

The role of the small enterprise work environment as a profit enhancer

ISSN 1456-3614
ISBN 978-952-479-073-4

Multiprint Oy, Tampere 2008

Table of Contents

To the Reader	5
Occupational safety and health is a profit enhancer	6
Occupational Safety and Health Act (738/2002)	7
1. EMPLOYMENT MATTERS	8
The employment contract	9
Leased labour	11
Young workers	12
On-the-job learning	14
Apprenticeship	15
Working hours register	16
Annual holidays	18
Family policy leave	22
Instructions when issuing a warning	24
Lay-offs	26
Termination of the employment contract	30
Certificate of employment	32
Instructions for filling in the pay certificate	34
Statutory obligations related to pay	36
Act on the Contractor's Obligations and Liability when Work is Contracted Out	37
The TyEL contribution is statutory	39
2. WORK ENVIRONMENT	41
Order and cleanliness – controlling costs	43
Safety of machinery	44
Chemical agents	46
The need for personal protective equipment, examples	49
Lighting	50
Noise and controlling it	50
Vibration and controlling it	52
Ventilation	54
Safety signs and their use	56
3. WORK, HEALTH AND WELL-BEING	57
Occupational health care	57
Workplace health promotion – cutting pension costs in advance	59
Good musculoskeletal capacity and health improve workflow and prevent illness	60
Mental well-being	61
Display screen work - well-being for IT work	62
Smoking at the workplace	63
Occupational safety and health cooperation at the workplace	65
What and where?	66
Addresses and contact information	67

To the Reader

Any company that employs less than 250 people (2003/361/EC) is classified as an SME, while a small enterprise has less than 50 and a micro enterprise less than 10 employees.

The information material concerning employment, the work environment and working conditions has primarily been designed to meet the needs of large and medium-sized workplaces – in other words, for workplaces that have specialists to utilise the information. Until now there has been very little information suitable for the needs of small enterprises.

The aim of this information package is to correct em. deficiency. The Possu publication covers the most important topics, summarising them into a practical and easy to understand presentation. The publication is intended for the use of the entire personnel. The focus is on matters related to employment and the work environment. The publication is not comprehensive, and thus the chapters include references to additional material.

The material has been compiled in a manner that makes it possible to deal with individual issues. When a problem related to working conditions or any other matter requiring a solution appears at a workplace, this manual can provide initial information. In particular, the information concerning employment matters has been summarised so that every topic has a sample form. The forms are photocopiable and available for use. Additional information can be found on the Internet using the search terms and questions can be presented to the Occupational Safety and Health Inspectorates (OSH Inspectorates), employment offices and expert institutions in different sectors. The contact information for these bodies is included in an appendix at the end of the manual.

An occupational safety and health databank at <http://fi.osha.europa.eu> is available for small and medium-sized enterprises that are interested in developing working conditions. The website includes tools that help familiarise people with basic risk management issues, perform company risk analyses on a computer, and look for external help from a directory of experts. The Finnish legislative database and generally applicable collective agreements can be found at www.finlex.fi.

An electronic version of this publication is available at www.tyosuojelu.fi/julkaisumyynti

We hope that you will read this material in its entirety and make recommendations for improvements and thus be part of developing the publication to better meet the needs of small enterprises. Please send any development recommendations to Hannu Tapola, tel. +358 3 262 72471 or hannu.tapola@stm.fi.

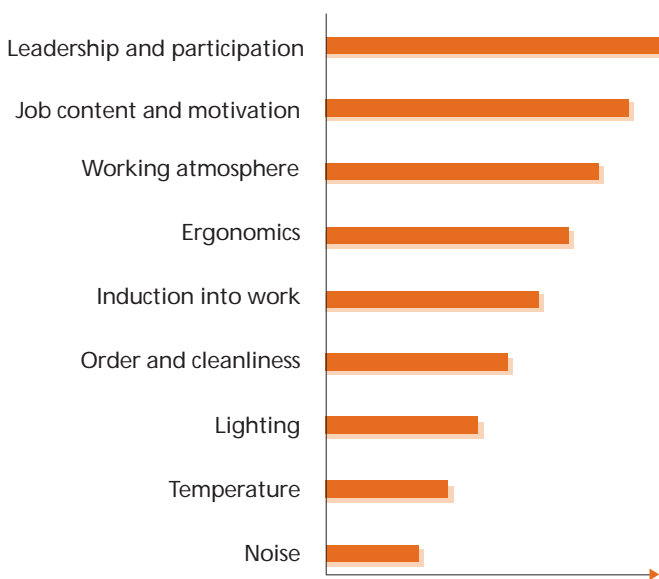
OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

Occupational safety and health is a profit enhancer

Productivity improves with working conditions

Studies of working conditions and the work environment show that an improvement in working conditions and a focus on order and cleanliness significantly improve productivity while reducing occupational accidents and absences from work.

Developing productivity may not actually involve major measures or additional costs. Good working conditions and a healthy work community make it possible to improve people's well-being and productivity. The importance of various work environment improvements to the development of company productivity can be described as follows (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2001).



Accidents and absences due to sickness reduce profit

An accident or work-related disease is always a physical and mental challenge that involves economic losses. A one-day absence from work due to an accident or illness causes the employer an average of about EUR 160 in additional costs.

The economic significance of accidents and absences due to sickness

The costs resulting from accidents and absences from work can be examined separately from the society, enterprise and employee standpoint.

For society, absences from work cause a reduction in the available workforce that subsequently leads to production losses and an increase in medical treatment and social expenditures. Another consequence of serious accidents and illnesses can be disability pension and early retirement expenses.

For enterprises, accidents and absences from work increase the company's production costs, reduce productivity and quality, and have a negative impact on competitiveness and customer service.

For the employee, the absence resulting from illness or an accident mean a reduction in income, especially if the absence is extended. Decreased capacity to work and the costs of medical treatment may cause other economic losses.

For more information:

Ahonen G, Bjurström L-M, Hussi T. Työkykyä ylläpitävän toiminnan taloudelliset vaikutukset. (The economic impacts of activities to maintain work ability) Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Social Insurance Institute of Finland (Kela) and The Finnish Institute of Occupational Health 2001.

Occupational Safety and Health Act (738 /2002)

The starting point and aim of the Occupational Safety and Health Act (738/2002) is for workplaces to take the initiative in managing safety, which will help promote and maintain safety and health as well as employees' capacity to work in a more efficient manner. The improvement and maintenance of safety should be a continuous process, and the responsibility of the entire organisation. The Act requires each workplace to have a policy for occupational safety and health at work.

The OSH Act applies to work carried out under the terms of an employment contract or to work performed in an employment relationship in the public sector or comparable service relationship subject to public law. The Act also contains provisions on the obligations of other people who affect safety and health at work. These include the manufacturers and importers of machines and equipment as well as installers, designers, people carrying out initial or periodic inspections, people dispatching or loading goods, the owners of buildings and ports, and ship owners. The Act includes a provision for penalties.

The Act provides guidelines for management of occupational safety and health and the employer's obligation to improve working conditions. The new Act further clarifies the employer's obligation to identify and assess the risks related to and caused by work. The employer has a general obligation to ensure the employees' safety and health at work with restrictions concerning unusual and unforeseen circumstances.

A shared workplace refers to workplaces where at least one person employed by an external employer

and/or a so-called self-employed worker works simultaneously with the employees of the employer exercising the main authority at the workplace.

The provisions regarding this type of shared workplace must be applied at all shared workplaces regardless of the line of business. Furthermore, the Act also contains a provision on the co-operation between different employers sharing the same industrial hall, place of business or similar space. The Act also imposes responsibilities on employees. They shall follow the orders and instructions given by the employer within his or her competence and otherwise observe such order and cleanliness as well as care and caution necessary for maintaining safety and health as required by the work and working conditions. The employee must use all available means to take care of both their own and the other employees' safety and health. The employee must also avoid harassment and inappropriate treatment of other employees.

Hazard and risk factors occurring at the workplace and the measures to prevent these have been handled in the Act around thematic entities. In addition to addressing the prevention of traditional physical accidents, attention has also been focused on stress factors at work and reducing them, ergonomics and display screen work, preventing the threat of violence, and working alone. The Act contains provisions on the prevention of harassment and other inappropriate treatment as well as describing structural safety of the workplace and work environment, chemical, physical and biological factors, and the safety of machines and tools.

1. EMPLOYMENT MATTERS

A lack of knowledge when managing employment matters can be expensive for an enterprise. This section outlines some of the common problems that can face small enterprises.

Important issues:

According to the Employment Contracts Act (55/2001), the employer must observe at least the pay and other terms for the work in question or similar work as outlined in the generally binding collective agreement for the sector.

- The collective agreements generally include a provision on taking out so-called group life insurance.
- On the basis of the Employment Accidents Act, the employer is obliged to take out insurance if the number of working days commissioned during one calendar year exceeds 12.
- The employer is obliged to pension and social security contributions for its employees.

The Working Hours Act (605/1996)

The Working Hours Act applies to almost all work performed on the basis of an employment or civil service relationship. The Young Workers' Act also applies to young people under the age of 18. The employer and employee can agree on various flexible shifts within the framework of the Working Hours Act and the collective agreement.

Regular working hours on the basis of the Act

General provision:

Regular working hours are a maximum of 8 hours per day and 40 hours per week. Note: Periodic work or working time based on an employment contract and local agreement.

According to the Working Hours Act, the maximum number of overtime hours is:

- 138 h over a 4-month period
- 250 h in a calendar year
- 80 h subject to local agreement (additional overtime)

For more information:

- Työpaikan lakikirja (The law book for workplaces). Edita Publishing Oy 2005.
- Saarinen M. Työsuhteasioiden käsikirja (A handbook for employment matters). Edita Publishing Oy 2003.
- www.finlex.fi

The employment contract

The advantages of a written contract

A written employment contract provides many benefits for both parties. A written contract can be used to reliably prove what has been agreed. The use of sector-specific contract forms ensures that all the important terms required by the law and the sector are included in the contract. A written contract also helps assure the employee that the employer is a trustworthy partner. This maintains job motivation and promotes commitment.

Planning the content of the employment contract

When planning the content of an employment contract, the employer should utilise at least the following tools: the collective agreement for the industry, the Employment Contracts Act, Working Hours Act and Annual Holidays Act as well as a sector-specific or other sample employment contract form. The legislation database and generally binding collective agreements can be found at www.finlex.fi.

At least the following matters affect the content of an employment contract:

- The needs of the employer and the employee.
- Provisions of the Employment Contracts Act concerning what issues must be agreed upon.
- The minimum terms of the collective agreement in the sector, which must be met.
- Provisions of the Employment Contracts Act, Working Hours Act and Annual Holidays Act that restrict the content of the employment contract.

Written information

If the employment contract is not in written form or it does not include the information listed below, the employer must by the end of the first pay period provide the employee with a written explanation of the terms of employment. The information is not required for fixed-term employment lasting less than one month.

If an employer makes a number of consecutive fixed-term contracts of less than one month with an employee under the same terms, the information must be provided within one month of the beginning of the first period of employment. The explanation is not required again if the terms remain the same. If the terms of employment change, the employee must receive written confirmation of the new terms by the end of the next pay period.

Minimum content of a written employment contract or explanation

- The domicile or business location of the employer and the employee
- The date work began
- The duration of fixed-term employment and justification for specifying a fixed-term contract
- Length of the trial period (if a trial period is agreed)

- The place where work is to be performed; if there is no fixed workplace, an explanation of the principles according to which the employee will work in various work locations
- The employee's principle duties
- The collective agreement applied to the work
- The grounds for determination of pay and the pay period
- The regular working hours
- The manner of determining annual holiday
- The period of notice or grounds for determining it
- In the case of work performed abroad for a minimum period of one month, the duration of the work, the currency in which the monetary pay is to be paid, the monetary compensation paid abroad, fringe benefits, and the terms for repatriation of the employee.

Duration of the employment contract

Permanent or fixed-term

An employee can always be hired as a permanent employee, in other words, for an indefinite period of time. If the employer intends to employ an employee for a fixed period, the duration of the fixed period must be agreed and acceptable grounds for this must be outlined in the employment contract. These can include substitution, the seasonal nature of the work, a fixed-term project, a one-off job, a training period for an educational institute, the fixed term of an apprenticeship or similar contract, and a factor related to the company's business or the position that requires a fixed-term contract.

If the employer cannot justify a fixed-term contract, the employment contract shall be considered valid for an indefinite period.

Trial period

The intention of the trial period is to reserve a short period at the start of employment in order to determine the grounds for continuing the employment relationship. The trial period and its duration must be agreed by the employer and employee. If the collective agreement determines the length of the trial period, the employer must inform the employee of the use of this provision when making an employment contract. If such information is not provided and the employment contract does not include a provision concerning trial period, there shall be no such period in the employment.

The trial period begins at the start of employment and lasts continuously for the agreed period. An agreed trial period may not be extended. The maximum length of a trial period is normally four months. In fixed-term employment of less than eight months, the trial period may be a maximum of half of the fixed term. If the collective agreement observed by the employer limits the length of the trial period, the employer and the employee may not agree on a longer period.

EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT

Employer _____

Address _____

Employee _____ Personal identity code _____

Address _____

THE FOLLOWING TERMS HAVE BEEN AGREED:

The employment contract is valid as of ____ / ____ ____

for a fixed term of ____ / ____ ____ ending on ____ / ____ ____

or until the work specified below is completed _____

Grounds for fixed-term employment _____

Place of work / object of work _____

Job description _____ Described in the attached appendix

A trial period of _____ months/days has been agreed.

Regular working hours

_____ hours / day

_____ hours / week

For periodic work _____ hours / in a _____ week period

The period of notice and annual holiday shall be determined according to the prevailing legislation and the generally binding collective agreement for the industry.

Pay at the start of employment shall be EUR _____ / _____ Pay period

Paydays _____

Final settlement shall be paid:

- upon termination of employment/at the end of employment
- upon dissolution of employment, on the third weekday after the end of employment at the latest

Bank and account number to which the salary is to be paid _____

Fringe benefits _____ Described in the attached appendix

Applicable collective agreement _____

In addition, the following has been agreed: _____

Two identical copies of this contract have been drawn up, one for each party

_____ / _____

Employer's signature

Employee's signature

Leased labour

Leased labour means that an employer assigns its employee to work for another employer (recipient of labour, user enterprise, client, commissioner of the work). The employee works under the management and supervision of the recipient of labour. Work often takes place at the workplace of the recipient of labour. The recipient of labour pays compensation to the supplier of the labour, not to the actual employee. The employee receives pay from his/her employer.

Leased labour must be distinguished from subcontracting and nominated subcontracting, in which the commissioner of the work and the subcontractor or nominated subcontractor have contracted for a specific end result.

Regulations

According to Chapter 1, section 7, subsection 3 of the Employment Contracts Act (55/2001), if, with the consent of the employee, an employer assigns an employee for use by another employer, the right to direct and supervise the work is transferred to the user enterprise together with the obligations for the employer that are directly related to performance of the work and its arrangement. According to Chapter 2, section 9, if the employer leasing the labour (for example, a leasing company) is not bound by any collective agreement, the collective agreement applicable to the enterprise utilising the leased labour shall apply.

Section 3 of the Occupational Safety and Health Act (738/2002) includes provisions regarding leased labour. Accordingly, anyone who has labour employed by someone else (leased labour) under their direction is required during the work to observe the provisions of this Act concerning employers.

Subsection 2 requires that the recipient of labour shall, before starting work, define the occupational qualifications for the leased labour and the specific features of the work to the employer of the leased employees. The employer shall ensure that the employees have adequate occupational skills and experience for the work in question.

Subsection 3 obliges the recipient of labour to take care of providing the employees with induction into the work. Subsection 4 gives the Government the right to lay down more detailed provisions.

The Government decree on certain occupational safety and health requirements in leased labour (782/1997) provides more information on the responsibilities of the employer of the leased employee and the party for whom the work is performed. These include the dissemination of information by the party for whom

the work is performed and the employer's responsibility to assess the employee's suitability for the work in question.

According to section 48 of the Act on Occupational Safety and Health Enforcement and Cooperation on Occupational Health and Safety at Workplaces (44/2006), anyone offering professional leased labour is obliged to give the appropriate occupational safety and health authority prior notice before starting the activity.

The responsibilities of the employee's own employer

The responsibilities of the employee's own employer are:

- to arrange occupational health care for the leased employee
- to notify the employee of the professional requirements and nature of the work
- to ensure that the employee has sufficient professional skill, experience and suitability for the work in question
- to take care of the employee's general instruction and guidance for the work tasks
- to confirm that the recipient of labour is able to fulfil its responsibilities and that the work can otherwise be performed in an appropriate and safe manner.

