



# Vancouver General Hospital Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOHSC) Terms of Reference

## Purpose and Authority

The purpose of the Vancouver General Hospital (VGH) JOHSC is to:

- Recommend to the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Executive Safety Management Team policies and procedures designed to protect and improve health, safety, and personal security of all Faculty of Medicine Workers and ensure compliance with applicable [WorkSafeBC regulations](#).
- Review safety concerns from unit-specific Local Safety Teams regarding corrective measures to address unsafe working conditions and confirm that corrective measures are effectively implemented.
- Collaborate with unit-specific Local Safety Teams to address local health and safety issues that cannot be or have not been resolved at the local level.
- Provide a forum for Employer and Worker representatives to collaborate on identifying and resolving health and safety issues in the workplace.
- Promote a culture of safety throughout VGH

Please see Appendix A for additional background information.

## Composition

This committee is made up of ex officio, appointed, and elected members. Please see Appendix B for committee membership requirements and related details.

The Faculty of Medicine's commitment to equitable and diverse membership on its committees and advisory councils guides its nomination and selection process.

The committee will represent Faculty, Staff and Paid Students from the following centres/departments/sites:

Departments:

- Vancouver Coastal Health Research Institute (VCHRI) Admin Office
- Vancouver Prostate Centre
- Centre for Aging SMART
- VCHRI Medical Animal Facilities
- ICORD
- Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences
- Immunity and Infection Research Centre
- Ovarian Cancer Research (OVCARE)
- Dermatology & Skin Sciences

Sites:

- Robert Ho Research Centre
- Jack Bell Research Centre
- Eye Care Centre
- Blusson Spinal Cord Centre
- VGH Research Pavilion
- Gordon & Leslie Diamond Health Care Centre
- Medical Student & Alumni Centre
- Heather Pavilion
- City Square Shopping Centre

Partnered PHSA Institutions:

- BC Centre for Disease Control
- BC Cancer Research Institute

## Voting Members (9-12)

### Worker Representatives

- One CUPE 2950 member (1)
- Two-three Faculty members (2-3)
- One to three AAPS members without managerial duties (1-3)
- Two to three Non-Union Technician & Research Assistants (2-3)
- Two to three paid students (graduate students or postdoctoral trainees) (2-3)

### Employer Representatives

- Two to three managers who exercise managerial functions at the workplace (2-3)

## Non-voting Members

### Ex officio

- Health & Safety Advisor, Faculty of Medicine (1)

### Resources

- Committee Administrator (1)

Guests may be invited to join specific meetings or portions of specific meetings at the co-chairs' discretion.

Voting members may appoint a voting proxy (delegate) at the JOHSC meeting to act in the member's absence. The voting member must notify the JOHSC meeting organizer over email that the delegate has been authorized to attend the meeting with no limits on their participation to vote. Delegate authorization cannot carry over and must be refreshed in advance of each meeting.

## Appointment Process

Ex officio members are members by virtue of their administrative appointment.

Worker representatives are selected by their union, association, or peers.

Employer representatives are appointed by the Dean through the annual process initiated by the Dean's Office.

Please see Appendix B for further details on this process.

## Term

Ex officio members are members as long as they hold their administrative appointment.

All other appointments to the committee shall be for a period of two (2) years. Any member may be reappointed to the committee following their initial term.

The annual term will run between October 2023 – September 2024, at which time the terms of reference will be reviewed and approved for a new term.

## Chair

Co-chaired by one Worker representative and one Employer representative.

Please see Appendix C for chair selection and role details.

## Meeting Schedule and Administration

The JOHSC is required by WorkSafeBC to meet at least once each month and may meet at the call of the co-chairs.

All members are expected to attend all meetings in person or via videoconference or phone.

The recording secretary will capture meeting minutes. Minutes will be circulated to all members.

The committee must keep accurate records of all matters that come before it, and will maintain copies of its minutes for a period of at least 2 years from the date of the JOHSC meeting to which they relate.

Records will be maintained in accordance with UBC and [Faculty of Medicine records retention guidelines](#). Please see Appendix D for recommended meeting procedures.

## Quorum and Decision-Making Process

Quorum consists of at least four members, with at least half of the members present being Worker representatives, according to WorkSafeBC.

The JOHSC should attempt to reach consensus on each decision it makes. If the committee cannot reach consensus then a vote may be taken. The committee will go with the majority vote, when a vote is needed.



If the JOHSC is unable to reach agreement on a matter relating to the health or safety of Workers at the workplace, a co-chair of the committee may report this to the Administrative Head or Safety Management Group, who may investigate and attempt to resolve the matter. Unresolved issues should be referred to the Dean, then to the appropriate Vice President, and then WorkSafeBC if not resolved.

