

The WSIB's Health and Safety Excellence program

Guide for HSEp Members registered in COR™



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What is COR™?

The Certificate of Recognition (COR™) is a national accreditation standard that verifies an employer's Occupational Health and Safety Management System (OHSMS) has been fully implemented. [The Infrastructure Health and Safety Association](#) (IHSA) is the organization that grants employers COR™ status in the province of Ontario. Businesses that meet COR certification often outperform competitors, and many municipalities across Ontario now require businesses to have COR™ to bid on contracts.

Recently, COR™ was enhanced to COR™ 2020. Businesses that previously achieved COR™ designation have until the end of 2025 to transition to COR™ 2020.

The Health and Safety Excellence program (HSEp) can help

The Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) has partnered with the IHSA to support businesses in meeting COR™ 2020 requirements through the Health and Safety Excellence program (HSEp).

We know how much work goes into the COR™ audit. So we've made it simple for businesses to demonstrate they have completed HSEp topics and submit evidence for validation using valid COR™ certification.

The recognition available in HSEp can support investments in obtaining COR™ 2020 certification. Businesses can receive rebates on their WSIB premiums ranging from \$1,000 to \$50,000 per topic (up to a maximum of 100% of premiums).

1. Topic selection for COR™ registered and certified firms

Whether transitioning from COR™ 2015 to COR™ 2020 or working towards the COR™ designation for the first time, HSEp includes health and safety topics that will help you achieve your business goals.

Businesses registered in COR™, but not yet certified

Out of the 36 HSEp topics, 29 align with the 14 COR™ 2020 audit elements.

For each action plan in the Health and Safety Excellence program, you can select one to five HSEp topics to fully implement the COR™ elements. Your program provider can assist you with selecting the most appropriate topics for your business. Once you achieve COR™ certification, you'll get the added benefit of streamlined WSIB validation for your remaining HSEp topics.

COR™ certified businesses transitioning from COR™ 2015 to COR™ 2020

If your business is transitioning from COR™ 2015 to COR™ 2020, you can choose HSEp topics that address significant health and safety management system gaps. For example, a new policy

needs to be established, or significant communication and training is needed to meet requirements.

In addition to addressing identified gaps, there are four topics in HSEp that specifically support the transition to COR™ 2020:

- Control of Documents (Elements 1.2)
Implement a procedure for the control of documents and retention of records to formalize your management system, develop consistency and reduce reliance on the knowledge of individual people
- Control of Records (Element 1.2)
Implement a procedure to maintain records to provide evidence of conformity to health and safety system requirements.
- Contractor Management (Element 4)
Implement a contractor management program to ensure health and safety standards for work performed in your workplace.
- Change Management and Procurement (Element 14.2)
Implement change management and procurement procedures to ensure health and safety risks and controls are put in place when adding or changing business processes.

Once you're ready to have HSEp topics validated, you'll need to submit a copy of the relevant section of your COR™ audit and corrective action plan to the WSIB.

COR™ 2020 certified businesses.

Businesses that have achieved COR™ 2020 certification can still take advantage of HSEp. Seven additional HSEp topics go beyond the requirements of the COR™ 2020 standard. These are:

- Accommodation and Return to Work Plans
- Control of Hazards
- Corporate Social Responsibility
- Return to Work Program Requirements, Forms and Tools
- Return to work Roles and Responsibilities
- Networking and Peer Learning
- Workplace Health Promotion

2. Streamlined validation process for COR™ certified firms

By completing the COR™ audit, a significant amount of the work you've completed also meets the HSEp topic requirements. For businesses participating in HSEp and COR™, submitting evidence to the WSIB on topics already audited for COR™ is duplicative, so we've simplified the process. Here's how it works:

1. When you're ready for WSIB validation of your HSEp topic(s), provide us with a document that describes how you implemented your HSEp topics along with your valid COR™ documentation per the chart below. No additional evidence is needed.

