

COVID-19 Work Refusal Information

Under the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations employers and workers share the responsibility of protecting the health and safety of workers, this includes the responsibility to work and act safely on the job.

Employees can refuse to do any specific job or task if they have reasonable ground to believe that it is unusually dangerous to themselves or another person. An unusual danger could include:

- A danger that is not normal for the job
- A danger that would normally stop work
- A situation for which the worker is not properly trained, equipped, or experienced to do

If an employee refuses to come to work or carry out a job duty due to fear of contracting the Coronavirus (COVID-19), employers must respond by carrying out an investigation and, if applicable, take action to eliminate the danger. To determine whether the refusal is reasonable employers must follow the steps to resolving a work refusal:

1. The worker informs the supervisor of the refusal and the reasoning for it
2. The worker and supervisor involve the OH&S committee co-chairpersons
3. A full committee investigation and vote are completed
4. The Occupational Health and Safety Division is contacted

Additional Information:

Reliable information on COVID-19 can be accessed on the Government of Saskatchewan website:

<https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/health-care-administration-and-provider-resources/treatment-procedures-and-guidelines/emerging-public-health-issues/2019-novel-coronavirus>

By law, workers who have exercised a work refusal are entitled to their regular wage and benefits during the investigation. Reprisal, including termination against the worker involved is prohibited.

Additional information on the Right to Refuse Dangerous Work can be found in Division 5 of the Saskatchewan Employment Act:

<http://www.worksafesask.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/OHS-Legislation 190611.pdf>