Responsibilities of the recipient of labour

The responsibilities of the recipient of labour are:

- to inform the provider of labour of the professional requirements and specific features of the work before starting work
- to inform the occupational health care and occupational safety and health representative at the workplace of the start of leased labour
- to ensure that the employee is provided with sufficient information about the hazards and risks involved in the work and the necessary occupational safety and health measures
- to inform the employee of any specific risks involved in the work and the related medical examinations (particularly night work and work that presents a specific risk of illness)
- to provide the employee with induction into the work and conditions at the workplace as well as occupational safety and health measures
- to take care of occupational safety and health during the work, including appropriate personnel facilities, the safety of tools, and proper ergonomic dimensions in the work environment
- if necessary, to familiarise the employee with occupational safety and health co-operation and communication at the workplace and the occupational health care arrangements.

Young workers

Who is a young worker?

The Young Workers' Act (998/1993) applies to employees under the age of 18.

15 years of age

A young person aged 15 who has completed his/her compulsory schooling can be employed on a permanent basis.

14 years of age

The work may not interfere with school attendance. A 14-year-old or a 13-year-old who turns 14 in the same calendar year can perform light work. He/she can work a maximum of half the holiday period during school holidays and do temporary work or work that is short-term in duration during the school year.

13 years of age or younger

With a permit issued by the Exceptions Division of the Occupational Safety and Health Inspectorate, a person under the age of 13 can work temporarily as a performer or assistant at art and cultural exhibitions and other similar events.

The employment contract

A person aged 15 can make an employment contract. For a person under the age of 15, the guardian (usually the father or mother) can make the contract or, with the consent of the guardian, it can be made by the young person.

The guardian can terminate the young worker's employment contract if this is necessary for the sake of the young person's education, development or health.

At the request of the young worker or his/her guardian, the employer must present a written explanation of the terms of employment BEFORE making the contract. This does not apply to one day's domestic work performed in the home of the employer.

What kind of work can a young worker do?

A young worker cannot be used for work that would be hazardous to his/her physical or mental development. Furthermore, work may not require greater effort or responsibility than what is reasonable considering the age and strength of young workers. The Decree on Work that is Considered Particularly Harmful or Dangerous for Young People (475/2006) provides more detailed information on this issue.

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health has issued a Decree on a List of Examples of Jobs Hazardous for Young Workers (302/2007). The decree includes an example list of work that cannot be assigned to young workers.

The Ministry of Labour decision 1431/1993 provides a list of work that is classified as light and which can be assigned to a young person aged 14 or who turns 14 in the same calendar year.

Working hours for young people

	13 – 15 years	15 – 17 years	NOTE!
Regular working hours	DURING SCHOOL HOLIDAYS 7 h/day 35 h/week	8 h/day 40 h/week	
	DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR 7 h/day on days off 2 h/day on school days Total: 12 h/week		13 – 15 years The maximum length of the school day and working hours is 8 h/day (special permit possible for professional development)
Overtime	Forbidden	Maximum of 80 h/year (by special permit an additional 40 h/year) 48 h/week	15 – 17 years maximum working time 9 h/day
Distribution of working hours	8 am-8 pm (until 11 pm in domestic work)	6 am-10 pm (11 pm in domestic work)	over the age of 15 in 2 shifts until midnight for professional training purposes
Meal breaks	½ h, if working hours exceed 4 ½ h/day	See previous	
Uninterrupted rest period	14 h/day	12 h/day	
Weekly rest period	38 h/week	As for adults	

Medical examination

If employment is intended to last more than three months, young workers must undergo a medical examination at the employer's expense within one month of the start of employment.

The medical examination is not required if the work is light shop or office work or other similar light employment or if the young person can produce a medical certificate obtained within the last year showing that he/she is fit for the employment.

List of young workers

The employer shall keep a list of all young workers who are recruited for at least two months. The list shall include:

- the full name and date of birth of the worker
- the worker's address
- the name and address of the worker's guardian
- the date on which employment began
- a job description

On-the-job learning

Students that are learning a vocation gain practical experience of their work tasks while studying. Each three-year basic vocational diploma includes at least 20 credits (about six months) of on-the-job learning, in other words, studying at workplaces.

On-the-job learning is regulated by the Vocational Education Act (630/1998) and Decree (811/1998). It is also guided by the recommendations and opinions of the central labour market organisations as well as the collective agreements in each field.

The general aims of on-the-job learning are

- to increase the responsibility of working life for education
- to increase the availability of qualified labour for enterprises
- to promote the employment of young people and their transfer to the labour market
- to increase students' knowledge of the labour market and the rules of working life
- to raise the level of co-operation between schools and working life.

On-the-job training periods are of great benefit to all parties when they are well planned in advance. Preparing students for the on-the-job learning period helps make it more successful. The workplace can also prepare to receive the student.

The workplace and the educational institute agree on the general arrangements for on-the-job learning in a written contract. The contract defines the aims, the most important content (learning tasks), duration and timing of the on-the-job learning period, and outlines the responsibilities of each party.

A personalised contract is used to agree on the student's on-the-job learning period. The contract includes more detailed information on the student's work arrangements, aims and tasks, etc.

General contract on the arrangement of on-the-job learning

(Word document on the Ministry of Education website)
www.edu.fi/tonet/fin/lomakkeet/sopimus.doc

Workplaces, teachers and students all have their own specific tasks when arranging on-the-job learning. The following paragraphs summarise the most important of these.

The tasks of the workplace in terms of on-the-job learning are:

- to provide the educational institute with information about the work and the conditions and work equipment related to the work environment.
- to agree in writing with the institute concerning the arrangement of on-the-job learning.

- to designate a responsible workplace instructor to direct and evaluate the student's learning at work.
- to take responsibility for the student's occupational safety and health during on-the-job learning.
- to provide the student with information about how the working community operates and develops.
- to inform personnel at the workplace of the on-the-job learning.

The teacher's tasks in terms of on-the-job learning are:

- to plan the on-the-job learning with the student and the workplace instructor.
- to provide the workplace instructor with information about the student's curriculum, aims and other important issues.
- to outline the appropriateness of the work tasks in various on-the-job learning periods, to plan the learning tasks, and to explain their aims to the workplace instructor.
- to help and support the student in the various stages of on-the-job learning.
- to participate concretely in counselling and evaluation of the student.

The student's responsibilities in terms of on-the-job learning are:

- to observe order at the workplace and follow the instructions and rules concerning the work and occupational safety and health.
- to perform the tasks agreed with the workplace instructor and the teacher and to observe the issues agreed in the on-the-job learning contract.

The workplace instructor designated by the workplace shall guide and evaluate the student's learning at the workplace. The workplace instructor, student and teacher shall participate in the evaluation of on-the-job learning. The student shall evaluate his/her learning by keeping a learning diary (as a Word document), for example.

The workplace instructor and the teacher shall both participate in evaluating the student in the agreed manner. The areas for evaluation include the student's technical skills, in other words, how the student handles the assigned learning tasks and his/her social skills (such as the ability to work independently, group work skills, precision, reliability, observation of working hours).

According to the recommendation of the labour market organisations, on-the-job learning should be arranged without an actual employment relationship. If, however, an employment contract is concluded, the pay shall observe the regulations of the collective agreement. The person learning on the job is not a replacement for workplace personnel and does not affect the employment of personnel already working at the company.

Apprenticeship

Apprenticeship is a working life-oriented form of education that provides the opportunity to earn secondary vocational diplomas and vocational and further vocational qualifications. It is also possible to complete additional training not aimed at a diploma. Apprenticeship is a good way for young people and adults to obtain basic vocational training, and is also a form of developing professional skills. Entrepreneurs can also train themselves through apprenticeship performed in their own companies.

An apprenticeship refers to studies arranged in conjunction with practical work tasks at the workplace. The studies are supplemented by theoretical studies.

Apprenticeship is based on a fixed-term employment contract between an employer and an apprentice student aged 15 or older. An apprenticeship always includes a personal study programme, which is drawn up on the basis of the principles of the curriculum or competence-based qualification approved by the Finnish National Board of Education.

When looking for a person with a specific educational or employment background as an apprentice, you should contact the local employment office. You can also go to www.oppisopimus.net website and use the employment service intended for apprenticeship parties.

Contact the training co-ordinator if you would like more information about apprenticeship training.

What rights and responsibilities does the training involve?

The employer is paid a training compensation from state funds to cover the costs of the training.

The student must be paid at least the minimum pay for a trainee as outlined in the collective agreement.

A responsible instructor must be named at the workplace, and this person takes charge of the student's practical training for the work tasks.

The employer must ensure that the student can participate in the theoretical studies in accordance with his/her individual study plan.

At the end of the training, the employer provides the student with a certificate that includes an evaluation of the student's performance in terms of the workplace training.

Apprenticeship training is suitable for enterprises in the following situations:

- The enterprise needs additional workforce for which it does not set high knowledge or skill requirements.
- The enterprise cannot find an employee with a suitable education on the labour market.
- There is a need to train personnel for a completely new task.
- The employee's tasks require additional specialist training for the professional sector.

Working hours register

The Working Hours Act (605/1996) states that the employer must plan employees' working time in advance and compile a working time system for that purpose. An adjustment system for working hours must be prepared in advance when observing average working hours.

The employer must keep a list of the realised working hours. This is called the working hours register. The working hours register can be kept in conjunction with payroll accounting. Payroll accounting as such cannot replace the working hours register.

The employer can choose the form of the working hours register, but it is essential that all the necessary information be clearly recorded and easy to read. Modern IT applications generally include the tools necessary to maintain a working hours register.

What information is needed?

The working hours register must indicate

- the hours worked
- overtime hours and the increases paid for them
- Sunday hours and the increases paid for them
- the supervisor's estimate concerning the number of overtime and Sunday hours when a monthly salary has been agreed upon. This information must be clearly evident in the working hours register without additional calculations.

Hours worked are recorded in the working hours register so that the working hours per day and per four-month period are listed separately. The same applies to overtime hours.

The hours are always recorded as actual hours regardless of how compensation is paid.

In practice, the working hours register and payroll accounting include the following documents:

- work roster (working time system)
- a scheme for averaging out employees' working time (when observing average working time)
- basic record (hours slip, time card, etc.)
- record of working hours
- pay sheet

The working hours register and payroll accounting can also be handled by an accountant in conjunction with the rest of the company's bookkeeping.

Annual holidays

Holiday credit year

The time from 1 April to 31 March preceding the holiday season constitutes the holiday credit year. The right to holiday is calculated on the basis of this period.

Holiday season

The period between 2 May and 30 September.

Full holiday credit month

This is a calendar month in which the employee has accumulated at least 14 days at work or the so-called equivalent of days at work.

If, according to the contract, the employee works on so few days that he/she does not accumulate 14 days at work in any calendar months or accumulates 14 days at work in only some of the months, a full holiday credit month is considered to be a month during which the employee has accumulated at least 35 hours at work or the equivalent of hours at work.

Period equivalent to time at work

Any period of absence from work for which the employer is obliged by law to pay the employee is considered to be a period equivalent to work. During an employment relationship, the equivalent of days at work is also considered to be those working days or working hours when the employee has been unable to work because of, for example, maternity, special maternity, paternity and parental leave, temporary childcare leave, absence for compelling family reasons, illness or accident, medical rehabilitation, or lay-offs. See the list in section 7 of the Annual Holidays Act (162/2003).

Right to holiday

Holiday entitlement is two weekdays of holiday for each full holiday credit month if, by the end of the holiday credit year, the duration of the employment relationship has been an uninterrupted period of less than one year. An employee is entitled to two and a half weekdays of holiday for each full holiday credit month.

If several consecutive fixed-term employment contracts that have continued uninterrupted or with only short interruptions have been concluded, the employment is considered to be continuous.

The earning of annual holiday shall continue uninterrupted if the employee transfers directly to the service of an employer that, on the basis of ownership, agreement or some other arrangement, is controlled by the previous employer or persons closely related to the previous employer.

The employee's right to be given leave

An employee, who, according to his/her contract, works for less than 14 days or 35 hours in all calendar months and therefore does not earn any annual holiday, is entitled to two weekdays of leave for each calendar month of employment if he/she so desires.

Month	April	May	June	July	August	Sep- tember	October	Novem- ber	Decem- ber	Jan- uary	Febru- ary	March	Total
Actual days at work													
Days equivalent to days at work													
Days entitling the employee to leave Total													
Days of leave													

HOLIDAY PAY CALCULATION/HOLIDAY COMPENSATION CALCULATION

Employer

Employer Date of birth

Holiday credit year -

Employment began on Employment continues Employment ended on

Holiday entitlement / right to time off months X days = weekdays

HOLIDAY PAY CALCULATION FORMULAS

1. EMPLOYEES WITH MONTHLY SALARY

Monthly pay at the start of the holiday € : Days worked per month = €/day X Workdays during the period of holidays = Holiday pay/holiday compensation €

2. EMPLOYEES WITH HOURLY WAGES IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ANNUAL HOLIDAYS ACT

Earnings from working during holiday credit year, overtime and emergency work increments excluded € : Days worked + 1/8 of overtime and emergency work = Average daily wage €/day { x } X = Holiday pay/holiday compensation €

When necessary: The number of weekly workdays divided by five

Coefficient in accordance with the Annual Holidays Act

3. EMPLOYEES WITH HOURLY WAGES ACCORDING TO HOLIDAY PAY AGREEMENT

Earnings from working during holiday credit year, overtime and emergency work increments excluded € : Hours worked = Average hourly wage €/hour X Coefficient according to holiday pay agreement = Holiday pay/holiday compensation €

4. PERCENTAGE-BASED HOLIDAY PAY/HOLIDAY COMPENSATION

Earnings from working during holiday credit year, overtime and emergency work increments excluded € + Wages fallen due from time comparable to working = Total X Compensation percentage 9% or 11.5% or % determined by applicable collective agreement = Holiday pay/holiday compensation €

TIME OF THE HOLIDAYS

- = days

- = days

- = days

Carried-over holiday entitlement days = days in total

HOLIDAY PAY

€

€

€

PAID

HOLIDAY BONUS ACCORDING TO COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT

€ X % = €

For holiday days - = € Paid

For holiday days - = € Paid

For holiday days - = € Paid

Carried-over holiday

The employer and the employee may agree that the portion of the holiday exceeding 18 days will be taken during the following holiday season or later as carried-over holiday. The employee has the right to carry over any portion of his/her holiday exceeding 24 days, providing that this does not cause any serious harm to the production or service operations at the workplace.

Granting annual holiday

The employee must be granted a **summer holiday** (24 weekdays) during the holiday season of 2 May - 30 September.

The rest of the holiday (the portion exceeding 24 weekdays) must be granted as **winter holiday** before the start of the following holiday season, in other words, between 1 October and 31 March.

Annual holiday is granted to the employee at the time determined by the employer unless otherwise agreed by the employer and the employee.

The employer and the employee may agree

- that the employee will take the portion of holiday exceeding 12 weekdays in one or more periods.
- on setting the annual holiday in a period that starts at the beginning of the calendar year which includes the holiday season and which ends the following year before the start of the holiday season.
- on taking the portion of the holiday exceeding 12 weekdays within one year of the end of the holiday season.
- on taking the annual holiday earned up to the end of his/her employment relationship before the employment relationship ends.
- that, at the request of the employee, the portion of the holiday exceeding 24 weekdays be converted into shortened working hours.

The agreement must be in writing.

Holiday pay and compensation

The **holiday pay/holiday compensation** calculation form (page 19) can be used for calculating holiday pay and compensation.

The holiday pay for an employee receiving **monthly pay** is calculated by dividing the monthly pay by the number of working days in the month in question and multiplying the resulting daily pay by the number of working days in the holiday period.

The holiday pay for an employee receiving **hourly wages or piecework pay** is calculated so that the pay received by the employee or his/her pay in arrears for

the time at work during the holiday credit year, excluding increases paid for emergency work and statutory or agreed overtime, is divided by the number of days worked during the holiday credit year and then supplemented by one-eighth of the hours at work that exceed regular working hours.

If, in accordance with the employee's contract, the number of working days per week is less than or more than five, the average daily pay is multiplied by the number of weekly working days and then divided by five.

The average daily pay is then multiplied by a factor determined according to the number of holiday days as outlined in section 11 of the Annual Holidays Act or in the holiday pay agreement.

Percentage-based compensation is mainly used when calculating the holiday pay for part-time employees or holiday compensation for employees earning leave. Holiday compensation is 9% of the employee's pay or pay in arrears for the time at work during the holiday credit year, excluding any sum paid for emergency work or statutory or agreed overtime work. The holiday compensation is 11.5% if the employment relationship has lasted for at least one year by the end of the holiday credit year preceding the holiday season. If the employee has been absent from work, any pay not received by the employee during the absence is added to the pay used as the basis for calculating the holiday pay.

