

Safety Representative: Information Sheet



An tÚdarás Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta
Health and Safety Authority

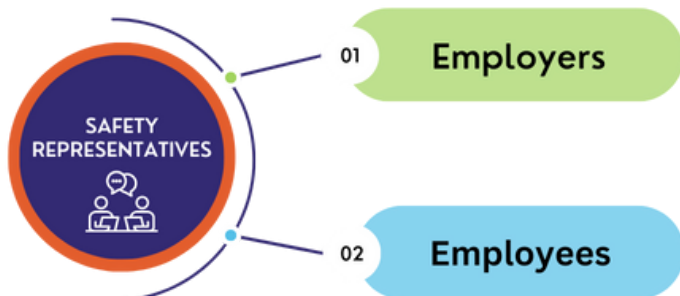
What is a Safety Representative?

- They are a worker that represents employees on all matters related to health, safety and welfare to management in the workplace.
- They are selected by their fellow employees and workers.
- They provide a direct link between employees and employers on health and safety issues identified through direct communication with fellow workers.

Important information

A Safety Representative

- Is not a **Safety Officer** or **Safety Advisor**, and is protected against penalisation (Section 27 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005)



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 hsa.ie



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What can a Safety Representative do?

Consultation

A Safety Representative may consult with, and make representations on health, safety and welfare matters relating to the employees in the workplace to the employer.

The employer must consider these representations, and act on them if necessary.

Where a safety committee is already in existence, it can be used for this consultation process.



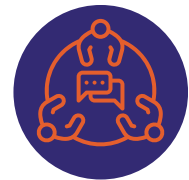
Inspections

Safety Representatives, after giving reasonable notice to the employer:

- have the right to inspect the whole or part of the workplace,
- at a frequency or on a schedule agreed between them and the employer.

The frequency of inspections undertaken by the Safety Representative(s) depends on:

- the size of the workplace, and
- the number of workers and the profile of the risks.



Investigations

A Safety Representative may:

- investigate accidents and dangerous occurrences in the workplace, and
- make written or verbal representations to HSA inspectors.



Important information

A Safety Representative must not interfere with anything at the scene of an accident.

Training

It is essential that Safety Representatives have the knowledge and skills necessary to perform their role effectively. Safety Representatives should:

- be allowed time for training, without loss of earnings, so that they can acquire the knowledge to carry out the role, and
- have training costs, whether provided by a commercial training organisation or trade unions, paid for by the employer.

Meetings / Facilities

A Safety Representative should:

- attend meetings when health and safety issues are being discussed.

A Safety Representative should be provided with reasonable facilities in the workplace such as:

- a meeting room, or access to up-to-date safety and health information and published guidance,
- a room to consult with employees or to prepare any submission or reports, and
- be given time to undertake their role as a Safety Representative in the workplace.



"A Short Course for Safety Representatives" is available to raise awareness of the role of a Safety Representative on hsalearning.ie.



What else can a Safety Representative do?

A Safety Representative may also:

- make representations to the employer on safety, health and welfare at the workplace,
- receive advice and information from HSA inspectors in relation to safety, health and welfare at the workplace,
- make verbal or written representations to HSA inspectors, including about the investigation of accidents or dangerous occurrences,
- accompany a Health and Safety Authority inspector carrying out an inspection at the discretion of the HSA inspector,
- be present when the HSA inspector interviews the employee about an accident or dangerous occurrence at the workplace (if requested by employee),
- consult and liaise with other Safety Representatives appointed in the same workplace, and
- be consulted by the employer in advance of workplace changes which can potentially impact on health and safety in the workplace.

A properly informed Safety Representative can play an important role in preventing accidents and ill-health.

It is in the employer's interest to ensure that Safety Representatives are supplied with all relevant information.

Safety Representatives must have access to information on:

- any risk assessments and safety statement relating to their place of work,
- reportable accidents, occupational illnesses and dangerous occurrences without identifying any individual,
- on safety and health measures required under safety and health legislation, and
- any safety and health information on dangerous equipment, chemicals or processes used at their workplace including instruction manuals and safety data sheets.

Videos and information for Safety Representatives are available at:

