

# HR QUARTERLY BULLETIN

SPRING 2025

**Driving change and  
shaping the future**



## LEGAL UPDATES

Bill 229, the Working for Workers Six Act, 2024, received royal assent on December 19, 2024, and made amendments to the Occupational Health & Safety Act and the Employment Standards Act.

## HEALTH & WELLNESS

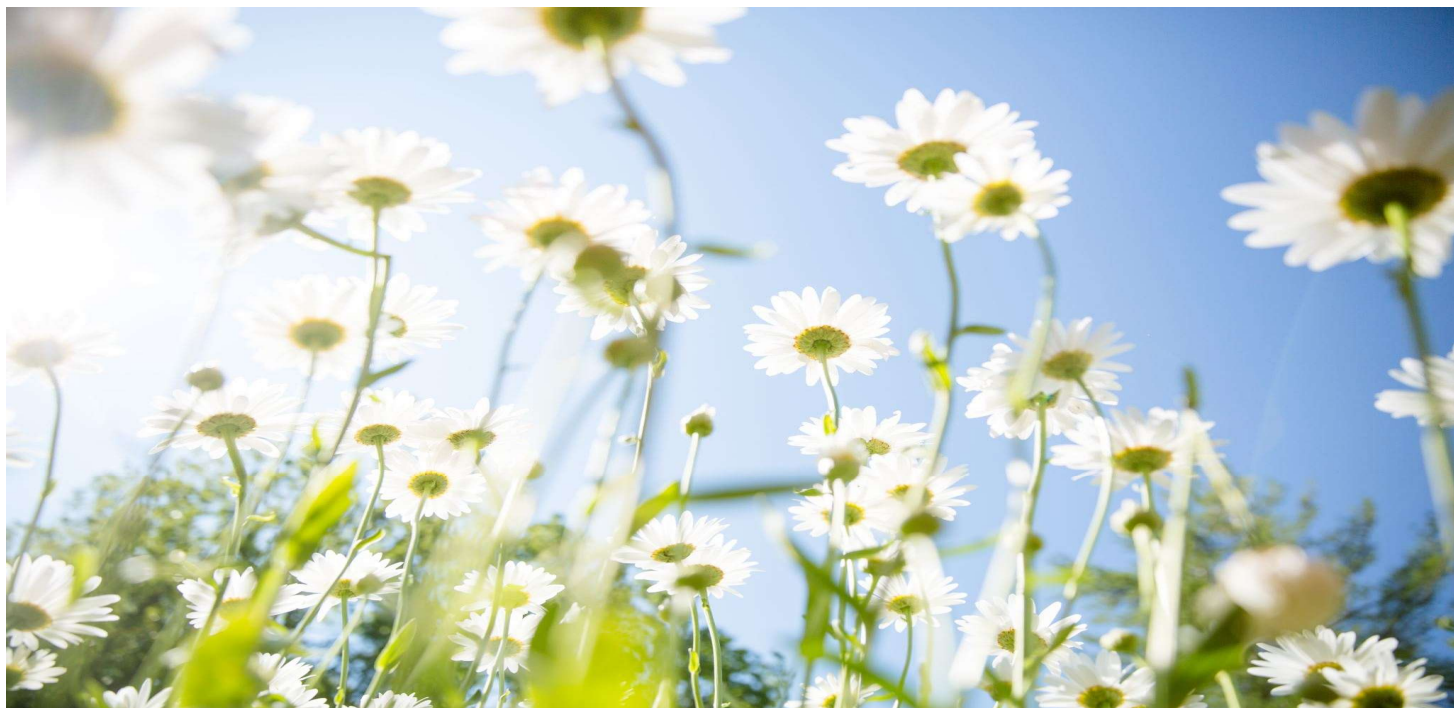
Establishing a workplace health and well-being program includes multiple factors and a range of approaches to fit the unique needs of each organization.

## FEATURE ARTICLE

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Employers have been adjusting to everchanging and shifting priorities. At S&G HR Consulting, Sandra & Marina support local businesses to adapt to these changes by providing consulting services, policy development, and training programs that fit their organization's unique, specific needs. For any additional questions, please contact us through our [website](#) or call us at [905-325-3396](tel:905-325-3396).



## LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

**Bill 229** builds on previous Working for Workers Acts and has now amended the fines for offences under the OHSA to include a **mandatory minimum fine** for **repeat offences by a corporation**. This amendment came into effect on December 19, 2024.