The percentages may be agreed differently in the collective agreements (for example, 18.5% in the construction sector, 10% or 12.5% for part-time employees in the commercial sector).

Holiday pay must be paid before the start of the holiday except for a holiday period not exceeding six days. Holiday compensation for employees earning leave is paid in conjunction with the leave or at the end of the holiday period at the latest.

At the end of an employment relationship, the employee is entitled to holiday compensation instead of annual holiday for any holiday entitlement or holiday compensation earned but not yet received. Holiday compensation is calculated according to the applicable parts of the holiday pay provisions.

When paying holiday pay or holiday compensation, the employer is obliged to provide the employee with a statement indicating the amount of the holiday pay or holiday compensation and the basis on which it was determined.

The employer must keep a record of the employee's annual holidays and carried-over holidays as well as the holiday pay and holiday compensation determined on the basis of the Annual Holidays Act. The annual holidays records must show the duration and dates of the annual holidays, the amount of holiday pay and compensation, and the basis on which they are determined.

Family policy leave

Regulations

The regulations concerning family leave are contained in Chapter 4 of the Employment Contracts Act (55/2001) and in the Sickness Insurance Act (1224/2004). The duration of family leave is determined according to the Sickness Insurance Act and the applicable notification periods are outlined in the Employment Contracts Act.

However, the employee has the subjective right to family leave providing that the notification periods are observed. In terms of partial child-care leave, the employer can refuse the requested leave in certain cases. A pregnant employee is entitled to take part in medical examinations prior to birth without any loss of earnings if these examinations have to be conducted during working time.

Maternity leave

- The duration is 105 weekdays, 30 - 50 weekdays of which are before the calculated time of birth.
- NOTIFICATION TO THE EMPLOYER at least two months before the start of the leave
- Possible pay is determined according to the collective agreement.
- The employee accumulates annual holiday.

Paternity leave

- The duration is 18 weekdays.
- Can be timed according to the family's needs in a maximum of four periods.
- Paternity leave is also extended by 1-12 weekdays if the father takes at least the last 12 weekdays of the parental leave (the so-called father's month). The father's month must be taken before 180 days have passed since the last payment date of the parental allowance that follows the maternity allowance.
- NOTIFICATION TO THE EMPLOYER at least two months before the start of the leave
- No remuneration is paid unless otherwise agreed in, for example, the collective agreement.
- The employee accumulates annual holiday.

Parental leave

- The duration is 158 weekdays.
- Either parent can take parental leave in a maximum of two periods, the minimum duration of which is 12 weekdays/period.
- NOTIFICATION TO THE EMPLOYER at least two months before the start of the leave.
- Usually unpaid.
- The employee accumulates annual holiday.

Child-care leave

- Until the child turns three.
- Either parent can take child-care leave.
- A maximum of two periods.
- The duration of each period must be at least one month.
- NOTIFICATION TO THE EMPLOYER at least two months before the start of the leave
- Unpaid.
- The employee does not accumulate annual holiday.
- The parent of an adopted child is entitled to child-care leave, see Chapter 4, section 3 of the Employment Contracts Act.

Partial child-care leave

- Possible when an employee has been employed for six out of the past 12 months.
- Both parents must be employed.
- Available until the end of July of the year when the child finishes the second school year.
- Working time is 6 h/day and 30 h/week unless otherwise agreed.
- Both parents may not take partial child-care leave simultaneously to care for the child. The parents can share the responsibility so that one cares for the child in the morning and the other in the afternoon or so that they care for the child on alternate days or weeks.
- CONTRACT MUST BE MADE at least two months prior to the start of partial child-care unless a shorter period has been agreed.
- The employer cannot refuse to grant the leave unless it causes serious inconvenience to production or service operations at the workplace.
- The scope covers children with extended compulsory education and children with a disability or long-term illness that require special care and support, see Chapter 4, section 4 of the Employment Contracts Act.

Temporary child-care leave

- Sudden illness of a child under the age of 10
- A maximum of four working days.
- Possible pay and holiday are determined on the basis of the collective agreement.
- NOTIFICATION TO THE EMPLOYER as soon as possible.

Absence for compelling family reasons

- If an employee's immediate absence from work is necessary for an unforeseeable and compelling reason resulting from an illness or accident suffered by his/her family.
- Temporary absence.
- NOTIFICATION TO THE EMPLOYER as soon as possible.
- At the employer's request, the employee must present a reliable explanation of the reasons for the absence.

FAMILY POLICY LEAVE

Employee _____

Employer _____

NOTIFICATION OF LEAVE

	Begins	Ends
<input type="checkbox"/> MATERNITY LEAVE [ADOPTION LEAVE]	____ / ____ - ____	____ / ____ - ____
<input type="checkbox"/> PARENTAL LEAVE	____ / ____ - ____	____ / ____ - ____
<input type="checkbox"/> PATERNITY LEAVE (18 weekdays in a maximum of four periods)		
1st period	____ / ____ - ____	____ / ____ - ____
2nd period	____ / ____ - ____	____ / ____ - ____
3rd period	____ / ____ - ____	____ / ____ - ____
4th period	____ / ____ - ____	____ / ____ - ____
<input type="checkbox"/> PATERNITY LEAVE, so-called father's month	____ / ____ - ____	____ / ____ - ____
<input type="checkbox"/> CHILD-CARE LEAVE CHILD UNDER 3	____ / ____ - ____	____ / ____ - ____
<input type="checkbox"/> PARTIAL CHILD-CARE LEAVE	____ / ____ - ____	____ / ____ - ____
<input type="checkbox"/> TEMPORARY CHILD-CARE LEAVE	____ / ____ - ____	____ / ____ - ____

The following has also been agreed: _____

_____ / _____ 20 _____

Place and date

Employee

Employer

Instructions when issuing a warning

If an employee seriously neglects or violates the responsibilities of his/her employment relationship, the employer may have reasonable and sufficient grounds to terminate the employment.

However, in the above-mentioned situation the employee may not be dismissed before the employer has issued him/her a WARNING concerning this matter.

After receiving the warning, the employee must be provided with the opportunity to correct his/her behaviour.

Since the warning must be verifiable, it should always be issued to the employee in writing.

The reason for the warning must be recorded in as much detail as possible (for example, how and when the neglect of work responsibility occurred).

The warning is not required in special cases in which the grounds for dismissal involve such a serious violation that the employee should have understood the severity of the error without a warning.

WARNING

EMPLOYEE

Name _____

Personal identity code _____

EMPLOYER

Name _____ Business ID _____

Address _____

Tel. _____

OUR COMPANY ISSUES THE FOLLOWING WARNING

The reason for the warning is: _____

Should the violation continue, the employer can initiate measures to terminate the employment relationship.

Place and date _____ / _____

Signature _____

The above warning has been issued to the employee for notification purposes:

Place and date _____ / _____

Employee's signature _____

WITNESSES _____

Lay-offs

Laying off means temporary or indefinite interruption of work and remuneration at the initiative of the employer while the employment relationship continues in other respects. Laying off can also be implemented by reducing the employee's regular working hours.

Grounds

- The employer may lay off an employee for a financial or production-related reason or if the work or the employer's potential for offering work have diminished temporarily and the employer cannot reasonably provide the employee with other suitable work or training corresponding to its needs.
- An employee in a fixed-term employment relationship can only be laid off if the permanent employee for which he/she is a substitute could also be laid off.
- The employer and the employee can also agree on a lay-off for a fixed period if this is necessary in view of the employer's operations or financial standing.

Procedure

Advance explanation:

- The employer must, as soon as it becomes aware of the need for lay-offs, provide the employee with an advance explanation of the available information.
- This explanation must indicate the grounds for the lay-off, and its estimated extent, implementation, commencement and duration.
- The employees or their representatives must be given the opportunity to be heard concerning the explanation provided.

Lay-off notice:

- The employer must notify the employee in person of the grounds for lay-off, commencement, duration or estimated duration a minimum of 14 days before the lay-off begins.
- If the lay-off concerns at least 10 employees, the employer shall also inform the representative of the employees and the employment authority.

Lay-off certificate:

- At the employee's request, the employer shall provide a written lay-off certificate indicating the reason for the lay-off, the date of commencement and duration of the lay-off. The date the employment relationship began should also be recorded for the employment authorities.

Returning to work and termination of employment

- If an employee has been laid-off indefinitely, the employer shall notify the employee of resumption of work at least seven days in advance unless otherwise agreed.
- The employer must observe the normal procedure for terminating employment when terminating the employment relationship of a laid-off employee.
- However, the employer may deduct pay for 14 days from the sum due for the period of notice if the employee has been laid off using a law- or contract-based notification period of more than 14 days.

The employee's rights

- The employee may accept other work during the period of lay-off and terminate this other employment regardless of the duration of the employment contract using a five-day period of notice.
- The employee may terminate his/her employment relationship without a period of notice during a lay-off except within the last week before the end of the lay-off if the date when the lay-off ends is known.
- Employees who terminate their employment contract after the lay-off has lasted continuously for a minimum of 200 days are entitled to their pay for the notice period as compensation, from which the employer can deduct a maximum of 14 days pay paid during the lay-off notification period.

LAY-OFF NOTICE

EMPLOYEE

Name _____

Personal identity code _____

Date employment began _____

EMPLOYER

Name _____ Business ID _____

Address _____

Tel. _____

REASON FOR LAY-OFF

TYPE OF LAY-OFF

1. Complete lay-off

2. Reduction of working hours corresponding to lay-off,

after which the working hours are

_____ h/day _____ days/week _____ h/week

DURATION OF LAY-OFF

1. Indefinite, beginning on _____ / _____ _____

Estimated duration _____

2. Fixed term beginning on _____ / _____ _____

ending on _____ / _____ _____

Place and date _____ / _____ _____

Signature _____

The above notice has been issued to the employee for information purposes:

Place and date _____ / _____ _____

Employee's signature _____

WITNESSES _____

Termination of employment after a minimum of 200 calendar days of lay-off

The employee is entitled to pay for the period of notice

- if an employer terminates a laid-off employee's employment contract so that the contract ends during the lay-off.
- if the employee terminates his/her employment contract after the period of lay-off has lasted continuously for a minimum of 200 days.

In both cases the period of notice that applies to the employer must be observed.

Amount of pay for the period of notice

The employer may deduct a pay sum due for 14 days from the pay for the notice period if the employee has been laid off using a notification period of more than 14 days.

Notes:

An artificial termination of the lay-off in order to circumvent the provisions is not acceptable. For example, annual holidays do not interrupt a continuous period of lay-off.

An employer may not ask a laid-off employee to return to work for the period of notice.

NOTICE OF TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP AFTER A LAY-OFF OF 200 DAYS

Employer's name _____ Business ID _____

Address _____

Employee's name _____

Address _____

My period of lay-off has lasted continuously for more than 200 calendar days.

In accordance with Chapter 5, section 7 of the Employment Contracts Act (55/2001), I hereby terminate my employment relationship. I request payment of compensation equal to the pay for the period of notice not yet received.

_____/_____

Employee's signature

I have received notification of this notice today.

_____/_____

Employer's signature

Termination of the employment contract

Termination, period of notice and expiration of fixed-term

Employment contracts made for an indefinite period are usually terminated by one of the parties giving notice. The termination notice will be followed by a period of notice agreed upon by the parties, or defined by the collective agreement or by law.

During a trial period either party may terminate the employment contract. However, it may not be terminated for inappropriate reasons as outlined in Chapter 2, section 2, subsection 1 of the Employment Contracts Act (prohibition of discrimination and equal treatment) or other grounds inappropriate to the trial period. The employer may not terminate the employment contract after neglecting to inform the employee that the provision on a trial period contained in the binding collective agreement has been applied.

A fixed-term employment contract is terminated without giving notice at the end of the fixed period or on completion of the work.

Protection against termination

The employer may not terminate an indefinitely valid employment contract without proper and weighty reasons. These can include:

- Serious breach or neglect of the employee obligations as well as essential changes in the conditions necessary for working related to the employee's person, or
- A substantial and permanent decrease in the amount of work for financial or production-related reasons, or due to a reorganisation of the employer's operations.

However, employees who have neglected their duties arising from the employment relationship may not be given notice before they have been warned and given a chance to correct their conduct. After having heard the employee and prior to giving notice, the employer must determine whether it is possible to avoid giving notice by placing the employee in other work.

If the work has substantially and permanently diminished, the employee may not be given notice if he/she can be placed in or retrained for other work by offering him/her work equivalent to that defined in the employment contract, or, if such work does not exist, other work equivalent to his/her education, professional skills or experience.

Unless otherwise specified in the collective agreement for the sector, and the parties to the employment contract have not agreed on a period of notice, the periods of notice are determined according to the law as follows:

If the employer gives notice		If the employee gives notice	
Length of employment	Period of notice	Length of employment	Period of notice
0–1 year	14 days	Less than 5 years	14 days
1–4 years	1 month	Over 5 years	1 month
4–8 years	2 months		
8–12 years	4 months		
over 12 years	6 months		

Illegal termination can become expensive

Before giving notice, the employer shall ensure that the termination is based on facts and that the grounds fulfil the conditions for protection against unjustified dismissal. The employer should ask its employers' organisation for help and advice. Employers that are not members of any employer organisation can ask for help from the Occupational Safety and Health Inspectorate.

The Occupational Safety and Health Inspectorates do not resolve any disputes over termination of employment. They can at most give their own opinion on the interpretation of the protection against unjustified dismissal in the case concerned based on the facts that have been delivered to them. Only a court of justice can make a final decision that binds the parties, indicating whether the protection against unjustified dismissal was complied with or violated.

If the employer terminates an employment contract and the employee considers the grounds for dismissal to be illegal, the matter can ultimately be resolved so that the employee files an action against the employer, seeking financial compensation in an ordinary court of law. If the court of law finds the dismissal to be illegal, it shall order the employer to pay compensation to the employee for unjustified termination of the employment contract. The amount of compensation is calculated on the basis of the employee's pay, and is equal to the pay due for a minimum of three and a maximum of 24 months. The action for damages must be filed within two years of the end of the employment relationship. After that, the statute of limitations on compensation will run out.

Right to cancel the employment contract

Under exceptional circumstances, it is possible to terminate an employment contract by cancelling it if one of the parties to the contract seriously neglects his/her duties or violates the contract. In such cases the employment contract is terminated immediately without a period of notice. The right to cancel an employment contract requires such a weighty reason that it is unreasonable to expect that the person cancelling the contract should continue the contractual relationship for the period of notice.

NOTICE OF TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

Employer _____ Tel. _____

Address _____

Employee _____ Tel. _____

Address _____

TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT

This notice hereby indicates that the employment agreement between the above parties is

Terminated Cancelled

The reason for termination or cancellation _____

Starting date of the employment relationship _____ / _____

Period of notice for the employment contract _____ months

Date of termination _____ / _____

Last day of employment relationship _____ / _____

Date _____ / _____

Employer's signature / Employee's signature

Hearing

Employee / Employer was heard on _____ / _____

Time to be heard has been reserved

The employee / employer has received notification of

- cancellation during the trial period
- termination for reasons due to the employee / employer
- termination due to financial or production-related reasons
- cancellation due to some other reason:

The above notice has been issued to the employee / employer for information purposes:

Date _____ / _____

Employee's signature / Employer's signature

We attest to the above notification

Date _____ / _____

Certificate of employment

On termination of the employment relationship, the employee is entitled to receive, on request, a written certificate of employment. The employee shall request the certificate from the employer. The employer is obliged to provide the employee with the certificate without delay, usually within about one week of the employee's request.

Content of the certificate of employment

Before the employer writes the certificate of employment, he/she should ask what matters the employee would like mentioned in the certificate. The shortest possible certificate only indicates the duration of the employee's employment relationship and the nature of the work.

Only at the specific request of the employee shall the certificate include an assessment of the employee's working skills and behaviour, and the reason for the termination of the employment relationship, or only one of these items.

The reason for the termination of the employment relationship does not refer to any detailed grounds for the termination or cancellation of the employment relationship. A certificate of employment shall only include a reference indicating who terminated the employment, and in what way. For example, the employment was terminated when the employee resigned. If the employer has given notice to the employee because the work has come to an end, or for financial or production-related reasons, this should be mentioned in the certificate. However, the reason for terminating an employment relationship should also be mentioned, and the same applies if the employment has been terminated on the grounds of a fixed term that has expired or because of some other reason relating to a fixed term.

If the employee only requests that the reason for the termination of his/her employment should be mentioned in the certificate, but does not request an assessment of his/her working skills and behaviour, the reason for termination must not be written in such a way that it contains an assessment of the employee's working skills and behaviour.