COR™ certified business in year 1 of COR™ cycle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant section of external¹ audit report
COR™ certified business in years 2 and 3 of COR™ cycle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant section of internal maintenance audit report, and • Letter of good standing from IHSA, OR • Evidence of topic completion if selecting any of the seven topics above the COR™ 2020 standard noted above.

Note: If you did not score ≥80% on an element, or 100% on legislative criteria, you must include a copy of your corrective action plan (CAP) along with the relevant section of the audit report for HSEp validation, along with evidence that you've taken action to address issues identified on the CAP.

2. The HSEp validator will confirm the documents' accuracy and review your description to determine the completion of your HSEp topics.
3. Once your topics are validated as complete, you'll receive a rebate from the WSIB. You will also receive a badge for any program levels (foundation, intermediate, or advanced) you complete².

Here's an example

ABC Inc. has enrolled in HSEp and selected five topics, and they are also transitioning from COR™ 2015 toward the COR™ 2020 designation. With the support of their HSEp provider, ABC Inc. implements these HSEp topics in their workplace. After completing their external COR™ audit, they get a report from the IHSA confirming their audit score.

Using a simple template, they upload a copy of the relevant sections of the audit report into the digital tool, along with a document describing how they implemented their HSEp topics (their evidence story), to the WSIB for validation. See ABC Inc.'s example evidence story starting on page 8 below. The WSIB validator completes a documentation review and marks the topics complete.

¹ Depending on the COR™ audit cycle, your deadline to submit HSEp topics for validation may not match. If an extension to your HSEp action plan is needed, your program provider can help arrange one for you.

² Assuming the business meets eligibility requirements.

Step-by-step instructions to submit HSEp topics for validation

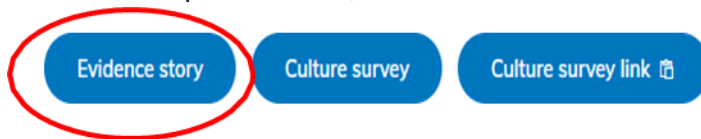
After implementing HSEp topics, and once you've completed your COR™ audit, you're ready to submit your HSEp topics for validation. Here's how:

Step 1 – Provide a topic implementation document (evidence story) on the HSEp digital tool.

Your evidence story describes how you implemented your HSEp topic(s). For HSEp members registered in COR™, we've created a simple template that can be used to create the evidence package (see Appendix A below).

When you're ready to upload it, log in to the HSEp digital tool on your web browser by visiting <https://www.wsib.ca/en/onlineservices>.

From the HSEp dashboard, click the blue **Evidence Story** button



A process bar³ will appear along the top of the screen:



After clicking on **Approved topics** in the process bar, click **Edit** next to the topic you're submitting for validation.



Evidence package

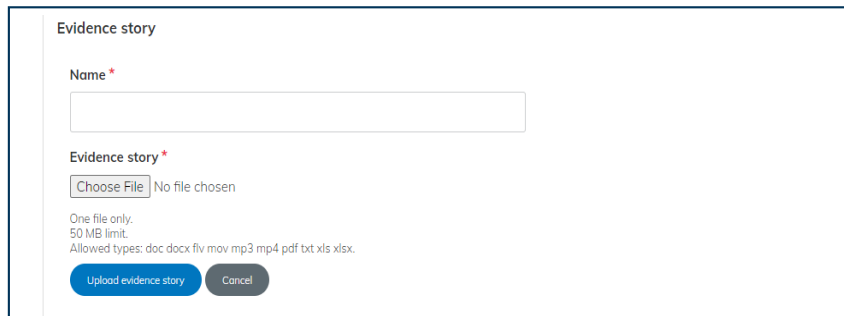
Leadership and commitment

Draft

Edit

³ If you see a 4-step process bar that is currently being phased out, please refer to the HSEp program's general [FAQs](#) on the digital tool.