## Lines of Accountability and Communication

This committee:

- Reports and makes recommendations to the Dean, who ultimately reports to the UBC Board of Governors and President and Vice Chancellor.
- Provides an annual report summarizing the year's activities to the Faculty Executive Committee, for information purposes. The annual Audit report compiled and distributed by Safety & Risk Services meets this need.
- Seeks input from the Department Heads and School Directors Committee before presenting recommendations to the Dean, as appropriate.
- May delegate responsibilities to subcommittees and/or ad hoc groups to make recommendations on, or conduct specific aspects of the committee's mandate.
- Works in close collaboration with Local Safety Teams (see Appendix E).

Representatives of this committee liaise with other academic and administrative committees and advisory councils as required.

## Responsibilities

This committee:

1. Supports UBC in adhering to Policy SC1: [Occupational and Research Health and Safety](#).
2. Monitors efforts of the University to comply with WorkSafeBC regulations ("the regulations"), all applicable Provincial and Federal Safety Legislation, as well as UBC's own safety policies and procedures.
3. Monitors activities and effectiveness of University health & safety programs.
4. Identifies situations that may be unhealthy or unsafe for Workers and advises on effective systems for responding to those situations.
5. Considers and expeditiously deals with complaints relating to the occupational health and safety of Workers. This will be done after the Worker has brought the complaint to their Supervisor.
6. Consults with Workers and the Employer on issues related to occupational health, safety and occupational environment, including communicable disease prevention.
7. Makes recommendations to the Employer and the Workers for the improvement of the occupational health and safety of Workers and compliance with the regulations, and monitor their effectiveness.
8. Makes recommendations to the Employer on educational programs promoting the health and safety of Workers and compliance with the regulations, and monitor their effectiveness.
9. Advises the Employer on programs and policies required under the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation for the workplace and monitors their effectiveness.



10. Advises the Employer on proposed changes to the workplace or the work processes that may affect the health or safety of Workers.
11. Ensures that incident investigations and regular inspections are carried out as required by the Regulation.
12. Participates in and reviews inspections, investigations, and inquiries as provided by the LSTs.
13. Carries out any other duties and functions prescribed by the Regulations.
14. Adheres to the [FoM General Responsibilities of Standing Committees](#), with the exception that, according to the Workers Compensation Act, the JOHSC is responsible for developing its own procedure, duties, and functions, which are outlined in these terms of reference. Therefore, these terms of reference must be approved by the committee, rather than the Faculty Executive Committee. The JOHSC will submit the terms of reference to the Faculty Executive Committee and consider any comments or suggestions for revision.

### **Approval & Version History**

This version of these terms of reference has been approved by the JOHSC on March 6, 2025.

## Appendix A: Background

The Workers Compensation Act (WC Act) requires that most Employers in the Province have a Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOHSC).

Due to the large number of employees at the University of British Columbia, the diversity of occupations and relative hazards, the University (Employer) has chosen to implement several JOHSCs in order to meet the requirements of the WC Act and the safety needs on and off Campus.

JOHSCs will be implemented within all areas of the University. This committee will be structured in accordance with the WC Act and will have Employer and Worker representatives

The University is composed of many Faculties and Departments, each of which is composed of a variety of workers and workplaces within its portfolio. The diversity of these groups and their functions involves unique hazard potentials. In order to support the individual JOHSC, a series of Local Safety Teams (LSTs) were implemented to provide support to the JOHSC by providing feedback from knowledgeable personnel with site specific safety information.

The LSTs are not required nor governed under the WC Act, but will be implemented to provide assistance on safety items and issues within their mandate and provide information, recommendations and support to the JOHSC.

Each LST will meet regularly and have their own Terms of Reference.

Due to the diverse nature of each workplace, the LST members, composed of knowledgeable personnel with site specific experience, will perform regular inspections including completed inspection reports to the JOHSC.

It must be noted that the development of the LSTs does not absolve nor transfer the responsibilities of supervisory or managerial personnel within the area supported by the LST.

LSTs on hospital sites will work with Health Authority partners to ensure site specific safety processes are followed.

## Appendix B: Membership Requirements and Details

### Composition and Quorum

Each JOHSC must have the following:

1. A minimum of 4 members;
2. Worker representatives (faculty and staff Workers who do not exercise managerial functions) and Employer representatives (management Workers who exercise managerial functions);
3. At least half of the members must be Worker representatives;
4. Two co-chairs, one selected by the Worker representatives and one selected by the Employer representatives.