New certificate of employment to correct faults and inaccuracies

The employer is obliged to issue a new, corrected version of the certificate of employment if the certificate contains inaccurate information. A corrected certificate should also be given if the reason for terminating employment has been mentioned or an assessment of the employee's working skills and behaviour has been given even though the employee has not requested them. The same obligation applies if the employer has included such information in the certificate that, according to law, must not be mentioned in it. The obligation to issue a certificate remains in force for ten years.

On request, the employer is obliged to provide an employee with a certificate of employment within 10 years of termination of the employment relationship.

A certificate including an assessment of the employee's working skills and behaviour must, however, be requested within five years of termination of the employment relationship.

If more than 10 years have passed since termination of the employment relationship, a certificate indicating the duration of employment and nature of the work duties shall only be given if it does not cause the employer undue inconvenience.

Violations concerning the certificate of employment will be reported to the prosecutor

If an employer violates any provisions concerning the certificate of employment, a fine shall be imposed on the employer for violation of the Employment Contracts Act. If an employee has requested a certificate of employment from the employer but has not been provided with it, the employee may inform the Occupational Safety and Health Inspectorate of the violation. If the employer, despite the request of the Occupational Safety and Health Inspectorate, still does not issue a certificate of employment, the Inspectorate can impose a default fine and report the violation to the public prosecutor.

CERTIFICATE OF EMPLOYMENT

Name: _____

Personal identity code: _____ - _____

has been in our employ in the following work duties: _____

The employment relationship began on: _____ / _____ _____

The employment relationship ended on: _____ / _____ _____

At the employee's request, I declare that he/she has demonstrated

_____ working skills

_____ behaviour

The reason for termination of the employment relationship was:

_____/_____
Place and date

Company name

Signature

Pay calculation

On payment of wages, the employer shall provide the employee with a calculation showing the amount of pay and the grounds for its determination. Pay calculation is a necessary tool for correcting eventual miscalculation or other errors occurred in calculating the pay. If the employer does not provide the employee with a pay calculation, the employee must remind the employer of this immediately. If the employee thinks that he or she has not received from the employer all the pay due, the employee must ask the employer to correct the payment.

Failure to provide a pay calculation on request is a punishable act (Employment Contracts Act, Chapter 13, section 11(2)).

Providing a pay certificate for the unemployment fund

On termination of employment or at the beginning of a layoff, the employer must provide the employee with a pay certificate for application of unemployment allowance. The certificate indicates the so-called regular earned income for at least the period of time that fulfils the condition for working laid down in the Unemployment Security Act (43/34 calendar weeks). If the working time varies weekly (e.g. 0–40 h/week), information on weekly hours worked must also be provided. The regular earned income is indicated by a pay certificate provided by the employer. **The pay calculation may be used as a pay certificate** if it contains the information required.

Pay certificates are sent directly to the unemployment fund where the employee is a member. In the case of an inquiry about an individual employee's earnings, the employer must, however, provide the unemployment fund with information necessary for deciding the matter.

PAY CALCULATION for the period

Employee				Occupation		
Employer				Grounds for pay determination € / month / week / hour		
1. Basic wage	2. Fringe benefits	3. Overtime total	4. Supplements for shift and period-based work	5. Other taxable earnings	6. Gross wage before prepayment of tax	Total
7. Deductions before prepayment of tax	8. Prepaid tax	9. Union dues	10. Pension premium	11. Unemployment insurance premium	12. Prepaid taxes and other deductions	Deductions total
Date of payment				AMOUNT DUE TOTAL		
Additional information						

PAY CERTIFICATE

Person's last and first names		Occupation	Date of birth
Employer's name and municipality of the company location			
Starting date of employment		Termination date of employment	
Pay information	Accrual during previous calendar year	Accrual during current calendar year	Pay from the previous pay period
	Accrual time	Accrual time	Accrual time
Pay subject to tax prepayment			
Holiday bonuses and holiday compensation			
Prepaid tax			
Employment pension and unemployment insurance premiums			
Supplements for shift and period-based work			
Additional information			
<input type="checkbox"/> Account of hours worked weekly attached*			
Date	Employer's/employer's representative's signature and contact information		

* If the working time varies weekly (e.g. 0 – 40 hours/week), an account of hours worked weekly must also be given. It must contain hours worked in each week and wages for them. Pay information must be given for weeks that fulfil the 43/34 condition for working.

Statutory obligations related to pay

The following pages include examples of the most important obligatory payments for which the employer must pay a certain percentage of the taxable pay paid to employees. Furthermore, the employer is also obliged to retain the employee's statutory contributions from his/her taxable pay.

More information about employment pension is available from the Finnish Centre for Pensions, which is the central institution for employment pension security.

Insurance companies handle TyEL (Employees' Pensions Act) insurance. They can also provide more information about YEL (Self-Employed Persons' Pensions Act) insurance. Non-life insurance companies that handle accident insurance matters can provide more information about accident insurance, employees' unemployment insurance contributions, and employers' unemployment insurance contributions.

Short-term work, or intermittent work

Insurance must also be taken out for intermittent work:

- in employment relationships of less than one month
- in employment relationships lasting a minimum of one month in which the pay remains less than the TyEL limit of EUR 46,08/month (in 2007)
- in all those employment relationships in which a private household is the employer.

Contributions are paid on the taxable pay and holiday compensation.

Payment of contributions

The employer shall pay the insurance contributions on a monthly basis by the 20th day of the month following payment of wages at the latest. The employer shall deposit the entire insurance contribution to the insurance company using the same forms used to deposit the TyEL contributions. Pre-completed forms shall be delivered to all registered employers. Insurance can also be handled electronically.

More information is available from the insurance companies.

Palkka.fi webservice

A pay calculation program is available free of charge at www.palkka.fi on the Internet to assist SMEs in the payment of wages and statutory payments. A pay certificate and summarised pay account may be written out from the web site. By means of the program, pay information for 11 years may be recorded.

Palkka.fi telephone service:

Tel. 020 697 034 (Mo-Fri 8.00 – 16.15)

For more information:

www.palkka.fi

www.etk.fi

www.etera.fi

www.vero.fi

www.yrittajat.fi

www.fkl.fi

www.varma.fi

Checking credit information

Companies' and private persons' payment defaults and other credit information can be checked from the credit data file of Suomen Asiakastieto Oy at the website www.asiakastieto.fi or by telephone (09) 1488 6256 (service liable to charge). Payment defaults can be checked only in the case of employees or job applicants in certain occupations. To appraise a job seeker or an employee, the employer may check the data concerning persons in jobs that require special reliability. Such duties are, for example, work tasks that involve handling of considerable sums of money, substantial decision-making power or economic commitment (Credit Information Act 527/2007, Act on the Protection of Privacy in Working Life 759/2004).

Act on the Contractor's Obligations and Liability when Work is Contracted Out

The objectives of the Act

The Act promotes equal competition between enterprises and ensures observance of the terms of employment. According to the Act, the contractor, enterprise or organisation governed by public law is required to ensure that the contracting parties fulfil their statutory obligations.

Whom the Act concerns?

The Act on the contractor's obligations and liability, which entered into force on 1 January 2007, applies to contractors who use temporary agency workers or who have a subcontract on tasks normally performed by the contractor. The Act obligates contractors in the case when the work is performed at the contractor's business premises or work site and the subcontractor has employees. An exception to this provision is construction, which is totally covered by the Act. The Act is also applied to foreign enterprises when the work is performed in Finland.

The Act is not applied to small subcontracts (less than 7500 €) and contracts concerning the use of temporary agency work (the maximum of 10 workdays in total). The Act does not apply if the contractor's contracting party can be considered reliable (e.g. government, municipality, public company), the contracting party's business activities are established or the contracting relationship can be considered established. Traders in agriculture and fishery as well as households remain outside the scope of the Act.

The content of the contractor's duty to check information

Before concluding a subcontract or a contract on the use of temporary agency work, the contractor shall require and the contracting partner shall provide the following information:

- An account of whether the enterprise is entered in the Prepayment Register, the Employer Register and is registered as VAT-liable in the Value Added Tax Register (www.ytj.fi);
- an extract from the Trade Register;
- a certificate of tax payment or of tax debt, or an account that a payment plan has been made regarding a tax debt;
- certificates of pension insurances taken out and of pension insurance premiums paid, or an account that a payment agreement on outstanding pension insurance premiums has been made, and
- an account of the collective agreement or the principal terms of employment applicable to the work.

These accounts may not be older than three months on the date on which the contract is concluded. The contractor must retain the accounts for at least two years from the end date of the contract.

Negligence fee

If the contractor neglects the duty to check information, a negligence fee may be prescribed. The amount of the negligence fee, which is determined separately for each individual contract, varies from 1 500 to 15 000 euros. The negligence fee is ordered by a decision of the local office of the Occupational Safety and Health Inspectorate of Uusimaa.

Act on the Contractor's Obligations and Liability when Work is Contracted Out (1233/2006)

Further information:

www.tyosuojelu.fi/fi/uutsp_tilaajavastuu

Statutory employer costs for wages and salaries paid in 2008

Pension insurance contribution	Employee's share	Employer's share	Total deposit
TyEL insurance contribution (varies according to company size and age of employee) (Insurance companies)	4.1% (<53 years) 5.2% (>53 years)	An average of 16.8%	An average of 21.8%
TyEL insurance contribution Temporary employer	4.1% (<53 years) 5.2% (>53 years)	18.3% 17.2%	22.4%
Unemployment insurance contribution (Accident insurance companies)	Employee's share	Employer's share	Total deposit
For the first EUR 1 686 000 of wages	0.34%	0.7%	1.04%
For the portion exceeding EUR 1 686 000	0.34%	2.9%	3.24%
For the part owner of the company	0.12%	0.7%	0.82%
Employment accident insurance contribution (Accident insurance companies)	The contribution varies between 0.3–7.5% according to the insurance company, industry and risk involved in the work. The insurance companies calculate and add to the invoice the unemployment insurance contribution. An average of 1.0%.		
Group life insurance contribution (Accident insurance companies)	An average of 0.075%		
Social security contribution (Paid when depositing prepaid tax to the regional tax office account)			
PRIVATE EMPLOYER'S SHARE ¹⁾			
	a	b	c
In total	2.771%	4.971%	5.871%
OF WHICH:			
• national pension share	0.801%	3.001%	3.901%
• sickness insurance share	1.97%	1.97%	1.97%
¹⁾ The payment category is determined according to the amount of depreciations on fixed assets as follows: a) depreciations < 50,500 euros, payment is 2.771% b) depreciations > 50,500 euros and represents 10–30% of the wages, payment is 4.971% c) depreciations > 50,500 euros and represents > 30% of the wages, payment is 5.871%			

The percentages change annually. The new percentages are issued at the end of the previous year. They are available on the Internet at www.vero.fi. Write employer obligations in the search field.

The TyEL insurance contribution is statutory

Small employers must pay the **TyEL insurance contribution** for their employees. The amount of the contribution is determined according to the withholding tax rate and total payroll outlined on the previous page. In 2008, for example, the TyEL contribution (temporary employer) is 22.4% of the employee's gross pay, of which the employee pays 4.1%. The employer shall deposit the entire sum to the employment pension fund and deducts the employee's share (4.1%) in conjunction with payment of wages. A pension contribution is not paid on TyEL holiday compensation.

The unemployment insurance contribution for wage earners (2008) is 0.34% of the first EUR 1 686 000 of payroll and 0.34% for the portion exceeding that amount. The employer shall collect the unemployment insurance contribution from the wage earner, and the accident insurance company subsequently collects the sum from the employer in conjunction with the accident insurance contribution.

The occupational accident insurance is statutory when the employer has an employee or employees working more than 12 days in a calendar year. If the employer knows when the work starts that the 12-day limit will be exceeded, the insurance must be taken out at the commencement of work. The insurance company collects the insurance contribution, which is paid in advance according to payment factors corresponding to the pay, type of insurance and risk associated with the work. The final payment is made upon completion of work, after the insurance company has received a declaration of earnings. The employer then receives a refund or makes an additional payment if necessary.

The social security contribution is only paid for wages paid to employees working in an employment relationship. The payment is made to the regional tax office using a bank transfer form that is also used to deposit the wage earner's prepaid tax. The bank transfer form includes the total amount of wages paid to the wage earner during the calendar month and the total amount of income tax withheld from that pay. The social security contribution is calculated on the basis of the wages paid to the wage earner during the calendar month (see the example calculation).

Household employers are exempt from the obligation to withhold income tax if the wages paid to the same wage earner during a calendar year are less than EUR 1,500.

Temporary employer

A temporary employer refers to an employer who, during the taxation year, pays wages to a maximum of five wage earners whose employment relationship lasts less than an entire calendar year.

If the employer begins to pay regular wages, he/she must notify the regional tax office of this prior to payment of the wages.

Payment time

The employer generally has to pay the pension insurance contribution **by the 20th day of the calendar month following payment of wages at the latest**. Income tax and social security contributions are paid by the 10th day of the calendar month following payment of wages at the latest.

If the last day of the payment period is a religious holiday or Saturday, the payment may be made on the next weekday.

The tax is paid to the bank account of the regional tax office operating in the home municipality of the employer. In early 2008, the interest on late payment was 11.5%.

Bank transfer form

An employer paying occasional wages (formerly an unregistered employer) pays the income tax and the employer's social security contribution using the "voluntary taxes" bank transfer form. The forms are available at tax offices, post offices and banks.

After submitting an initial notification, entrepreneurs paying regular wages (formerly a registered employer) receive pre-completed bank transfer forms from the tax authority.

Example calculation of the contributions withheld from the employee's pay and the employer's auxiliary labour costs

Pay formation:	
Monetary pay (basic pay + holiday pay/compensation) ¹⁾	2,000 €
Tax deduction (for example, 30%)	- 600 €
Pension contribution collected from the employee 4.1%	- 82 €
Unemployment insurance contribution 0.34%	- 6.80 €
Net pay	1311.20 €
Auxiliary labour costs deposited by the employer:	
• TyEL temporary employer 22.04% x 2,000 ²⁾	448 €
• Social security contribution 2.951% x 2,000	55.42 €
• Employment accident insurance (varies by industry) 0.5% x 2,000	10 €
• Unemployment insurance contribution 1.33% x 2,000 ³⁾	20.8 €
• Possible TES group life insurance, roughly 0.1%	2 €
Total	536.22 €

¹⁾ Other bonuses (for example, holiday bonus, shortening of working hours compensation) are agreed in the collective agreement by sector.

²⁾ The employer deposits the employer's and the employee's TyEL contributions to the insurance company by the 20th day of the calendar month following payment of wages.

³⁾ The accident insurance company uses a different invoice to collect the employer's and the employee's unemployment insurance contributions, and collects the group life insurance contributions in conjunction with the accident insurance.

Pay receipt

Pay receipts for employers and employees are available at bookstores.

Pension insurance for self-employed persons

Self-employed persons have to take out insurance on the basis of the Self-employed Persons' Pensions Act (YEL) for the duration of the business activities. Farmers are required to take out insurance in accordance with the Farmers' Pensions Act (MYEL). These insurances are obligatory and may not be replaced by voluntary pension insurance.

YEL or MYEL insurance ensures an income for the entrepreneur and his/her family in various risk situations, including sickness, the end of work, and death of the entrepreneur or a family member. Thus, the statutory insurance secures the well-being of the entrepreneur during active work as well as during retirement.

MATA agricultural employment accident insurance is also mandatory for farmers.

Voluntary accident insurance for self-employed persons

Entrepreneurs are not generally covered by statutory accident insurance nor does statutory accident insurance cover accidents that occur during leisure time. For this reason, entrepreneurs should take out accident insurance for entrepreneurs, which provides compensation for accidents occurring during working and leisure time and for occupational diseases. The insurance can apply to the entrepreneur and members of his/her family.

Voluntary pension insurance for self-employed persons

Voluntary pension insurance taken out by an entrepreneur supplements the statutory employment pension for self-employed persons, which in Finland averages about EUR 550 per month.

Liability insurance

Business liability insurance covers the liability for compensation that, according to the law, can apply to the company as a result of activities in its area of operation.

Product liability insurance covers the liability for compensation that, according to the law, can apply to the company due to damage caused by a product it has produced or imported.

Business interruption insurance covers loss of earnings, changing wages and the cost of limiting interruption damage that occur for the period of interruption.

Legal expenses insurance is applicable to nearly all sectors and nearly all companies operating in Finland. Legal expenses insurance covers the costs resulting from use of a lawyer and producing evidence. The insurance covers damages occurring during the validity of the insurance. Damage is considered to exist if there is a verifiable dispute or the insured has been served with a summons.

2. WORK ENVIRONMENT

The importance and objectives of work environment design

The Occupational Safety and Health Act emphasises the importance of being proactive regarding working conditions rather than acting only after the appearance of hazards and risk factors. Planning plays a decisive role in this activity.