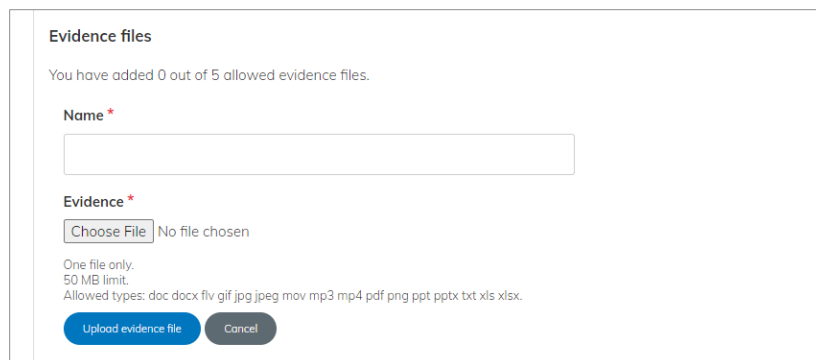
You'll be prompted to upload a topic implementation document for your selected topic. Click the gray **Choose File** button and select your saved document from your device. Name it (i.e. "evidence story") in the **Name** text box, and then select the blue **Upload evidence story** button.



The screenshot shows a form titled "Evidence story". It has a "Name*" field with a text input box. Below it is an "Evidence story*" section with a "Choose File" button and the text "No file chosen". Underneath, it specifies "One file only, 50 MB limit, Allowed types: doc docx flv mov mp3 mp4 pdf txt xls xlsx." At the bottom are two buttons: "Upload evidence story" (blue) and "Cancel" (gray).

Step 2 – Upload your supporting documented information (evidence files)

1. Next, click **Choose File** under the Evidence Files section and upload your valid COR™ audit documentation, including the relevant section of the audit report or a letter in good standing from the IHSA and a copy of your continuous action plan (CAP) if you scored less than 80% overall or less than 100% on a legislative element.

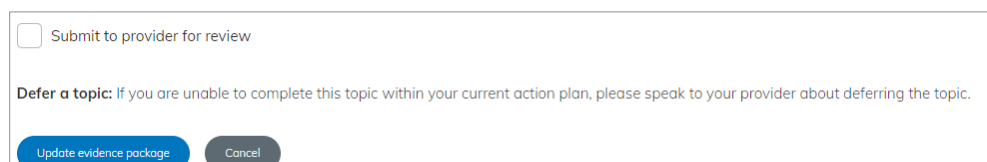


The screenshot shows a form titled "Evidence files". It includes the text "You have added 0 out of 5 allowed evidence files." Below this is a "Name*" field with a text input box. The "Evidence*" section contains a "Choose File" button and "No file chosen". It also lists "One file only, 50 MB limit, Allowed types: doc docx flv gif jpg jpeg mov mp3 mp4 pdf png ppt pptx txt xls xlsx." At the bottom are "Upload evidence file" (blue) and "Cancel" (gray) buttons.



Please note: you'll need to repeat this step for each of your HSEp topics.

2. Once uploaded, click on **Update evidence package**, and when you're ready to submit your topic, click **Submit to provider for review**.



The screenshot shows a form with a checkbox labeled "Submit to provider for review". Below it is the text "Defer a topic: If you are unable to complete this topic within your current action plan, please speak to your provider about deferring the topic." At the bottom are "Update evidence package" (blue) and "Cancel" (gray) buttons.

After your provider confirms that your evidence package is ready, you'll receive a notification that the topic was submitted to a WSIB validator. If you subscribe to online notifications, you'll receive a notification when the WSIB has validated the topic(s). All topics validated as complete by the WSIB validator are eligible for a rebate⁴.

⁴ Assuming the business meets eligibility requirements.



Frequently asked questions

Why is the HSEp validation process different for members registered in COR™?

As a recognized occupational health and safety management system (OHSMS) standard, the COR™ audit meets HSEp topic requirements, so we've streamlined the validation process to simplify it for members working on COR™ and HSEp at the same time.

