explain pay periods, deductions, vacation pay, minimum wage, and so on.

How do I know if my work is safe?

- Have I been properly trained for the job I am doing?
- Have I been given the right safety equipment to do the job?
- Do I feel unsafe when doing my job?
- Do I work close to dangerous materials?

Workers' Rights

All Canadian provinces and territories have laws in place to protect the health and safety of workers. The laws provide all workers with the following three rights:



Right to know

About hazards in the workplace, including potential exposure to COVID-19, and how to protect yourself.



Right to participate

Through your health and safety representative or safety committee.

How? By discussing health and safety concerns with your supervisor.



Right to refuse unsafe work

that you believe is dangerous to your health and safety of another worker.

Immediately report work refusals to your supervisor and follow the specific steps for your province or territory.

 CCOHS.ca