The most important decisions concerning the safety of the work environment, working premises, structures, work methods and the tools and substances used are made in the design phase. They are also most effectively implemented at that time. Correcting situations after the fact is often expensive and in many cases the optimal end result cannot be achieved. A well-designed and functionally successful work environment helps promote improvement of work productivity and the financial result.

The employer's design obligations

Sections 12 and 13 of the Occupational Safety and Health Act include a design obligation aimed at the employer. Section 12 applies to the work environment and occupational safety that is structurally related to it, while section 13 addresses the dimensioning of work and workload. These sections should be applied when the employer starts planning structural changes to the workplace or work environment, when building new premises, and when changing existing premises and conditions.

The above-mentioned employer obligations apply when design is planned internally within the company. When the work is assigned to an external designer, this designer must be provided with sufficient information concerning health and safety as they apply to the object of design. In such cases, an external designer also carries independent responsibility as outlined in section 57 of the Occupational Safety and Health Act. The employer shall ensure that the designer has sufficient competence to appropriately carry out the design assignment. As the orderer of the design, the employer is not required to provide the designer with information about the valid legislation and regulations.

To achieve a good design

Create a good design practice in order to develop your company.

Whether the design involves

- new work premises
 - renovation of old premises
 - changes to production or work methods
 - acquisition of machinery and equipment
- a common factor to all is the design theme as well as the development of co-operation and information flow within the company.

Joining forces

Proactive design is more and more important in modern companies. It is worth making design a part of normal activities.

You can also contact the Occupational Safety and Health Inspectorates regarding design-related matters.

Case example:

A subcontracting company employing about 20 employees began to experience extended absences that accounted for roughly 7% of effective working time. A number of serious occupational accidents involving new employees had occurred at the company. In response to a tough competitive situation, the company had to develop its production methods, welding and assembly sites, and thus improve the lead-times for its products in general. The customers' quality requirements had also become stricter.

Design groups were established at the workplace, and they began to run this process in addition to doing their work. The Occupational Safety and Health Inspectorate was involved in the early phases of design to clarify questions concerning occupational safety and health. The co-operation continued several times at the request of the employer.

As a result of a well-designed change

- production increased by nearly 20%
- product quality improved
- absences decreased by one-third
- serious accidents were avoided
- the number of minor accidents decreased by half
- employees' job motivation improved
- general order at the workplace is outstanding
- the premises are now presentable.

Occupational safety and health policy

The employer must have a policy for promoting safety and health at the workplace and maintaining the employees' work ability. It should incorporate the need to develop working conditions and the impact of factors related to the work environment. The objectives of the policy must be taken into account in workplace development and planning, and they must be discussed with the employees or their representatives. Compiling an occupational safety and health policy is a statutory obligation that applies to companies of all sizes.

For example, an individual objective could involve improving the physical work environment by acquiring devices to make work easier or new devices. A further objective could be decreasing the mental burden of work by changing and rearranging work tasks for the purpose of increasing job satisfaction and motivation.

Analysis and assessment of methods and risks at work

The first step in compiling a policy is to assess the operating methods required for handling occupational safety and health and to analyse and identify the hazards resulting from the work.

Analysis and assessment of the risks focuses on all work performed at the workplace, including foreseeable maintenance, shutdowns, etc. and work done outside the workplace (subcontracting, etc.) as well as the work of outsiders at the workplace. Furthermore, the special needs of young people, women, the disabled and ageing workers must also be taken into account.

If necessary, experts shall be used to help assess the risks (exposure to chemicals, noise, etc.). It is also advisable to make use of opinions of the occupational safety and health authorities, occupational health care and the insurance company concerning working conditions and their development.

Reviews

A key factor when focusing and developing occupational safety and health activities at the workplace is to review the working conditions and their current state: the type of work tasks performed at the workplace

- the type of work tasks performed at the workplace
- the environment it is performed in, and
- the personnel, tools and methods used to perform the work.

It is also important to determine which factors are related to maintaining the work ability of the workers and the principles and practical forms of implementing workplace health promotion.

The workplace survey compiled by occupational health care is a good source of information on the working conditions. It provides information on the risks caused by the work and working conditions and examines their significance to employee health.

Once the current state has been analysed, objectives for occupational safety and health activities at the workplace can be set and the short- and long-term development needs assessed.

Preparing the policy

The content, form and extent of the occupational safety and health policy are determined by the sector, size, production and service method, and occupational safety and health needs of the company. The policy can cover the entire company. At the company level, a general platform can be drawn up that is then supplemented by more detailed plans within the work units. Work unit-specific plans are also possible.

As the employer is responsible for drawing up the occupational safety and health policy, its commitment to the policy is extremely important. The policy is drawn up in co-operation between the occupational safety and health manager and the occupational safety and health representative. It can be created as a separate document or as part of other company instructions, such as the quality or safety system or the human resources policy guidelines.

The OSH policy is an important part of occupational safety and health management at the workplace, and is closely related to the company strategy. When the policy is updated, it is advisable to record the date and names of the people who participated in the process. A carefully written OSH policy will ensure that occupational safety and health at the company is clear and systematic.

Contents

The occupational safety and health policy shall outline the responsibilities of the employer and the employees and present the occupational safety and health organisation and occupational health care and their respective tasks. The policy should also indicate how occupational safety and health and work ability matters are taken into consideration during induction and work guidance.

Other issues addressed in the OSH policy include a description of the work environment and development targets as well as measures aimed at achieving the targets, objects of monitoring, how occupational safety and health matters are taken into account in company activities, and monitoring and maintenance of the policy.

The statutory equality plan and measures designed to ensure equality between men and women can also be included in the OSH policy.

The company's safety instructions, names of the responsible persons, and guidance concerning use of the instructions should also be appended to the policy if they are not already part of it.

Among other things, the safety instructions include:

- access pass and work permits
- safety instructions for machines that pose a risk
- instructions on arranging traffic for equipment moving around at the workplace
- user manuals and instructions for work methods requiring special measures
- instructions for actions in situations involving robbery or violence
- Instructions for follow-up care in threat situations
- prevention of workplace bullying, a conflict resolution model
- treatment guidance for substance abusers
- instructions for working alone
- instructions related to fire safety
- guidelines for maintaining first aid readiness

The OSH policy is intended to be a guidance tool, and therefore it must be monitored and revised in response to changing conditions. It is important for all levels of the organisation to commit to the goals, targets and measures presented in the OSH policy.

For more information:

- Teollisuusergonomia. Käsikirja suunnitteluun (Industrial Ergonomics. A Design Manual) Finnish Institute of Occupational Health 1992.
- Työterveyttä maataloille (Occupational health on farms). Farmers' Occupational Health Services Customer bulletin 2001.
- Elmeri. A workplace safety and health observation method. Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, Occupational Safety and Health Administration 2000.
- www.rakennustieto.fi

Order and cleanliness – controlling costs

Good order has been proven to have an impact on a company's capital, raw material and personnel costs. As a result of good order and cleanliness:

1. Work productivity and quality improve

Unnecessary work is avoided when the required material and tools are in working order in the proper location.

2. Job motivation and job satisfaction increase

Working is more pleasant and inspiring when the work environment is in good order. Satisfaction promotes job motivation.

3. External respect for the company increases

Along with product quality, corporate image is a key trademark. A good corporate image adds to customer confidence, which in turn promotes material acquisitions.

4. The company's delivery reliability improves

Raw material waste, defective product batches and other unnecessary work cause additional costs and are time-consuming. Delivery times increase, causing uncertainty for the customer and product manufacturer.

5. Absences due to accidents and sickness decrease

Good order and cleanliness reduce accidents and absences due to sickness. The most common accidents involve slipping, falling, collisions with various barriers, tripping, falling objects, etc. Remember that the employer is responsible for the salary costs resulting from accidents for 1-3 days unless this portion has also been separately insured.

6. Employee turnover decreases

High employee turnover indicates a company in which matters are not well handled. New employees always have to be guided and trained for their new job. In the long term, permanence in the workforce provides cost savings due to improved quality.

7. Warehousing investments decrease

Good order also provides more space. Monitoring the warehouse stocks becomes easier. The capital tied up in raw materials and semi-finished products is reduced. Good order and cleanliness are one step towards implementing a quality system. Good order also provides a competitive edge.

Example:

The work premises in a metal industry company are untidy and disorganised. In the morning, employees have to look for their tools for more than an hour. The company CEO calculated that the non-productive working time used to look for the tools cost the company EUR 1.46 every minute, or EUR 168 per day, which is directly attributable to poor order.

For more information:

- Tuttava workbook for developing order and cleanliness Finnish Institute of Occupational Health 1992.
- Työhygieniä - työolot ja niiden parantaminen (Occupational hygiene – working conditions and improving them). Finnish Institute of Occupational Health 1997.
- Occupational safety and health in Finland. Brochures 2006:16. Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.

Safety of machinery

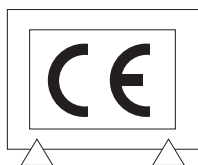
Do you intend to purchase new machinery?

The regulations concerning safety of machinery are identical throughout the European Economic Area. The manufacturer ensures that the machinery complies with the requirements. The manufacturer uses a CE marking on the machinery to indicate compliance with the requirements and delivers the Declaration of Conformity and instructions in Finnish and Swedish with it. The authorities do not inspect machinery in advance.

How is the manufacturer responsible for the safety of the machinery?

The manufacturer's responsibility is emphasised. During design and production of the machinery, the manufacturer has to:

- assess the risk factors associated with the machine
- design and build the machine so that it meets the requirements of the Decision on Machine Safety (1314/1994) and its amendments; the easiest way to build the machine to comply with the requirements is to observe the harmonised SFS-EN standards
- write the user instructions in Finnish and/or Swedish
- compile a technical construction file that includes drawings, lists of requirements, methods to remove risks, test results, reports on the quality of mass-produced machines, etc.
- provide a Declaration of Conformity
- attach the required markings to the machine, in particular, the CE marking



Certain machines must undergo a type examination (for example, some woodworking machines, presses, vehicle lifts, elevated work platforms and safety components) if harmonised standards were not observed during design. Type examinations are performed by the designated institutions.

What happens if I buy a used machine?

Used machinery purchased within the European Economic Area must comply with the Government Decision on the Acquisition, Safe Use and Inspection of Machinery and Other Work Equipment (856/1998) and its amendments if the machinery is not subject to any

special regulations. The Government Decision outlines responsibilities for the employer, who must take safety of machinery into account during purchase, commission, use, service, maintenance, employee training and guidance, and when inspecting work equipment.

Machines from outside the European Economic Area must meet the requirements for new machines. Make sure that your machine meets the valid regulations!

How is the employer responsible for the safety of the machinery?

The employer must

- acquire only machines that comply with the requirements
- handle the manufacturer's tasks in certain cases, for example, when building a machine for its own use (if there are several suppliers for the machine or combination machine, a supplier responsible for final assembly shall be designated, and this supplier also shall also attach the CE marking)
- ensure that the machine remains compliant with the regulations throughout its useful life by means of sufficient maintenance and service
- ensure that the commissioning and regular inspections for certain cranes, lifts and presses are performed.

The machines used at the workplace must at least meet the safety level outlined in the Government Decision on the Safety of Machines. Machines manufactured in accordance with the Government Decision must be kept at the required safety level.

Ask the experts for advice

- The occupational safety and health authorities (monitor machines used at workplaces and machines available on the market)
- Notified bodies (perform EU type examinations)
- Finnish Standards Association (SFS)
- The Finnish Technology Industries
- MTT Agrifood Research Finland (MTTVakola) provides information on standards for agricultural machinery

For more information:

- Government Decision on the Safety of Machines (1314/1994)
- The Government Decision on the Acquisition, Safe Use and Inspection of Machinery and Other work Equipment Used at Work (856/1998) and its amendments, the so-called Decision on UseSFS-EN Standards
- Koneturvallisuus. Koneen vaarojen arvioinnista CE-merkintään (Machine safety. Assessing risks for CE marking) Työsuojeluoppaita ja -ohjeita 16 (Occupational Safety and Health Guides and Instructions 16), Occupational Safety and Health Administration 2005.
- Koneturvallisuus. Säädökset ja soveltaminen (Machine Safety. Legislation and application) Työsuojelujulkaisu 57 (Occupational safety and health publications 57). Occupational Safety and Health Administration 2007.
- Käyttöpäätöksen soveltamissuosituksia. Koneiden turvallisuuden vaatimukset (Application recommendations for the Decision on Use. Requirements for machine safety) Työsuojelujulkaisu 42 (Occupational safety and health publications 42). Occupational Safety and Health Administration 2007.
- Työvälineiden turvallinen käyttö. Soveltamissuosituksia (Safe use of work equipment. Application recommendations) Työsuojelujulkaisu 32 (Occupational safety and health publications 32). Occupational Safety and Health Administration 2007.

Chemical agents

Dangerous chemicals

Package markings

The manufacturer or importer of a chemical is required to mark the product package with appropriate markings.

The package must bear information on the hazardous properties and safe use of the chemical, the need for protection and first aid. The employer is responsible for ensuring that the package of a dangerous chemical is appropriately marked.

Safety data sheet

The safety data sheet is a document that the supplier of the chemical is required to provide. The safety data sheet indicates the composition of the substance, its chemical and physical properties and information about the dangers of the chemical. The safety data sheet presents the necessary safety and protective measures and instructions for first aid and extinguishment.

A list of chemicals being used at the workplace and their safety data sheets must be kept at the workplace and be available for employees to read.

Proper handling

Chemicals are designed and manufactured for a specific purpose. They should be used according to the instructions. Proper handling of chemicals improves safety at work and reduces costs.

Avoid using the wrong container

Chemicals for sale generally come in a package that is appropriately marked and contains instructions for use and safety. The substance should be stored in its original container. If the container is changed, the new one must be marked in the same way as the original.

Exposure at work

Dangerous substances may also be produced in conjunction with working. Such may be welding fumes and grinding dust and intermediate and end products of processes.

Who is exposed?

The employer is responsible for analysing the level and type of exposure to chemical agents for each individual

employee. An employee's exposure is assessed on the basis of experience, existing information as well as occupational hygiene and biological exposure measurements.

Four types of chemical exposure limits have been set:

- binding limit values for impurities in workplace air (asbestos, benzene, lead, carbon bisulphide, vinyl chloride and hardwood dust)
- concentrations of contaminants in workplace air known to be harmful (HTP value = the lowest concentration considered to pose a hazard to the employee. Determined for about 500 substances.)
- binding limit values for biological samples
- indicative limit values for biological samples.

Occupational health care professionals assist the employer by assessing exposure to chemical agents as part of the workplace survey. If the workplace survey gives reason, the occupational health care professionals will also monitor the employees' exposure level in conjunction with health examinations.

Distribute information to everyone

It is not enough for the employer to have information on the hazards of chemicals if the employer does not ensure that all employees who at the workplace come into contact with chemicals have access to the same information. It is important to know the properties of the chemical in advance and take these into consideration when planning to use the chemical. All users should be instructed thoroughly in the proper use of the chemical. For example, if a dangerous product comes into contact with the eye, it is too late to get the first aid instructions out of a drawer.

- Which chemicals are used and how dangerous are they?
- Which hazardous substances are produced at work and how dangerous are they?
- Who is exposed and at which phase of work?
- What is the level of exposure (limit values)?
- What are the necessary control measures and schedule?
- Monitoring

Control measures

Problems should be placed in order of importance and a schedule drawn up for implementing improvement measures. The most effective control measures generally involve replacing the chemical with a less dangerous chemical and changing work methods and practices.



Respiratory protection

Chemicals enter the body most easily through inhalation. Substances that evaporate easily get quickly into the workplace air and are then inhaled into the body. Fine droplets form in the air when chemicals are sprayed. These can enter the body in the same manner. When grinding, chemicals get into the air as finely divided dust.

Emission of vapours, spraying mist, grinding dust and other types of hazardous agents into the workplace air can be prevented, for example, by arranging local ventilation (e.g. local exhaust) or by separating the work from other premises. Efficient general ventilation is also necessary. General ventilation is adequate only when the impurities are not harmful and the quantities are small.

Occupational hygiene measurements can be used to assess if the concentration of a chemical in the breathing air is dangerous. Measurements can be made to assess the starting situation and the success and adequacy of control measures. If the use of a chemical poses a risk to employees and the risk cannot be eliminated by technical measures, respiratory protection should be used. The protection selected must be appropriate for the intended use. A dust mask does not protect a person from vapours or vice versa.



Skin protection

Skin protection is important when handling chemicals. Chemical-proof safety gloves should be used to avoid rashes. The safety data sheets contain instructions on the protective glove material suitable for the chemical in question. Some chemicals can be absorbed through the skin into the body and cause poisoning. If a chemical comes into contact with the skin, wash the skin area immediately using plenty of water and soap, and then apply cream on the skin to prevent drying.