Quorum for the meeting is achieved when the requirements for bullets (1) to (3) above are met. Quorum is required for voting within the JOHSC.

Occasionally, the committee may invite guests to provide information; they will be considered a non-voting resource.

All appointments to the committee shall be for a period of two (2) years. Any member may be reappointed to the committee following their initial term.

### Selecting Employer Representatives

The Dean/Managing Director/Administrative Head of Unit shall appoint the Employer representatives. The representatives must exercise managerial functions at the workplace where the JOHSC is established.

### Selecting Worker Representatives

The selection of Faculty and Staff Worker **representatives and alternates** shall be completed in accordance with Section 128(1) of the Workers' Compensation Act:

1. The Worker representatives on a joint committee must be selected from Workers at the workplace who do not exercise managerial functions at that workplace, as follows:
  - a. If the Workers are represented by one or more unions or associations, the Worker representatives are to be selected according to the procedures established or agreed on by the union (s) or association(s);
  - b. If none of the Workers are represented by a union, the Worker representatives are to be elected by secret ballot;
  - c. If some of the Workers are represented by one or more unions and some are not represented by a union, the Worker representatives are to be selected in accordance with paragraphs (a) and (b) in equitable proportion to their relative numbers and relative risks to health and safety;
  - d. If the Workers do not make their own selection after being given the opportunity under paragraphs (a) to (c), the Employer must seek out and assign persons to act as Worker representatives.

Where the selection of JOHSC representatives are written in respective Collective Agreements, defer to the process outlined.

Efforts should be made to ensure all major work groups or areas are represented on the JOHSC. When major work group membership is misrepresented, invitations to request or appoint members to the committee in order to ensure equitable representation will be conducted. Refer to the list below to ensure that representatives are selected if they are included in your JOHSC work area.

- AAPS (Management & Professionals)
- BCGEU
- CUPE 116
- CUPE 2278
- CUPE 2950
- Faculty Association
- IUOE 882
- Non-Union Technicians and Research Assistants



## Duties of Committee Members

- Attend all monthly committee meetings. When unable to attend, inform the Recording Secretary. Attendance shall be reviewed by the appointing entities at the request of the co-chairs.
- Participate in all activities of the committee, and chair subcommittees when requested.
- Review inspections and investigations reported to the committee, by the Local Safety Teams (LSTs). Participate in inspections and investigations as requested or required.
- Recommend and participate in the development of policies and procedures for improvement of health and safety.
- Attend safety courses or seminars, which are made available to committee members. Each committee member will receive a total of 8 hours of training each year.
- Promote the University Safety Policy, and safety procedures of the University, in carrying out their work.
- Be familiar with WorkSafeBC Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, the University Safety Policy, and the committee's terms of reference.

## Training and Educational Leave Entitlement

- Regulation 3.27(2) and (4) establishes mandatory minimum training and education requirements for new joint committee members and Worker health and safety representatives selected on or after April 3, 2017.
- Following June 01, 2017 new members to a JOHSC will be required to be provided 8 hours of training in accordance with OH&S Regulation 3.27(2) and (4).
- New JOHSC members are required to be provided 8 hours of training as soon as practicable but no more than 6 months after being selected in accordance with the mandatory list of topics provided in OH&S Regulation 3.27(2) and (4) – Safety & Risk Services (SRS) will provide the training.
- Additionally, all JOHSC members are entitled to 8 hours of annual educational leave (Section 135, WCA) or a longer period if prescribed by regulation, for the purposes of attending occupational health and safety training courses.
- A member of the JOHSC may designate another member as being entitled to take all or part of the member's educational leave.
- The Employer must provide the educational leave without loss of pay or other benefits and must pay for, or reimburse the Worker for, the costs of the training course and the reasonable costs of attending the course.

## Time from Work for Meetings and Other Committee Functions

Members of the joint committee are entitled to time off from work for:

- The time required to attend meetings of the committee;
- Other time that is reasonably necessary to prepare for meetings of the committee, and
- Other time that is reasonably necessary to fulfill the other duties and functions of the committee.





Time off for JOHSC members to perform these duties and functions will be deemed to be time worked for the Employer.

## Appendix C: Co-chair Selection and Role

### Co-chair Selection

When a JOHSC is formed, the Worker and Employer representatives will each select one of their own members to act as a co-chair for a two-year term.

For subsequent co-chair elections:

- Current elected co-chairs will meet at the beginning of July of their second year to each develop a list of potential candidates as their replacement co-chair (presented at the July meeting).
- Additional candidates for each of the groups can be added by the floor at the July-August meeting.
- The election of the co-chairs will be held at the beginning of the September meeting with the elected co-chairs assuming the responsibility immediately to chair the October meeting.

