

## **The Work Education Agreement – WEA**

Before you begin your co-op placement – your teacher will complete a Workplace Education Agreement sometimes shortened to WEA. This form has your personal information, your job placement information, your hours of work and the course that is being used for your workplace objectives.

This WEA form must be signed by four people – the workplace supervisor, your teacher, you and parents/guardian if you are under the age of 18. This is a legal document that will begin accident insurance coverage for you free of charge under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB).

To ensure Workplace Safety and Insurance coverage, the Work Education Agreement form must be completed by the parties concerned before the student starts at the training station. District school boards must use the Work Education Agreement form for individual students. The form should be completed for students in cooperative education, work experience, and Supervised Alternative Learning for Excused Pupils (SALEP) programs who are not receiving wages or are not covered by their employer.

The student's signature must appear on the Work Education Agreement form, indicating consent to the conditions of coverage in the agreement. The consent of a parent or guardian is also required if a student is under eighteen years of age. (This requirement is still valid despite the fact that the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act gives students who are sixteen years old the right to protection of their personal information.)

### **Conditions of Coverage**

1. Students are covered under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act during the time that they are performing the duties of a trainee at the training station under the supervision of a training supervisor.
2. Students are covered when their training station is located on district school board property, and when they are supervised by non-teaching staff members (for example, building custodians, electrical maintenance supervisors, audio-visual technicians, or purchasing officers).
3. Students are covered when assigned to placements that do not have compulsory Workplace Safety and Insurance coverage (e.g., banks), since they are considered to be employees of the Ministry of Education for this purpose.
4. Students enrolled in the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP) are covered under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act before they become paid registered apprentices. Those registered under the Trades Qualification and Apprenticeship Act will

establish an employer-employee relationship with their employer, and the employer will assume responsibility for providing coverage. OYAP students registered under the Apprenticeship and Certification Act are covered by the Ministry of Education if they are not being paid a salary. Once a student is on an employer's payroll, the employer assumes responsibility for the student's coverage.

5. Students whose training station is outside the province – for example, students enrolled in international cooperative education programs – are covered under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act for up to six months while at their work placement in the host province or country. If the placement continues beyond the six months, a written request for extension of coverage must be sent to the Ministry of Education.
6. Students are not covered while travelling to and from the training station. Students are covered while they are travelling in the course of their work for the training organization.
7. Students are not covered when working as teacher aides in a classroom or shop in a school. In a traditional school placement, students are under the constant supervision of teachers, and teachers have greater control over the working conditions in a classroom setting than they have over the working conditions in a placement in the community. The Workplace Safety and Insurance Board table of accident rates by type of industry shows that the level of risk is generally much higher in jobs in the community. The ministry's main concern is to provide coverage for students in placements in the higher-risk areas.
8. Students are not covered during the time that they are in training for, or are participating in, individual or team sports. Amateur or professional athletes are not covered under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act.
9. Students are not covered under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act while they are being transported by ambulance from a cooperative education work station to a hospital as a result of an injury.

## **Benefits**

The Workplace Safety and Insurance Act provides for compensation for loss of earnings; health care; rehabilitation services; and disability pensions for employees injured in on-the-job accidents. See the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board pamphlets for additional details regarding benefits. These pamphlets are available from local Workplace Safety and Insurance Board offices.

For the purpose of Workplace Safety and Insurance coverage only, students are deemed to be employees of the Ministry of Education, although they do not receive wages.