

## *News Release*

### **Ontario To Reward Safe Employers**

November 22, 2019

#### **WSIB To Provide an Estimated \$140 Million in Financial Incentives**

TORONTO - Ontario will reward its safest employers with an estimated \$140 million for excellence in occupational health and safety as part of a first-of-its-kind in Canada program unveiled today.

The program, Supporting Ontario's Safe Employers, will formally recognize employers who successfully implement health and safety programs in their workplaces. The financial rewards will come in the form of Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) rebates over a three-year period.

"We know that good health and safety practices save lives," said Monte McNaughton, Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development. "But they also save money. This program is a reflection of that fact. Our government wants to do everything it can to make workers safer and help businesses save money."

Research has shown that organized, systematic approaches to health and safety increase worker participation in health and safety practices, encourage ongoing improvement and help reduce workplace injuries and illness. Similar programs in Europe and Japan have resulted in a decline in workplace accidents.

"This is a big step for Ontario's health and safety community as we continue to move forward in protecting workers," said Ron Kelusky, Ontario's Chief Prevention Officer (CPO). "We're adopting innovative approaches to become a modern regulator. Industry has long asked for rewards for employers who successfully promote health and safety in their workplace."

The program is open to any employer in Ontario, regardless of size or sector. Led by the Office of the CPO, this ministry program was developed based on feedback from labour, employers and other stakeholders.

The WSIB is also building on the program by launching [Health and Safety Excellence](#), a new program that will promote continual health and safety improvement in Ontario workplaces.

While the provincial program recognizes employers who have already implemented a health and safety management system, the WSIB's program will encourage employers without an existing program to develop one.

"We know that businesses across the province strive to make their workplaces as healthy and safe as possible for their employees," said Elizabeth Witmer, WSIB Chair. "Our new Health and Safety Excellence program gives them a roadmap to improve health and safety, whether they're just getting started or want to optimize processes they already have in place."

These initiatives are part of the government's commitment to encouraging a culture of health and safety to protect workers on the job and build a prosperous province.

## **QUICK FACTS**

- Supporting Ontario's Safe Employers is the first program of its kind in Canada.
- The names of recognized employers will be posted on the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development's website. These employers will be able to brand themselves as CPO-recognized.
- An occupational health and safety management system (OHSMS) is a tool that provides an employer with a systematic approach to managing health and safety in the workplace.
- Employers may use one of the existing OHSMS standards accredited by the Chief Prevention Officer or they may develop their own system and apply to have it accredited by the province.
- For more information, employers can contact the Ontario Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development's Prevention Office at [SOSE@ontario.ca](mailto:SOSE@ontario.ca).

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- [Supporting Ontario's Safe Employers](#)

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

- [Supporting Ontario's Safe Employers](#)
- [Ontario's new accreditation standard](#)
- [Employer recognition criteria](#)
- [WSIB Health and Safety Excellence Program](#)

## QUOTES

"We have supported the concept of accreditation and recognizing good employers for the past 10 years and are pleased that the current government is moving forward with this important health and safety initiative."

— *Ian Cunningham, President, Ontario Council of Construction Associations*

"The consultative process by the Ministry in the development and implementation of this program is to be lauded and will certainly contribute to the success of this program and to the overall strategy of the Ministry in providing a Prevention lens to employee engagement and empowerment and a safer workplace."

— *T.E. Baker, Human Resources Advisor, The Bayview Group of Companies*

"ATS Automation has valued participating as a stakeholder in consultations with the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development through the WSPS Executive Advisory Committee to provide feedback on the benefits of engaging with prevention initiatives, and to highlight the positive impact of providing recognition to proactive companies in the manufacturing sector."

— *Natalie Ederly CRSP, Manager, Corporate Health, Safety and Environment, Canada, ATS Automation Tooling Systems*

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