Expert advice is available from occupational health care professionals, the Occupational Safety and Health Inspectorate and the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health.

REACH

REACH, the European Union regulation concerning the registration, evaluation, authorisation and restriction of chemicals (1907/2006) entered into force on 1 June 2007. It is part of the binding legislation of the member states. The regulation reforms the chemical legislation concerning substances and preparations. It also sets requirements for articles containing substances. The aim of the regulation is to improve the protection of human health and the environment.

REACH primarily applies to manufacturers and importers of chemicals but also the downstream users of substances and preparations.

Further information:

- Chemicals Act (744/1989)
- Chemicals Decree (675/1993)
- European Community Regulation on the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (1907/2006)
- Government Decree on Chemical Agents at Work (715/2001)
- Reach. Perustietoa työpaikoille EU:n kemikaalasetuksesta (Basic information on REACH for workplaces) . Occupational Safety and Health Guides and Instructions 45. Työsuojeluhallinto 2008.
- Vaaralliset kemikaalit (Dangerous chemicals). Occupational Safety and Health Guides and Instructions 20. Työsuojeluhallinto 2006.
- Reach advice service: www.reachneuvonta.fi

Personal protective equipment

- Safety helmets
- Hearing protection
- Goggles and face shields
- Respiratory protection
- Protective gloves
- Safety shoes
- Fall protection equipment
- Protective clothing

Personal protective equipment must be used if the risks cannot be sufficiently alleviated through technical solutions!

Proceed as follows:

- Assess the risks, make use of the expertise of occupational health care or the occupational safety and health authorities
- Select a CE-marked protective device intended for the work



- Familiarise yourself with the instructions for use
 - Plan and instruct the user regarding the devices
 - Make sure the protective device is used
 - Ensure that the protective devices are always in working order
- **A personal protective device is always personal**
 - **The employer pays for the protective device**
 - **There must be a sufficient number of protective devices**

Mark the work premises where protective devices are needed

(Government Decision 976/1994)



Safety helmet required



Hearing protection required

For more information:

- Government Decision Respecting the Use of Personal Protective Equipment (1406/1993)
- Government Decision Respecting the Choice and Use of Personal Protective Equipment at Work (1407/1993)
- Henkilönsuojainten valinta ja käyttö työpaikalla (Choice and use of personal protective equipment at the workplace). Työsuojeluoppaita ja -ohjeita 11 (Occupational Safety and Health Guides and Instructions 11), Occupational Safety and Health Administration 2007.
- Kuulosi on tärkeä (Your hearing is important). Occupational Safety and Health Administration 2006.
- Henkilönsuojaimet. Valmistajan ja myyjän opas (Personal protective equipment. A guide for manufacturers and sellers). Occupational Safety and Health Administration 2006.
- Kemikaalilta suojaavan käsineen valinta (Choosing gloves for protection from chemicals). Työsuojeluoppaita ja -ohjeita 26 (Occupational Safety and Health Guides and Instructions 26), Occupational Safety and Health Administration 2005.
- Henkilönsuojaimet työssä (Personal protective equipment at work). Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, The Centre for Occupational Safety, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2001).
- Henkilönsuojaimet sähkö- ja telealan töissä (Personal protective equipment for electrical and telecommunications work). Finnish Institute of Occupational Health 1990.

The need for personal protective equipment, examples

Protection	<i>Work for which special legislation requires use of the protective device</i>	<i>Work and workplaces in which the protective device is generally needed</i>
Safety helmet Falling objects, knocks, lateral pressure, electric shocks	Construction work, stud gun work, explosive and excavating work, logging, work on a vessel	Earth-moving, machine shops, foundries, mast and pillar work, lumber handling, production of concrete products, stevedoring, loading and warehousing work
Hearing protection Noise, shock wave	Continuous noise over 85 dB (A) or waves over 200 Pa, pneumatic drilling and other noisy work, stud gun work, explosive and excavating work, chain saw and brush saw work	Percussion drilling, deep drilling, work in machine shops (for example, using clamps or power tools), forges, foundries, lumber and stone industry, snowplowing
Goggles and face shields Splinters, particles, dust, splashes, sparks, radiation	Logging (chain saw, brush saw), stud gun work, explosive and excavating work, work on a vessel, laser work	Grinding, cutting, chiselling, stone handling, forging, abrasive blasting, handling chemicals, welding, flame cutting
Respiratory protection Dust, gases, lack of oxygen	Asbestos work, explosive and excavating work, exposure to benzene, exposure to lead, cargo holds on ships, tanks and other enclosed spaces, painting, spray painting (work on a ship), working in refrigeration and freezer rooms onboard vessels	Painting, spray painting, pesticide handling, tank work, sewer work, handling mouldy goods and other work that exposes the employee to chemical or biological agents
Protective gloves Mechanical risks, chemicals, radiation, heat, cold	Work on a vessel, handling of dangerous chemicals	Machine shop work, woodwork, slaughterhouses, other work with foodstuffs, waste handling, handling of chemicals, welding
Safety shoes Falling objects, stepping on nails, slipping, cuts from saw chains, chemicals, heat, cold	Construction work, explosive and excavating work (for example, drilling and scaling), logging, work on a vessel	Agriculture and forestry industry, machine shops, stevedoring, transportation, warehousing, cold stores
Fall protection equipment Prevention and interruption of falling, support for work	Construction work, suspension scaffold work, explosive and excavating work, work on a ship	Pillar and mast work, mines, quarries, property maintenance (going onto roofs, shovelling snow and other roof work), window cleaning, tanks, silos, wells, rescue, lowering an injured person
Protective clothing Chain saw cuts, cold, heat, fire, electric arc, molten metal splashes, warning clothing, chemicals	Logging: safety guards for chain saw work and warning clothing in felling machine areas, asbestos work, pesticide handling, work on a ship, work done on a road in traffic	Agriculture and forestry work, cold and hot work, handling of chemicals, health care, waste handling, electrical work with a risk of electric arc flash
Life jackets Drowning	Logging or log floating work that involves the risk of falling into the water	Fishing, pilot activities

Lighting

The lighting for working conditions comprises natural light (windows), artificial light powered by mains current and, for example, battery-powered safety lighting if necessary. The prevention of excessive light and glare by means of reflectors, awnings and blinds is also part of lighting.

Good lighting helps differentiate between details, does not blind or heat, and is also economic and helps promote occupational safety and job satisfaction. Poor lighting is unpleasant, reduces work efficiency and causes errors that can lead to accidents.

Reasonable differences in lighting intensity improve the effect of lighting. Intensities that are too high make it difficult to see, especially if a person has to alternate between looking at dark and light surfaces. The background of the object being viewed and the surrounding area should not be lighter than the object itself. Completely white desks and working surfaces should be avoided. The colour white is an advantage in terms of wall surfaces because it reflects up to 90% of the light. In such cases, less light power is required and the hazards of heat are less during the summer. (A lime-washed surface reflects about 60% and a brick surface 10-30% of light.)

Sufficiency of lighting

The general lighting in indoor premises where employees spend extended amounts of time, move or work should be 150-200 lux. A rule of thumb is that the power should be at least 10 W/ square metre of floor when using fluorescent lights. A lot more power is needed when using incandescent lights, and this is also turned into heat. For repetitive tasks requiring precision, the minimum lighting level must be higher, usually at least 400 lux, which can be achieved by means of spot-lighting. During the summer, artificial light and natural light should generally be reduced (by shutting off some lights, and using awnings and blinds).

The recommended light intensity when working outdoors with moving machinery is at least 60 lux, and at least 120 lux for tasks requiring precision.

Eye capacity

Eyesight becomes weaker with age. Focusing at a distance becomes slower and the eye is more susceptible to glare. A 40-year-old requires two times more light and a 60-year-old many times more light than a 20-year-old. The strong increase in the need for light in middle age must be taken into account in design.

The most common deficiencies in lighting:

- Cleaning of lights is neglected, resulting in decreased light intensity
- Lamps are used for too long
- Lamps and igniters are too old
- Lamps flicker and make it difficult to concentrate
- Improperly directed lights and display surfaces
- Light coming from the windows causes glare
- Rearranging the space without changing the lighting
- Portable lamps/trouble lights without shades
- Too much contrast between the light and the background causes glare
- Shiny surfaces of the object prevent vision
- Outdated and uneconomic installation leads to unnecessary heat loads and costs

For more information:

- Näyttöpäätetyö (Display screen work). Työsuojeluoppaita ja -ohjeita 1 (Occupational Safety and Health Guides and Instructions 1), Occupational Safety and Health Administration 2006.
- Valaistussuositukset 9 -1986. Sisävalaistus (Lighting recommendations 9-1986. Interior lighting). Suomen Valoteknillinen Seura ry. (Finnish Light Technology Association)
- Valaistussuositukset 10 -1990. Ulkotyö- ja piha-alueet (Lighting recommendations 10-1990. Outdoor work and yard areas). Suomen Valoteknillinen Seura ry. (Illuminating Engineering Society of Finland)
- www.valosto.com

Noise and controlling it

What does noise mean?

Noise indicates that a process is 'leaking'. Loud noise means that a work or production method is wasting energy and other resources.

The effects of noise on people

Loud noise, especially impact or impulse noise, weakens the hearing permanently. The weakening is not generally noticed before it is too late. Noise also affects the blood circulation and causes stress reactions. Noise disturbs performance at work, especially phone use and other oral communication, causes mistakes and inaccuracies. Noise can also increase the risk of accident.

Objectives of noise control

Noise control is aimed at two issues:

- creating a low-noise, good work environment
- preventing hearing damage.

Hearing protection may be the only way to protect your hearing until noise is reduced to a safe level. However, the protection is only a temporary solution. Noise is primarily reduced by technical means.

Noise level	Maximum exposure time per day
85 dB	8 hours
88 dB	4 hours
94 dB	1 hour
100 dB	15 minutes
115 dB	0

Link to a noise exposure calculator:

www.tyosuojelu.fi/fi/melulaskin

Rules of thumb:

- If you cannot hear normal speech from one metre away, the noise level is more than 85 dB.
- Chain saws and compressed air devices produce about 100 dB (to the ear of an unprotected user).

The risk of hearing damage begins to increase at an exposure level of 80 dB and rises steeply if daily exposure exceeds the values presented in the table. The Noise Decree requires that a noise control programme be drawn up and implemented if the average noise exposure at work is 85 dB or more or if the highest unweighted temporary value is 140 pascals (137 dB). In such cases, employees must also wear hearing protection.

The exposure level in the outer auditory canal may not exceed 87 dB or a temporary level of 140 dB under any circumstances.

Noise control programme

For example, a workplace noise control programme includes plans concerning how to

- purchase only low-noise equipment
- remove or replace work phases or methods that cause noise
- muffle sources of noise
- encase machines
- prevent noise from spreading by partitioning.

The occupational safety and health authorities assist workplaces in drawing up noise control programmes and acquiring services.

For more information:

- Government Decree on the Protection of Workers Against Risks Caused by Noise (85/2006)
- Työmelu (Noise at work). Työsuojeluoppaita ja -ohjeita 2 (Occupational Safety and Health Guides and Instructions 2), Occupational Safety and Health Administration 2007.
- <http://fi.osha.europa.eu>

Vibration and controlling it

The Decree on the Protection of Employees from Vibration is new in Finland

The Government Decree on the Protection of Employees from Vibration that is in accordance with the EU's Human Vibration Directive sets the following obligations concerning action and exposure limit values for vibration, and for exceeding those limits.

The exposure limits outlined in the decree shall be applied to all work performed using new machines as of 6 July 2007. However, the exposure limits for work performed using so-called old machines can be exceeded until 6 July 2010 and in the agriculture and forest industries until 6 July 2014.

The manufacturer of a machine or equipment or the party putting it on the market must provide the necessary information concerning vibration emissions from a mobile work machine and hand-held or hand-guided machine. Hand vibration may cause Raynaud's phenomenon and joint damage. The problems caused by body vibration can include lower back pain.

Action and exposure limit values for vibration

The limit value for exposure to hand vibration is 5 m/s^2 and the action value is 2.5 m/s^2 .

The limit value for exposure to body vibration is 1.15 m/s^2 and the corresponding action value is 0.5 m/s^2 . All the values refer to an 8-hour average value, defined in three directions.

Evaluating exposure and risk

The employer must determine the employees' possible exposure to vibration and identify the cause of the vibration. If necessary, the level of exposure must be measured and the extent of the risk to the employee's health and safety it causes must be evaluated. The evaluator and the person performing the measurements must be an occupational health care expert or other person with sufficient knowledge and skills to measure vibration. An external expert must be used if necessary.

Both body and hand vibration can be of the concussion type, including shaking. The decree does not set limit or action values for shaking, but nevertheless the resulting health risk must be assessed.

Generally speaking, drills, chipping hammers and impact wrenches pose a risk to health, at least with long-term use, unless they are dynamically well balanced. Similarly, rotating hand power tools can make disc wear noncentral. Otherwise, rotating machines have fairly low vibration levels. For example, vibration emissions for the best chain saws are about 2.5 m/s^2 , in

other words, they could be used for several hours consecutively per day.

If the vibration level for a hand-held machine is 10 m/s^2 , it can be used for a maximum of two hours per day. (In such cases, two hours is the so-called trigger time). Correspondingly, a machine vibrating at 20 m/s^2 can be used for no more than half an hour. The action values for exposure are achieved when these times are reduced to one quarter.

The exposure times for mobile machines are usually long. When driving in terrain, on icy fields or poor roads for longer periods of time, the action limit for body vibration is usually exceeded, as is also the exposure limit on occasion, especially when driving an empty vehicle too fast. Horizontal vibration is decisive in such cases. On roads, vertical vibration can be too strong when driving fast.

The employer must keep the results of the risk assessment, and the employer must have access to this information. The risk assessment has to be kept up to date and checked whenever the work methods or working conditions change significantly or vibration poses a health risk to the employee.

Vibration control programme

The employer must draw up a vibration control programme if an employee's vibration exposure exceeds the action value. The programme is a free-form document that outlines the reasons why the action value was exceeded and sets targets for removing the risks it causes or reducing them to the lowest possible level. It must indicate the target level and the methods and resources used to achieve that target, who is responsible for the measures, and the schedule for those measures. When setting targets, the development of technology and availability of control measures aimed at the source of vibration, such as stabilisation and levelling of routes, should be taken into consideration.

Teaching and guidance, personal protective equipment

The employer must provide employees that are exposed to vibration with the required training and guidance for selecting tools, work methods and for the operation of work machines and driving style as well as other activities as necessary.

Special attention should be paid to methods that the employee can use to reduce exposure to vibration by, for example, changing the work habits and driving style, adjusting the seat, using a seatbelt and maintaining driving routes. The greatest exposure often occurs when driving an empty machine at too high a speed.

Employees doing vibration work outdoors should be provided with warm, waterproof gloves that still allow a

good feel for the tool. In general, gloves do not significantly reduce exposure to vibration, but they do keep the hands warm and thus reduce the hazardous effects of vibration. They are also considered part of the vibration control programme.

The employer can help the employee select the most suitable and safest machines for each type of work by means of appropriately marking the equipment.

For more information:

- Government Decision on the Safety of Machines (1314/1994)
- Government Decree on the Protection of Workers from Risks Caused by Vibrations (48/2005)
- Tärinä ja sen torjunta työssä (Vibration and controlling it at work). Työsuojeluoppaita ja -ohjeita 43 (Occupational Safety and Health Guides and Instructions 43), Occupational Safety and Health Administration 2007.

Ventilation

Ventilation refers to the use of air and heat technology to control the indoor air and emissions. Emissions can be hot or cold gases, vapours (including water vapour), fumes, dust, or simply hot air and heat radiation.

Ventilation of the work premises can be implemented by means of

- 1) the piston principle (so-called clean rooms, paint shops, quarries)
- 2) the short-cut principle (the poor man's piston principle, used for ordinary production premises, locations with a lot of heat sources)
- 3) the displacement principle (for example, in high spaces)
- 4) the mixed principle (low emissions, small rooms)

Methods 1-3 are all displacement methods. If there are a lot of emissions, local ventilation is generally predominant (in methods 2 and 3).

A lot of mistakes are made when planning and implementing ventilation. Special competence is required when planning ventilation. This is one case where the old saying certainly applies: a job well planned is a job half done.

In order for ventilation to perform in the appropriate manner, it also has to be used in the correct manner. The most common mistake is to neglect service and adjustment measures.

The need for ventilation can be reduced and production costs and energy saved by minimising the creation of impurities (plugging leaks, choosing the right work methods and using low-emission machines) and by removing impurities immediately by means of local exhaust ventilation.