We are transitioning from COR™ 2015 to COR™ 2020 and need to create policies for elements that didn't previously require policies. Can we select the relevant HSEp topics to implement these elements?

Yes, you are free to select between one and five HSEp topics annually that need to be fully developed following an implementation model (i.e. Plan-Do-Check-Act). Your program provider will support you in selecting the most appropriate topics for your business. Be sure to review the topic selection guide when choosing topics.

Why can't I submit all my supporting COR™ documentation at once?

Our digital tool doesn't allow members to submit topics for validation without submitting evidence for each topic.

Our digital tool doesn't allow members to submit topics for validation without submitting evidence for each topic. What if our business didn't score at least 80% on an element or 100% on a legislative requirement?

You'll need to include a copy of your corrective action plan (CAP) with your COR™ documentation. You'll also need to demonstrate that you've taken steps to resolve any non-conformities.

Do I need to complete all corrective actions / non-conformities before HSEp validation?

No. If corrective actions were identified on your COR™ audit related to your HSEp topics, tell us how you've started addressing them in your evidence story. Completing all items on your continuous improvement plan is not required for validation.

We've completed year one of the COR™ cycle. What happens for years two and three?

In years two and three of the COR™ cycle, businesses can submit a copy of the relevant sections of their internal maintenance audit and the letter of good standing from the IHSA as evidence of HSEp topic completion. Talk with your HSEp provider to discuss which HSEp topics best align with your COR™ 2020 journey.

Our company is COR™ 2020 certified and has implemented all 36 HSEp topics. What's next?

Companies that have achieved COR™2020 designation and have completed the remaining HSEp topics are likely ready to apply to the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development's accreditation program, [Supporting Ontario's Safe Employers](#) (SOSE).

Businesses that achieve SOSE recognition are eligible to receive additional [financial rewards](#) from the WSIB for up to three (3) years. Please speak to your program provider to learn more.

Note: once you've applied for SOSE, you cannot participate in HSEp. Please speak to your program provider to learn more.

Example of an evidence submission for a COR™ certified member

ABC Inc.'s consolidated HSEP topic implementation document

HSEp topics selected:	Applicable COR™ 2020 element	COR™ audit section total score
1: First aid	11.2(h), 11.14-11.17	100%
2: Control of hazards, COVID	3	100%
3: Incident and injury reporting	10	92%
4: H and S communication	8.2	95%
5: Leadership and commitment	1.1	100%
		Corrective actions: See attached CAP

Date of COR™ audit: December 13, 2021, to December 15, 2021

Implementation model used: Plan-Do-Check-Act

Plan

ABC Inc. decided to work towards obtaining the COR designation in 2021. While preparing for this, we conducted a gap analysis of our current health and safety program and found the following gaps:

- a first aid policy and procedure to equip and inspect first aid kits

- a procedure to control the spread of COVID-19 at a newly established site
- clearly defined roles and responsibilities for workplace incident and injury reporting
- a means to communicate health and safety updates effectively, and
- leadership commitment to health and safety

Members of our JHSC and our leaders developed the standards and forms related to our HSEp topics in March 2021, which included feedback from employee volunteers. The standards were signed by our owner on April 1, 2021.

Do

We reviewed training records and trained all supervisors who did not have standard first aid with Level A CPR/AED on June 11 and 12, 2021. We held a staff-wide health and safety day on July 3, 2021, including staff training on our new policies and procedures. We ensured that all employees trained signed off on a training record to ensure no one was missed. Additionally, learning took place through employee orientation and toolbox talks, and site-specific evidence was reviewed by a third-party external auditor (interviews/observations).

Email communications and a link to a post on our internal website were sent on April 10, May 15, June 20, July 14, and again on November 10, including all the new standards and procedures. We held a COVID training session on May 19 with staff at our field office. We completed mock emergencies and first aid mock sessions on June 19, 2021.