Worker and Employer representatives can only recommend and elect candidates for co-chairs within their own working group.

### Duties of Co-chairs

- Review previous minutes and materials prior to each meeting, and prepare an agenda.
- One co-chair will chair a meeting; take a leadership role in guiding committee discussions towards definite recommendations.
- Report to the committee on the status of suggestions and recommendations from previous meetings.
- Appoint subcommittee members, and encourage active participation from members.
- Ensure a time and place for a meeting has been arranged by the Recording Secretary.
- Ensure that the minutes are recorded at each meeting.
- Ensure that the previous minutes and proposed agenda, and pertinent information are distributed prior to the meeting
- Write reports and correspondence.
- Ensure that each member has access to a copy of relevant resource information, including the WorkSafeBC Occupational Health and Safety Regulation, and the committee's terms of reference.
- When directed by the committee, the co-chairs will send written recommendations to the appropriate Administrative Head of Unit or Safety Management Group.

## Appendix D: Recommended Meeting Procedures

### Agendas and Minutes

- An agenda will be prepared by the recording secretary via the co-chairs and distributed to members prior to the meeting.
- Minutes of the meeting will be prepared as soon as possible after the meeting with a copy provided to the Employer.
- The recording secretary with approval of the co-chairs will be responsible for sending a copy of the minutes of the meeting to Administrative Head or Safety Management Group and the union if requested by any union representing Workers at the workplace.
- The University will retain and make available copies of the minutes for at least 2 years from the date of the joint committee meeting to which they relate.

The meetings should follow an agenda, which contains the following topics:

- Roll call or attendance
- Determination of quorum
- Approval of agenda
- Approval of previous minutes
- Review LST minutes
- Review of the monthly Accidents and Incidents
- Review LST inspection reports
- Report of actions taken as a result of items arising from the minutes
- Correspondence: Review of WorkSafeBC and any other health and safety regulatory agency inspection reports
- Other Business

Minutes of meetings will be recorded by a designated Recording Secretary and provisionally approved by the co-chairs. Committee approved minutes will be electronically distributed to:

- Management Committee
- All JOHSC members;
- All co-chairs of LSTs via SharePoint;
- Safety & Risk Services, and
- Be available for review by all members of the university community within two weeks following the end of the meeting.

All minutes will also be electronically posted on a central JOHSC web site and physically posted in areas where electronic access to Workers is limited.

### Recommendations to the Employer

- All recommendations agreed to and put forward will be noted in the meeting minutes.



- The minutes of the meeting will be forwarded to the Employer for their consideration and approval.
- All recommendations approved by the Employer will be forwarded to the applicable party or workgroup for completion and implementation.
- The status of approved recommendations shall be provided to the JOHSC for discussion at a future meeting.

### Recommendations requiring a response from the Employer

- The JOHSC must make all recommendations to the Employer in writing with a written request for a response from the Employer within 21 days. Both the Employer and Worker co-chairs must sign the letter of recommendations before they are forwarded to the Employer. All recommendations must be made separate from the minutes of the meeting.
- The Employer is required, under the OHS Regulation, to respond to the joint committee recommendations within 21 days of receiving the written request. The Employer must respond in writing by:
  - Indicating acceptance of the recommendation, or
  - Provide rationale for not accepting the recommendation.
- If the Employer is not reasonably able to provide a response before the end of the 21-day period, the Employer will be asked by the committee to provide - within that time - a written explanation for the delay, together with an indication of when the response will be provided.
- If the JOHSC is not satisfied that the explanation provided for the delay is reasonable - in the circumstances - a co-chair of the committee may report this to WorkSafeBC. WorkSafeBC may investigate the matter and may, by order, establish a deadline by which the Employer must respond.

### Posting Committee Information

The Employer must promptly post and keep posted at the workplace, in a place readily accessible to employees, the following:

- The names and work locations of the joint committee members,
- The reports of the 3 most recent joint committee meetings, and
- Copies of any applicable orders under this Division for the preceding 12 months.

This information is posted on the UBC Safety Committees website.

### Appendix E: Local Safety Teams

List of current Local Safety Teams (LSTs) providing support:

- Vancouver Prostate Centre LST
- ICORD/Blusson Spinal Cord Centre LST
- VCHRI Animal Care LST
- VGH Admin LST

List of current partner institution JOHSCs providing local safety information:

- BC Cancer Research Centre PHSA JOHSC
- BC Centre for Disease Control PHSA JOHSC