

Question and answers-Popular questions from employers and providers –  
Supporting Ontario’s Safe Employers program

Health and Safety Excellence program changes in response to Covid-19	Details
<p><b>#1: Ability to change topics on approved action plan</b></p>	<p>If you have an approved action plan, you <b>may change your topic selection to help address the impact of COVID-19</b>; keeping in mind that the Excellence program is intended to reward implementation of <b>NEW</b> health and safety initiatives. Some relevant topics related to pandemic response are Emergency prevention and preparedness in conjunction with Emergency response. While these may appear to be the most obvious options, the program has the flexibility to select the topics that work best for your program or management system.</p> <p>Potential rationale for selecting topics may include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting employee mental health through the pandemic</li> <li>Promote H&amp;S to raise awareness</li> <li>Defines work plan to address pandemic</li> <li>Enhances preparedness to address pandemic</li> <li>Helps develop pandemic response capability</li> <li>Define PPE to limit exposure to COVID-19</li> <li>Identifies responsibilities for pandemic response</li> </ul>
<p><b>#2: Extension deadline to complete and submit evidence of topic completion</b></p>	<p>If you require more time to complete topics and submit validation evidence, an extension will be provided beyond the current 12 month time limit. Evidence of topic completion can be submitted for validation to the WSIB up to 15 months (including the review of evidence by the provider) from the action plan approval date. This timeframe may be extended based on how things evolve.</p>
<p><b>#3: Extended deadline to develop and submit an action plan</b></p>	<p>There has been existing flexibility with the 90-day expiration date for action plan submission, this will continued to be offered to you.</p>

## Question and answers-Popular questions from employers and providers – Supporting Ontario’s Safe Employers program

1. Once completed, can the assessment be changed?

The assessment cannot be re-set. Regardless of the assessment results, the employer should proceed with topic selection. It is not a requirement to pick the recommended topics or select topics from the level the employer was evaluated at. You can help employers select the most appropriate topics for their workplace based on the results of the assessment AND the items on page 17 of the Program guidelines.

2. If I choose less than 5 topics on my action plan, can I add additional topics after my action plan has been approved?

The system allows only 1 ‘action plan’ per program year.

3. On an action plan, can an employer select more than one ‘Control of Hazards’ topic?

From a program perspective, the ‘control of hazards’ topic can be repeated (and qualify for a rebate) for each hazard at the workplace and there is no limit on the number of times this topic can be repeated. With release #1, the employer can select the ‘control of hazards’ topic only once. Employers MUST list the control topic(s) they will be working on in the ‘comments’ section (Controls of Hazards – Slips, Trips and Falls, Control of Hazards – WHMIS, Control of Hazards – PPE...)

4. For the level 3 topic – external audit, can you provide a definition of an external audit?

A third-party audit is an audit performed by an external auditor or audit organization independent of the customer-supplier relationship, the employer and/or organization, as well as being free of any conflict of interest. Independence of the auditor or audit organization is a key component of a third-party audit.

5. Is it mandatory to complete all of the requirements listed in the health and safety topics guide under each topic?

As the topics are currently written, the expectation is that all of the requirements of each topic will be fulfilled.

6. Can topics be scoped by service areas/sites/stores within a single WSIB account number?

Scoping as defined in the Safety Group program guidelines doesn’t currently apply in the same way in the new Excellence program. If an employer is working on a topic at only one of their areas/sites/stores this would need to be supported by the risk assessment. Is the topic at this location considered one of the highest risks for injury in that workplace? If so, then working only on a topic at a single service area/site/store could be appropriate. If there are other workers at other sites exposed to the same risk, then scoping should not be site specific.

7. For members that implement topics in over 31 sites, how many sites should be included in the validation evidence? (Reference to validation guide, pg. 6)

If the number of sites **where the topic applies** is 31+, the number of sites to be included in the validation evidence will be determined on a case by case basis, based on factors such as the risk associated with

## Question and answers-Popular questions from employers and providers – Supporting Ontario’s Safe Employers program

the topic, the number of sites where the topic applies and the approximate number of employees at each site. WSIB is finalizing the process to determine the number of sites an employer is to include in their validation evidence.

8. Is the evidence listed in the validation guide the only implementation evidence required?

The validation guide was developed to give employers examples of the type of evidence that could be submitted to demonstrate that their selected topics are ‘living and breathing’ at their workplace. The examples have been provided as guidance only as the Excellence program offers flexibility with evidence submission. The program allows employers to submit evidence that reflects their company activities - for example, process flow diagrams versus standards.

The validation evidence must be representative of the overall operations and suitable for the employer’s size, structure, and complexity of their business. As the scope and complexity of each topic will vary according to the size and type of workplace – so too will the evidence. An employer will also provide ‘the story’ of implementation (Plan-Do-Check-Act) for each topic.

9. When an employer submits a topic for validation, how long will it take to receive the validation audit results from the WSIB?

For 2020, there will only be a Fall rebate. In order for an employer to qualify for the Fall rebate, all topics must receive final validation audit results from the WSIB by August 1. For the Spring rebate, the date is March 1. At the time the rebate is calculated, WSIB will use the annual premiums for the previous calendar year.

We are working on finalizing WHSS service delivery standards to ensure a standardized validation turnaround time

10. What information is required for an employer to register in the WSIB portal?

To complete the registration, employers require their WSIB account number (7 numerical digits), not the firm number. In addition, they need the company (legal) name as registered with WSIB, their first and last name and their email address.

11. Does the employer have to use a unique email addresses for each WSIB account number they wish to register?

Yes - Currently, there is a system control where an email address can only exist once in the system in order to identify unique users and maintain security controls. This means that a user managing multiple WSIB account numbers registered in the Excellence program, must use a different email address for each account number.

With Release #2 (April 20), employers will have the ability to link one e-mail address to multiple WSIB account numbers registered in the program.

12. Is there a limit to how many other users register with the same WSIB account number?

There is no limit to the number of users per WSIB account number

13. Does everyone from the organization have the same user status on the digital platform?

## Question and answers-Popular questions from employers and providers – Supporting Ontario’s Safe Employers program

Yes, everyone should have the same view and be able to do any company related functions including completing the assessment, the selection of health and safety topics (action plan), submitting the action plan for approval, writing comments.

With Release #2 (April 20), there will be an additional function for an organization to upload evidence

14. After registering on the digital tool, I did not receive the ‘welcome email’?

The automated ‘set password’ email was likely stopped by the company security firewall. Please have the employer email [health\\_and\\_safety@wsib.on.ca](mailto:health_and_safety@wsib.on.ca) and we will set up a temporary password in the system. The employer then needs to logon with their email address and enter the temporary password at: <https://healthandsafety.wsib.ca/user/login> (this is not your unique provider link). Once on the first page, they can click on edit to change the temporary password.

15. Employers have 90 calendar days from accessing the digital platform to complete the assessment and create and submit their action plan to their program provider for approval. What happens after the 90 days?

The 90-day limit is a ‘soft’ deadline.

16. On the digital tool dashboard, there is a box titled ‘Expiring Action Plans’ – is this for action plans expiring (12 months from when AP approved) OR those coming up to the 90-day deadline for completion?

Those expiring in 365 days. Now expanded to 15 months under the Covid 19 program revisions.

17. Why is the action plan expiration date, one year from when the employer submits their action plan for review and not when the action plan is approved?

Currently, a soft expiration is tied to the action plan ‘creation date’ instead of the ‘approval date’. This will be revised with the next release.

18. Should an employer be able to view other member’s action plans?

No, an employer should be able to view only his or her own company specific information. This has now been fixed.

19. Why is the number of employers in my ‘overall statistics’ table different than the number of employers in my ‘employer status’ table?

There was a bug where multiple action plans could be created under one employer account. Both issues were logged with our vendor.

20. Can employers participate in both the Health and Safety Excellence program and the Supporting Ontario’s Safe Employers program at the same time and receive financial recognition?

## Question and answers-Popular questions from employers and providers – Supporting Ontario’s Safe Employers program

Yes, an employer can participate in the Health and Safety Excellence program and Supporting Ontario's Safe Employers program at the same time for financial recognition. The Excellence program includes additional best practices topics beyond the MLTSD accreditation. These topics are:

- Networking and Peer Learning
- Corporate Social Responsibility ➤ Workplace Health Promotion.

As such, employers already meeting an accreditation can still complete these topics through the Health and Safety Excellence program and qualify for financial and non-financial incentives. An employer can also revisit ‘Control of Hazards’ topic, as long as it is a new hazard in the workplace.