Typical uses for local exhaust ventilation or negative pressure ventilation chambers and fume hoods are in conjunction with:

- machines that produce hot gases and vapours
- basins that emit impurities
- painting, gluing, solvent wash
- handling of chemicals
- welding work
- cleaning that produces dust
- powerful machine tools

The health- and comfort-based target levels for indoor conditions – heat conditions and air purity – are a key element when planning a ventilation system. The Occupational Safety and Health Act (738/2002) and provisions based on it outline obligations for the employer regarding the target level. In the Decree on Concentra-

tions Known to be Hazardous (109/2005), the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health has confirmed a list of substances with concentrations in workplace air known to be hazardous (HTP values). Employers must take them into consideration when planning the workplace and assessing the working conditions.

Section D2 of the National Building Code of Finland also includes regulations and instructions that can be applied to work premises.

At the very minimum, the target must be a minimum level derived from the law that applies to all workplaces, but a more demanding target level must be selected whenever possible. For example, the starting point for planning ventilation can be to use the best available technology or minimising health risks as much as possible.

Temperature

The Occupational Safety and Health Act includes requirements for the temperature of work premises under normal conditions. The National Building Code of Finland sets a planning value for the general temperature of occupied zones in buildings, which is 21°C during the cold season and 23°C during the summer season. Room-specific guideline values are also defined.

According to the Occupational Safety and Health Act, an employer has to limit an employee's exposure to physical factors that are harmful or dangerous to safety or health to such an extent that they no longer pose a threat or danger to the employee's safety or health. Physical factors include temperature, humidity, draft, noise, pressure, vibration and radiation. Exposure to heat, cold, draft or heat radiation can be due to production methods, the nature of the work, machines and equipment and the work environment.

The Government Decree on Safety and Health Requirements in the Workplace (577/2003) states that the windows and glass walls of workrooms, with consideration to the nature of the work, must be made of such a material or be so protected that the employee can avoid being exposed to a harmful heat load caused by the sun.

Measures to reduce exposure depend on the properties of the factor in question and the nature of the work. As with other occupational hygiene factors, the aim should be to prevent exposure altogether. If general technical methods do not lead to a satisfactory result, the exposure time can be reduced by means of breaks or by changing work tasks. Using personal protective equipment can alleviate the harmful consequences of exposure.

Guideline values for temperatures and air movement have been drawn up in accordance with workload:

Work classification	Heat production	Recommended temperature	Air movement
Light desk work	< 150 W	21 – 25°C	< 0,1 m/s
Other light work	150 - 300 W	19 – 23°C	< 0,1 m/s
Medium heavy work	300 - 400 W	17 – 21°C	< 0,5 m/s
Heavy work	400 -	12 - 17°C	< 0,7 m/s

Limit values for temperature and recommendations concerning temperatures

Temperature conditions must maintain a person's heat balance and comfort. In addition to temperature, heat conditions comprise humidity, air movement (draft) and heat radiation. Other factors include the nature of the work, heavy work, manner of performance and clothing. The recommended relative humidity is 30-70%.

Working in cold conditions

The hazardous effects of cold begin to appear when temperatures fall below 10°C. Naturally the greatest exposure to cold occurs in outdoor work, but people are also exposed to drafts and cold when indoors, for example, in the foodstuffs industry. Slight and moderate cooling can weaken the capacity of the hands while intense cooling diminishes all capacities. Employees working for years in cold work develop more joint and muscle problems than those performing similar work in warm conditions.

Clothing is often the only means of providing personal protection against the hazards of cold. Further options include insulation of the contact surfaces of tools and machines or various heating devices for workstations. In some cases it is also possible to change the working conditions and working methods.

Working in hot conditions

During hot summer weather, the heat causes problems in many jobs. Some work exposes employees to heat throughout the year. In order to protect employees from excess heat, employers have to implement measures that can include improving ventilation or shortening the exposure time.

It is the employer's responsibility to use technical measures to ensure that the temperature at the workplace remains at less than +28°C when the outdoor temperature is less than +25°. If, despite the technical measures, the workplace air temperature exceeds +28° due to hot weather, the work must be reduced by limiting the time that employees are exposed to the heat. Exposure times for light and medium heavy continuous work have been established at 50 minutes per hour for work done at temperatures less than +33° and 45 minutes per hour when the temperature exceeds +33°C. This means that a 10-15 minute break is taken every hour. Higher temperatures and heavy physical work require special protective measures. These include determining the risk of heat ailments for the employee, the use of special protective clothing and frequent breaks during the work. Of course, the primary measures are technical solutions related to ventilation and insulation of heat sources.

The employee can help reduce the heat load by selecting suitable light and loose clothing for the work. It is also important to maintain the body's fluid and salt balance. If a fluid deficiency is not corrected, the temperature of the internal organs will rise thus causing dehydration of the body to place excess burden on the circulation. Without protective measures, work performed in hot conditions may lead to cramps, fainting and even heatstroke.

For more information:

- HTP-arvot 2007. Haitallisiksi tunnetut pitoisuudet (HTP values. Concentrations known to be harmful). Publications of the Ministry for Social Affairs and Health 2007:4.
- National Building Code of Finland. Ministry of the Environment.
- Industrial Ventilation – Technical Solutions. Finnish Development Center for Building Services Ltd TAKE. Report 27.

Safety signs and their use

If the risks to an employee cannot be avoided or sufficiently reduced through general technical or structural measures or by reorganisation of work

- the employer must arrange for safety signs
- provide the employee or his/her representative with instruction and guidance in the meaning of safety signs.

Safety signs are divided as follows:

- prohibitory signs
No smoking.



- warning signs
General warning sign



- regulatory signs
Safety helmet required



- guidance signs, for example,
 - Exit
 - First aid
 - Fire fighting equipment
 - Hand signals and oral communication

The instructions in the table below apply to all signs that utilise safety colours!

More detailed information on safety signs and their use is available in Government Decision 976/1994.

Colour	Purpose	Instructions and information
Red	Prohibitory sign	Dangerous behaviour
	Danger alarm	Stop, off, emergency stop equipment Evacuate
	Fire fighting equipment	Identification and location
Yellow or orange	Warning sign	Be careful, take precautionary measures Investigate
Blue	Regulatory sign	Specific behaviour or action Wear personal protective equipment
Green	Emergency exits, first aid	Doors, exits, routes, equipment, devices
	No danger	Return to normal activity

Occupational health care

What is occupational health care?

Occupational health care activities start with the company's needs, which are defined in co-operation with the employer, employees and occupational health care personnel.

The aim of occupational health care is:

- a healthy and safe work environment
- a well-functioning work community
- prevention of work-related illnesses
- to maintain work ability and functional capacity, and to promote health

Occupational health care is implemented according to good professional practice that is based on co-operation and knowledge of the relationship between work and health.

What does occupational health care do?

Investigates and assesses

Workplace visits are used to identify possible health risks and consider methods of removing them. Expert assistance in these matters is particularly important when planning new work premises and methods. The report must be on display at the workplace.

Informs and advises

Occupational health care provides answers concerning whether chemicals are dangerous to health, how skin can be protected and treated, whether recess exercise would be beneficial, are desktops properly dimensioned, how to lift loads properly, and other questions according to the problems at each workplace.

It also provides advice concerning personal fitness and promoting health.

Assesses work ability and monitors the state of health

The medical examinations performed when starting work determine whether a person has a defect, disability, illness or allergies that might worsen during work or might make that person unsuitable for the work in question.

All medical examinations involve assessing work ability and initiating maintenance measures when necessary.

Regular examinations are performed on employees exposed to solvents, dust and noise in order to prevent possible professional diseases and to assess excessive exposure.

Handles first aid training and supplies

Where are services available?

An agreement concerning occupational health care for employees can be made with a health centre or a private medical centre offering occupational health care services, or with an occupational health care centre established by a group of companies.

Entrepreneurs should also purchase occupational health care services for themselves.

What kind of agreement can you make?

Statutory occupational health care must be arranged for all employees. This includes the above-mentioned measures to the extent required by the problems in the work environment and the demands of the work tasks in the company.

Occupational health care medical services can be included in the agreement, and they can also be extended to cover the entrepreneur or the employer.

What does it cost?

If occupational health care can reduce absences by even a few days each year through preventive measures, it will have paid for itself.

Employees

Occupational health care that includes hospital care costs less than EUR 180/employee each year. Kela refunds 50% of this amount to the employer. In addition, 60% of the costs of the workplace survey are refunded. The rest of the costs are tax-deductible on the company's tax assessment.

The entrepreneur

Kela refunds 50% of an entrepreneur's occupational health care costs. The health care centre invoices the entrepreneur for 50% of the costs and applies to Kela for a refund of the remaining amount. When utilising private services, the entrepreneur has to apply for the refund from Kela. In addition, 60% of the costs of the workplace survey are refunded.

Rescue plan

All sites at which a fire inspection is performed at least once a year are required to have a rescue plan.

A rescue plan is also required for such companies where the number of employees and other people (for example, customers) simultaneously on site is at least 30.

If several different companies operate in the same business premises, a plan including the necessary arrangements must be jointly drawn up for the building even if none of the individual companies meet the minimum requirement of 30 people. In such cases, the responsibility for initiating the rescue plan lies with the owner or holder of the building. For example, the responsibility can be transferred to one of the tenants in a lease agreement.

First aid readiness at workplaces

Workplaces must maintain first aid readiness with consideration to the special conditions prevailing at each workplace, such as the risks involved with chemicals.

First aid readiness includes

- appropriate supplies and equipment
- people with first aid skills
- knowledge of which measures must be taken in case of accident or illness in order to get quick first aid.

The employer must notify the occupational safety and health authorities of any accident that requires an investigation. This notification obligation applies to serious injuries and cases of death.

For more information:

www.ttl.fi

www.kela.fi

Workplace health promotion – cutting pension costs in advance

What is workplace health promotion (WHP)?

Workplace health promotion refers to all activity aimed at influencing health, work ability and functional capacity, well-being and productivity.

Who is involved?

All working people regardless of age or profession are within the scope of workplace health promotion. The aim is to promote and support the work ability and functional capacity of workers at every stage of their career.

What measures are used to promote WHP?

Employers have a lot of opportunities to influence work ability. These methods include work guidance, work methods that reduce load, development of the work environment and work community.

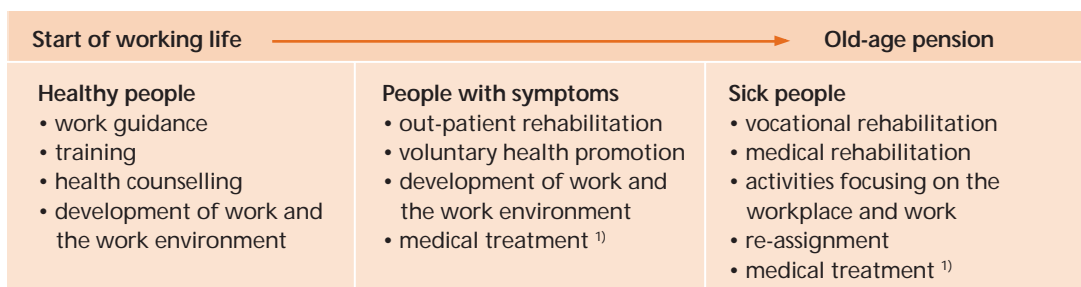
The employee can influence his/her health through work habits, lifestyle and maintaining good physical condition, an area in which employers should encourage and support voluntary activity on the part of employees.

Special measures are focused on persons that show symptoms, illness or poor condition that threatens their work ability. Occupational health care professionals play a key role in identifying, treating and, if necessary, directing such people to rehabilitation.

What is the benefit of all this?

Good work ability increases the efficiency and productivity of work and reduces absences due to illness and other costs resulting from disruptions to production. Furthermore, the employer can concretely demonstrate that he/she appreciates the employees and cares about their well-being.

The following diagram shows procedures that can be used to focus the measures.



¹⁾ When this possibility has been arranged in the occupational health care at the workplace

For more information:

- Ahonen G, Bjurström L-M, Hussi T. Työkykyä ylläpitävän toiminnan taloudelliset vaikutukset. (The economic impacts of activities to maintain work ability) The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Kela and the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health 2001.
- www.ttl.fi

Good musculoskeletal capacity and health improve workflow and prevent illness

Musculoskeletal system function

Musculoskeletal system capacity and health is a key prerequisite for work ability. Work ability can be maintained at a good level if

- the work content and work methods,
- physical and mental requirements set by the work, and
- work equipment and workplace structures are adapted to the employee's individual characteristics in the planning stage. It is also important to ensure that the employee is capable of handling heavy work and can get help in balancing the workload.

An important factor is to take the special features of each workplace into consideration.

Things to consider when managing risks to the musculoskeletal system

- handling of heavy loads
- work positions and movements that place excess load on the system
- repetitive work movements
- grips that require hand strength
- mechanical pressure, for example, caused by a hand tool
- work involving an unbalanced physical load
- the effect of vibration: body and hand vibration
- the importance of lighting and temperature conditions
- accidents
- work arrangement practices
- psychosocial factors

Inspect and develop

Determine whether workplace tasks involve harmful physical loads or the risk of accident, particularly with regard to lifting done by hand, working at a screen and repetitive work.

Use the resulting report to develop work procedures and methods with the employees and assess their success.

If these issues do not receive sufficient attention, the result can be musculoskeletal disorders, which subsequently lead to

- an employee losing his/her work ability and functional capacity
- absences and the related costs
- a change in the atmosphere of the work community
- loss of professional work contribution
- decreased work productivity and quality

Get expert help

Expert help with surveying workload and for development measures is available from occupational health care and the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health. More information about the employer's obligations is available from the local Occupational Safety and Health Inspectorate.

For more information:

- Käsien tehtävät nostot ja siirrot työssä (Lifting and Moving Objects by Hand at Work). Työsuojeluoppaita ja -ohjeita 23 (Occupational Safety and Health Guides and Instructions 23), Occupational Safety and Health Administration 2007.
- Näyttöpäätetyö (Display screen work). Työsuojeluoppaita ja -ohjeita 1 (Occupational Safety and Health Guides and Instructions 1), Occupational Safety and Health Administration 2006.
- Toisto-Repe. Toistotyön arviointimenetelmä (A method for assessing repetitive work). Finnish Institute of Occupational Health 2004.
- Näppärä. Näyttöpäätetyön ergonomian ja työympäristön arviointi (Evaluating the ergonomics of display screen work and the work environment). Finnish Institute of Occupational Health and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2004.
- Työkuormituksen arviointimenetelmä TIKKA (TIKKA. A method for assessing workload). Finnish Institute of Occupational Health 2005.
- Ergonomics standards; www.sfs.fi.
- Occupational safety and health databank: <http://fi.osha.europa.eu>
- Finnish Institute of Occupational Health www.ttl.fi > Ergonomia > Työkalut

Mental well-being

Opportunities.	Risks:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a small company is like a team • independence when working • the chance to set challenging targets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • working alone • the desire to take on too many roles • the susceptibility to take risks and excessive work loads
A small company is like a team	The risks of working alone
Social support (encouragement, support from the manager and colleagues...) is a key factor in managing pressure and stress. In a team, assessing workload, managing work, and forecasting changes is easier than in a large work community.	Inflexible division of work increases the amount of work performed alone and isolation. Conflicts, discrimination or excessive competitiveness can disrupt the internal support. Working alone reduces the ability to identify stress factors, harmful requirements or bullying.
Independence when working	The desire or need to take on too many roles
Independence when working offers greater opportunities for self-fulfilment. Independence when working and managing work is beneficial in terms of learning, professional competence and tolerating pressure.	One way of achieving self-fulfilment is to do everything alone. Small entrepreneurs are the employer, employee, taxation expert, occupational safety and health manager, etc. Constantly changing work tasks and unclear job descriptions have a negative impact on well-being.
The chance to set challenging targets	The susceptibility to take risks increases with pressure
Small companies and work groups usually provide better opportunities to set challenging targets. The ability to identify strengths and weaknesses is better than average.	Especially when working alone, the ability to differentiate between possible and impossible challenges is disrupted. If the targets set become personal measures of value, the susceptibility to take unreasonable risks increases.

For more information:

- Inappropriate treatment. Occupational Safety and Health Guides and Instructions 42. Occupational Safety and Health Administration 2007.
- Suomela T, Pakkala L. Elän täydesti - näkökulmia yrittäjän työhön ja terveyteen (Living life to the fullest – perspectives on an entrepreneur's work and health). Finnish Institute of Occupational Health 2004.

Display screen work - well-being for IT work

Assessing the risks

Information technology is utilised in almost all types of work. Work performed with computers differs in terms of the amount of information processed, how material is handled, use of a mouse, and the object being viewed. The work also includes a lot of negotiations and contacts using a computer and other teleinformatic devices.