Check

We applied to the IHSA to become COR™ certified in 2021. This process required an internal audit, which was submitted to the IHSA for review in September 2021. The external audit took place Wednesday, December 13, 2021, through Friday, December 15, 2021.

XYZ Consulting Ltd. conducted the external audit on behalf of the IHSA. The audit was led and completed by Jane Doe. The audit consisted of two workplace visits:

- Plant B in Townsville: Number of workers: 3 Visited: 13-Dec
This project involved ABC Inc. working as a subcontractor to install ductwork within a newly constructed administration building. The site included the main trailer for ABC Inc. employees. Installation activities were observed during the visit.
- The water treatment plant in Villestown: Number of workers: 6 Visited: 13-Dec
This project involved ABC Inc. working as a subcontractor to install exterior pipe and ductwork. The site was within an existing water treatment plant, and the activities observed included preparation work for pressure testing and hardware installation with hand tools.

Please see attached audit report sections for these elements.

We scored an overall mark of 96.58%, achieving the minimum score of 65% for each element, and 100% on all legislated components. As a result, the auditor's opinion is that the company is eligible for COR™ certification. We received our certification on December 21, 2021.

Act

Upon receiving the COR™ certification, a companywide memo was sent via email to share in a toolbox talk, thanking employees for their help and participation in the H&S program and internal/external audits. The COR™ auditor identified no non-conformities or corrective actions on these elements, so we did not develop a CAP for these elements. However, we plan to maintain our COR™ designation, which means we will be undergoing an internal maintenance audit next year and look for opportunities for continual improvement. We will enroll in HSEp again next year to develop topics related to our areas of improvement noted on this year's audit.

COR IHSACa Work Safe For Life		Certificate of Recognition™ 2020 Audit Tool			
Version 2.0	Note: Definitions for bolded terms are included in the Definitions section at the end of this Audit Tool				
Company Name: ABC Inc				Not yet saved.	
Element 11: Emergency Preparedness		Score Possible	Score Achieved	Legislated	Verification Technique
Element 11 Total		55	55	100% total achieved Passed LQ(s)* All scores inputted	

COR IHSACa Work Safe For Life		Certificate of Recognition™ 2020 Audit Tool			
Version 2.0	Note: Definitions for bolded terms are included in the Definitions section at the end of this Audit Tool				
Company Name: ABC Inc				Not yet saved.	
Element Name & Number		Score Possible	Score Achieved	Total (Percentage)	
Element 1: Health and Safety Policy and Document and Record Control		37	37	100%	
Element 2: Hazard Assessment, Analysis and Control		52	52	100%	
Element 3: Controls		39	39	100%	
Element 4: Procurement and Contractor Management		26	26	100%	
Element 5: Company Rules		18	18	100%	
Element 6: Personal Protective Equipment		32	32	100%	
Element 7: Preventative Maintenance		29	29	100%	
Element 8: Training and Communication		66	63	95%	
Element 9: Workplace Inspections		37	37	100%	
Element 10: Investigations and Reporting		39	36	92%	
Element 11: Emergency Preparedness		55	55	100%	
Element 12: Statistics & Records		25	25	100%	
Element 13: Legislation and Other Requirements		23	23	100%	
Element 14: Management Review and Management of Change		76	76	100%	
Total Score Achieved		554	548	99%	

Appendix A: HSEp topic(s) implementation document template for COR™ certified members

HSEp topics selected:	Applicable COR™ 2020 element	COR™ audit section total score
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	
		Corrective actions:
		CIP items on COR™ audit:

Date of COR™ audit:

Please check: Internal audit (maintenance) External audit

HSEp Topics Implementation Story (Evidence Story)

In the section below, clearly describe how you implemented your HSEp topics to prepare for your COR™ audit. Please outline specific activities taken, including dates and appropriate locations. Your program provider is available to assist.

Implementation model used:

Evidence story -