- This mandatory minimum only applies for offences resulting in death or serious injury under the OHSA.
- If a corporation is convicted of a subsequent offence, which results in death or serious injury within a two-year period, they will be subject to a minimum fine of \$500,000.

### Amendments to the ESA: New Hire Information

Effective July 1, 2025, employers (with 25 or more employees) must provide all **New Employees** with the following information in writing on their first day of employment, or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter:

- The employer's legal name
- Contact information for the employer
- A description of where the employee will perform work
- The employee's starting wage or commission
- The applicable pay period and paydays
- A general description of the employee's anticipated hours of work

**Long-Term Illness Leave (Section 49.8)**: for an unpaid leave of absence if an employee will not be performing the duties of their position because of a serious medical condition. This will come into effect on June 19, 2025.

## HEALTH & WELLNESS

### What Defines a Workplace Health and Well-Being Program?

During these uncertain times, both employers and employees are experiencing elevated workplace stress. While there are many factors beyond our control, implementing a well-being program—regardless of your organization's size—can make a meaningful difference.

Establishing a workplace health and well-being program includes multiple factors tailored to the unique needs of each organization. The most effective programs address a wide range of employee interests and challenges. Here are some common areas of focus with varying approaches based on workplace-specific needs:

- **Employee Input:**
  - Employees share suggestions or identify needs for health and wellness initiatives. This can be achieved through feedback channels such as anonymous focus groups, surveys, and one-on-one discussions.
- **Workplace Environment:**
  - **Healthy Living:**
    - Promoting healthy eating and active living.
    - Addressing work organization and stress management.
  - **Work-Life Balance:**
    - Time management strategies.
    - Balancing work and personal life.
  - **Work Environment:**
    - Providing facilities or programs for healthy activities.
    - Ensuring a safe working environment.
    - Eliminating psychological risks and preventing violence (including harassment and bullying).
    - Upholding fair hiring practices.
    - Offering access to professional counseling when needed.
- **Management Practices:**
  - Conducting sessions on personal health topics.
  - Providing training for stress management, time management, and work-life balance.
  - Encouraging employee participation in decision-making (e.g., job analysis, organizational changes).
  - Recognizing achievements and promoting job satisfaction.
  - Offering flexible work hours to accommodate exercise or wellness activities.
  - Providing financial assistance for health-related programs (e.g., recreational activities, employee assistance programs, health screenings).

In conclusion, implementing a well-being program can positively impact absenteeism rates and associated costs, reduce turnover, and improve return-to-work outcomes following injuries or illnesses.

## FEATURE ARTICLE

### The Importance of Developing a Learning Culture and Investing in Training

Developing a learning culture and investing in employee training and development are crucial for long-term success. Unlike large corporations with abundant resources, small to medium size businesses rely heavily on their employees' skills, adaptability, and innovation to stay competitive.

A strong learning culture encourages continuous skill development, ensuring employees remain efficient and up to date with industry trends. This is especially important in rapidly changing industries such as technology, marketing, and customer service. Employees who receive ongoing training are more confident, productive, and capable of handling new challenges, ultimately improving overall business performance.

Investing in training and development also boosts employee morale and retention. When businesses provide growth opportunities, employees feel valued and are more likely to stay, reducing turnover costs. High turnover can be costly for small businesses, as recruiting and training new employees takes time and resources. A well-trained workforce also leads to improved customer service, enhancing the company's reputation and customer satisfaction.

Moreover, a learning culture fosters innovation and problem-solving. Employees who continuously learn can contribute new ideas and improve business operations. This adaptability is crucial for small to medium size businesses to navigate market changes and economic uncertainties.

Incorporating training programs, mentorship, workshops, and online courses doesn't have to be expensive. Many cost-effective options, such as e-learning and in-house knowledge-sharing sessions, can provide significant benefits.

In conclusion, developing a learning culture and investing in training are essential for small to medium size businesses aiming for growth and sustainability. By prioritizing employee development, businesses can enhance productivity, reduce turnover, improve customer satisfaction, and stay competitive in today's market.

Knowledge  
is  
power!



#### **Resources:**

For your free Organizational Assessment, click [here](#)

For access to further resources and useful links relating to Covid-19, health and safety mandates, and public health updates, please visit: [S&G HR Consulting Resources](#).