According to the Government Decision on Display Screen Work (1405/1993), workstations must be evaluated with consideration to the harmful physical and mental load and the sight requirements of the work.

Assessment of the risks associated with display screen work must be extensive and task-specific. Conditions affecting the physical and mental load must be taken into account when identifying risks. These factors include

- the location of the screen, keyboard and mouse as well as other auxiliary devices
- sight requirements
- programme functionality
- lighting and temperature conditions
- work community support and work management
- amount and type of information and contacts
- opportunities to influence the work.

Arranging work

Working at a display screen strains the back, neck, shoulders, upper limbs and eyes. Display screen work must be arranged so that other tasks and work phases break up the continuous workload at the terminal. Breaks must be taken at appropriate intervals. Breaks from display screen work shall include movement, muscle stretching and focusing on other objects to avoid eye strain.

Make sure that:

- the office chair is properly dimensioned for the employee, is adjustable and comfortable to sit in
- the height of the desk is appropriate and adjustable if necessary
- the position of the screen is adjustable and the viewing angle to the screen is correct
- the source material is positioned in a stand in the appropriate location with regard to viewing and handling it
- the keyboard and mouse are at an appropriate distance and there is sufficient desk space to support the hands and for a wrist support if needed
- general and local lighting is appropriate and properly positioned so that it does not cause glare or disturbing reflections.

Vision and eye examinations

Occupational health care should arrange vision and eye examination for people doing display screen work. The person should have sufficient vision for the intended work either without glasses or corrected with glasses appropriate for the work.

Special glasses

According to the Government Decision, the employer must provide the employee with special eyeglasses appropriate for display screen work if ordinary eyeglasses are not suitable for the work even after ergonomic corrections of the workplace.

Special work glasses are glasses that differ from normal eyeglasses intended for general use in terms of strength, lens type or lens installation.

Special work glasses are only necessary for employees with presbyopia or, in exceptional cases, employees under the age of 45 if the work environment cannot be changed so that glasses designed for general use function flawlessly.

Refund of glasses requires a statement from an ophthalmologist or optician clearly indicating the grounds for special glasses or other possible aid devices. If only one pair of glasses is prescribed for an employee after a vision examination, these glasses do not fall within the scope of the Government Decision because they are also suitable for other use.

For more information:

- Näyttöpäätetyö (Display screen work) Työsuojeluoppaita ja -ohjeita 1 (Occupational Safety and Health Guides and Instructions 1), Occupational Safety and Health Administration 2006.
- Näppärä. Näyttöpäätetyön ergonomian ja työympäristön arviointi (Evaluating the ergonomics of display screen work and the work environment), Finnish Institute of Occupational Health and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2004.
- Occupational safety and health databank: <http://fi.osha.europa.eu>
- Finnish Institute of Occupational Health: www.ttl.fi > Ergonomia > Työkalut

Smoking at the workplace

Environmental tobacco smoke is classified as a carcinogenic substance. Passive smoking also increases the risk of cardiovascular disease and reproductive health disorders. For this reason, non-smoking employees must be protected from tobacco smoke.

The employer has to take responsibility for prohibiting smoking in premises that are deemed smoke-free areas by the Tobacco Act (225/1997). Such premises include facilities that are public and common for the entire work community. The employer also has to monitor observation of the ban and prohibit or limit smoking in other premises to ensure that employees are not unintentionally exposed to tobacco smoke. Prior to prohibiting or limiting smoking, the employer must negotiate with the employees or their representatives.

An amendment to the Tobacco Act designed to protect restaurant employees from tobacco smoke entered into force on 1 June 2007, and this amendment bans smoking in restaurants. After that change, smoking is only permitted in separate smoking booths from which tobacco smoke cannot spread to other parts of the restaurant. Eating and drinking in the smoking area is prohibited. Work is prohibited in the smoking booth, with the exception of the necessary maintenance of order, fire and rescue operations, and attendance to safety. The smoking booth may only be cleaned after proper ventilation. A two-year transitional period allows existing restaurants to arrange the smoking space in different ways if a permit has been obtained from the municipal health authorities.

Pregnant employees may not perform work that involves exposure to environmental tobacco smoke. If it is not possible for them to work in a smoke-free area, the employees are entitled to apply for special maternity leave. Employees under the age of 16 may not perform work that involves exposure to environmental tobacco smoke. Employees over the age of 16 but under the age of 18 may do such work under special circumstances if the work does not pose any special health risk.

Smoking at the workplace is prohibited

- in premises to which customers or the general public has unlimited passage
- common work community facilities, including corridors, meeting rooms, rest and coffee rooms and other comparable facilities
- washing, dressing and bathroom facilities
- indoor and outdoor facilities at schools and kindergartens
- in restaurants, with the exception of a separate smoking booth

The employer shall ensure that these rooms are designated and monitor observation of the ban.



No smoking

Smoking is permitted

- in separate areas that are equipped and labelled as smoking booths, and where ventilation has been arranged so that tobacco smoke does not spread to smoke-free premises.

Assessing exposure to tobacco smoke at the workplace

The Government Decision on Environmental Tobacco Smoke and the Prevention of Related Risks of Cancer requires that employers perform a risk assessment concerning employees' exposure to tobacco smoke. The employer has to assess whether the exposure is continuous or occasional and how many hours per day the employee is exposed to tobacco smoke. In practice, the assessment can be done in a sensory and empirical manner. In some cases, it may be necessary to measure the nicotine concentration of the air.

Measures in case of exposure

If the assessment indicates that employees are exposed to significant amounts of environmental tobacco smoke, the employer must implement measures to reduce the exposure. The assessment must be repeated on a regular basis. The employer also has to monitor the impact of the reduction measures and provide employees with counselling on the risks of environmental tobacco smoke and the measures to reduce exposure. The ASA Register (National Register of Workers Exposed to Carcinogens) maintained by the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health must be notified of employees that are exposed to environmental smoke. The employer has to ensure that occupational health care performs the statutory health examinations on exposed employees.

Monitoring of the Tobacco Act

Monitoring of the Tobacco Act is divided between several authorities by task area. The Occupational Safety and Health Inspectorate monitors the Tobacco Act at workplaces. The municipal health authority monitors the Act with regard to customers. Private citizens can contact the monitoring authorities if necessary.

The Tobacco Act is monitored by the following authorities:

General administration and guidance:

- The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health

General supervision, supervision of sales and advertising

- The National Product Control Agency for Welfare and Health (STTV)

Regional supervision of the Tobacco Act:

- State Provincial Offices

Retail sales of tobacco and local supervision of smoking:

- Municipal health inspectors

Supervision of employer obligations in relation to the Tobacco Act, supervision of the carcinogenic risk caused by environmental tobacco smoke:

- Occupational Safety and Health Inspectorates

Supervision of smoking at public events and in the public indoor premises of work communities that are intended for customers:

- Police authorities

Supervision of the import of tobacco products:

- Finnish Customs

For more information:

- Government Decision on Environmental Tobacco Smoke and Combating the Associated Risks of Cancer at Work (1153/1999)
- Government Decision Amending the Annex to the Government Decision on Medical Examinations in Connection with Work Involving Special Health Hazards (1154/1999)
- Ministry of Social Affairs and Health Decree on Smoking Booths (964/2006)
- The Act Amending the Act on Measures to Reduce Tobacco Smoking (700/2006)

Occupational safety and health co-operation at the workplace

Maintaining occupational safety at the workplace always requires co-operation between the employer and the employee. The Act and Decree on the Enforcement of Occupational Safety and Health and the occupational safety and health agreements specify the co-operative bodies to be formed for the activities. On the basis of this, an occupational safety and health manager for the workplace is appointed and, if necessary, an occupational safety and health representative selected and an occupational safety and health committee established.

Occupational safety and health manager

The employer designates an occupational safety and health manager to represent it in the cooperation on occupational safety and health. This person should be very familiar with the occupational safety and health conditions and regulations at the workplace. The occupational safety and health manager must be provided with sufficient operational prerequisites for handling his/her responsibilities. The entrepreneur can also serve as the occupational safety and health manager.

Occupational safety and health representatives

The blue-collar and white-collar workers select an occupational safety and health representative and two deputy representatives to represent them with the employer and the occupational safety and health authorities.

A representative must be chosen if the workplace has a combined total of at least 10 blue collar and white collar workers.

The blue collar and white collar workers can also select a joint representative if so agreed at the workplace. See the occupational safety and health agreement in your sector for more information.

Occupational safety and health committee

The occupational safety and health committee serves as a co-operative body between different personnel groups.

Unless otherwise agreed, such a committee must be established if at least 20 employees work regularly at the workplace.

To be appointed	OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH MANAGER as the employer's representative	always
To be selected	OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH REPRESENTATIVE to represent the blue collar and white collar workers	if the company has at least 10 employees
To be established	OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH COMMITTEE as a co-operative body	if the company has at least 20 employees, unless another form of co-operation is agreed upon

What and where?

The duty of the Occupational Safety and Health Inspectorates is to monitor compliance with occupational safety and health legislation and regulations at workplaces. They also shall improve the level of safety and health at workplaces as well as give advice, instructions and opinions concerning the application of the legislation and regulations and carry on cooperation with employer and employee organisations in the field of occupational safety and health.

Workplace Development Programme Tykes (2004–2009) promotes the modes of operation of Finnish workplaces. Development activity in the programme projects is based on cooperation between the management and staff of the workplaces. The activities of the Tykes programme continue as part of the activities of Tekes, Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation.

The Employment and Economic Development Centres (TE Centres) and employment offices serve employers when recruiting personnel, in training and many other matters related to personnel and business activities.

They can also assist companies when hiring unemployed and disabled persons and when establishing a new company (start-up grant). Furthermore, they provide training, location counselling and services when companies are dealing with change.

The employment offices serve companies at the local level. In addition to traditional employment office activities, the Labour Administration has developed a diverse variety of special services to meet company needs. Many employment offices now have a business services unit that can offer companies tailored service packages.

The Finnish Institute of Occupational Health performs national research work in the area of occupational safety and health and occupational health care. The Institute also sells its services to companies.

The Centre for Occupational Safety is an office run by Finnish labour market organisations. Its most important tasks are consultation, training and communications related to developing the work environment and work community as well as production of related material.

The Finnish Work Environment Fund is run by the labour market organisations and is an important funding body for research and development. It is also the main financier of the Centre for Occupational Safety activities. The Fund receives its income from accident insurance premiums paid by employers. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health monitors the activities.

The Finnish Work Environment Fund provides financing for research, development, communications and training activities that improve working conditions and promote the safety and productivity of work communities. Companies, municipalities, research institutes and other research communities can apply for grants. Development grants are allocated within the scope of the Fund's activities and are intended for the practical implementation of research and development results at the applicant's workplace with the help of an external consultant. The work communities of companies and municipalities can apply for grants.

The application periods close on 1 February and 1 September. The application periods for personal stipends end on 2 January, 2 May and 1 October.

The aim of the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work is to collect and disseminate information on occupational safety and health. In co-operation with its national partners, or Focal Points, the Agency maintains an information network on the Internet. The network is designed to spread new information related to occupational safety and health. Among other things, it offers practical solutions to promote occupational safety and health at companies.

In Finland, the Occupational Safety and Health Department at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health serves as the Focal Point for the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work. The Agency's Finnish website can be found at <http://fi.osha.europa.eu> and the international website at <http://osha.europa.eu>.

The European Social Fund (ESF) can provide support for improving employees' well-being at work and work ability. Under normal circumstances, the best way to establish a project is with the help of occupational health care and by joining forces with other entrepreneurs in the same industry or municipality. These applications are processed by the TE Centres and the Provincial Governments.

The TE Centres can provide additional information on ESF funding specifically aimed at solving problems associated with structural changes in working life. The main aim of the Fund's Objective 3 Programme is to combat unemployment in advance with a particular focus on employees working in small and medium-sized companies. Also in this area, networking between small companies is the most practical way to initiate large and influential projects.

The task of the **municipal trade promoters** is to assist companies and serve as liaisons between companies and the municipal administration. The trade promoters can be reached at the municipal offices.

Addresses and contact information

SEARCH FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION E-SERVICES AND FORMS

www.suomi.fi/asiointi

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH DATABANK ON THE INTERNET

<http://fi.osha.europa.eu>

DEVELOPMENT AND FINANCING SERVICES FOR SMEs

Internet link collection
www.te-keskus.fi

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH INSPECTORATES

www.tyosuojelu.fi

EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CENTRES

www.te-keskus.fi

FINNISH INSTITUTE OF OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

Topeliuksenkatu 41 a A
00250 HELSINKI
Tel. +358 30 4741
Fax +358 30 474 2779
www.ttl.fi

OTHER EXPERT BODIES

Finnish Centre for Pensions

www.etk.fi

Finnvera Plc

www.finnvera.fi

Inspecta Group

www.inspecta.fi

Ministry of Employment and the Economy

www.tem.fi

Foundation for Finnish Inventions

www.keksintosaatio.fi

Central Chamber of Commerce

www.keskuskauppakamari.fi

Poison Information Centre

www.myrkytystietokeskus.fi
Tel. +358 9 471 977 (direct)
Tel. +358 9 4711 (switchboard)

National Board of Patents and Registration of Finland

www.prh.fi

SME Foundation

www.pkt.fi

SITRA, The Finnish Innovation Fund

www.sitra.fi

Finnish Standards Association (SFS)

www.sfs.fi

Association of Finnish Accounting Firms

www.taloushallintoliitto.fi

STAKES (National Research and Development Centre for Welfare and Health)

www.stakes.fi

Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority (STUK)

www.stuk.fi

The Federation of Accident Insurance Institutions

www.tvl.fi

Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation (TEKES)

www.tekes.fi

Safety Technology Authority (TUKES)

www.tukes.fi

The Finnish Work Environment Fund

www.tsr.fi

The Centre for Occupational Safety

www.ttk.fi

Vakes (Insurance Centre)

www.vakes.fi

NATIONAL LABOUR MARKET AND INTEREST GROUPS

Advisory Board of Chemicals

www.kemikaalineuvottelukunta.fi

AKAVA – Confederation of Unions for Professional and Managerial Staff in Finland

www.akava.fi

The Confederation of Finnish Industries EK

www.ek.fi

The Central Union of Agricultural Producers and Forest Owners (MTK)

www.mtk.fi

The Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions SAK
www.sak.fi

European Chemicals Agency
<http://ec.europa.eu/echa>

The Federation of Finnish Enterprises
www.yrittajat.fi

Finnish Environmental Administration SYKE
www.ymparisto.fi/syke

The Finnish Confederation of Salaried Employees STTK
www.sttk.fi

National Product Control Agency for Welfare and Health
www.sttv.f

Suomen kuntaliitto (Local Finland)
www.kunnat.net

Contact information

**The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health
Occupational Safety and Health Department**
Uimalankatu 1
P.O. Box 536, 33101 Tampere
Tel. +358 9 160 01 or
+358 3 2627 2000
Fax +358 3 2627 2511

**Occupational Safety and Health Inspectorate
of Uusimaa**
Siltasaarenkatu 12 A
P.O. Box 46, 00531 Helsinki
Tel. +358 9 774 711
Fax +358 9 730 798

**Occupational Safety and Health Inspectorate
of Turku and Pori**
Linnankatu 39, 20100 Turku
Tel. +358 20 690 777
Fax +358 20 690 778

**Occupational Safety and Health Inspectorate
of Häme**
Uimalankatu 1
P.O. Box 272, 33101 Tampere
Tel. +358 3 260 8800
Fax +358 3 260 8899

**Occupational Safety and Health Inspectorate
of Southeast Finland**
Villimiehenkatu 2 B, (3rd floor)
P.O. Box 145, 53101 Lappeenranta
Tel. +358 20 690 500
Fax +358 207 470 529

**Occupational Safety and Health Inspectorate
of Vaasa**
Kauppapuistikko 20 B
P.O. Box 172, 65101 Vaasa
Tel. +358 20 690 620
Fax +358 6 361 0331

**Occupational Safety and Health Inspectorate
of Central Finland**
Ailakinkatu 17
P.O. Box 119, 40101 Jyväskylä
Tel. +358 10 397 4000
Fax +358 10 397 4005

**Occupational Safety and Health Inspectorate
of Eastern Finland**
Vuorikatu 26 A, (5th floor)
70100 Kuopio
Tel. +358 17 201 401
Fax +358 17 201 410

**Occupational Safety and Health Inspectorate
of Northern Finland**
Albertinkatu 8
P.O. Box 229, 90101 Oulu
Tel. +358 8 315 9511
Fax +358 8 315 9599

Occupational Safety and Health Exhibit
Uimalankatu 1
P.O. Box 272, 33101 Tampere
Tel. +358 3 260 8800
Fax +358 3 260 8150