



# People Matter

It's about health and safety



**workinfo**  
[www.workinfo.govt.nz](http://www.workinfo.govt.nz)  
0800209020

  
DEPARTMENT OF  
**LABOUR**  
TE TARI MAHI

**OSH**  
occupational safety  
& health service  
te oranga oranga

# What's happening?

A new law on health and safety is coming. It aims to help make workplaces safer for everyone. It gives everyone a greater say in health and safety at work. The law takes effect from May 5th 2003.



# What's it all about?

It's about looking after ourselves and our mates at work, so everyone stays safe.

It's also about workers and employers working together so that everyone can do their job safely.

It's important that we all know about health and safety and what we need to do.

If any one of us is seriously injured at work, we may not be able to return to work for a long time. This may be hard on our families financially. We may also face living with a permanent injury.

Everyone should work in a safe place and be protected from danger. No one has to do unsafe work. If you think something at work is unsafe, speak up. Tell your employer, health and safety representative or union rep.

# What do employers need to do?

Employers need to keep the workplace safe. They must:

- identify all risks and dangers at work. Then work out how to get rid of them or manage them
- make sure that everyone knows what equipment to use and how to use it safely
- train people to do the job safely
- provide protective clothing or equipment to keep workers safe
- work with everyone to make sure that good health and safety is in place and maintained
- look into the problem when told that something is unsafe.

Employers must make sure that everyone knows how to keep safe at work.



# What do each of us need to do?

We all need to help make our workplaces safer. Here is how we can help each other:

- wear the right protective clothing and equipment and use equipment safely
- tell the employer or health and safety representative about any worries with health and safety, so that they can be fixed before problems occur
- always be on the look out for any dangers in the way that people work. Think of ways to make work safer
- tell your employer or a health and safety representative about accidents straight away
- help new workers to understand how to stay safe at work
- if people are tired or stressed at work, or affected by alcohol or drugs, the way they work can put others at risk. If you think that the way someone is working is unsafe, you must tell your employer or health and safety representative.

Everyone has the right to get involved with health and safety at work. Reporting dangers is part of the job and will help to make your workplace safer and stop accidents from happening.

# How should employers and workers work together?

Employers and workers should work together to:

- make sure that good health and safety practices are put in place and maintained
- work out ways for workers to be involved in health and safety decisions. This can be done through a health and safety representative or committee. It can also be done in other ways that suit your workplace. If workers have a union, the union should also be involved.

## What about volunteers?

All work activities should be planned with health and safety in mind. The volunteer organisation has to take all possible care to keep volunteers safe in the workplace. For regular volunteer work, the organisation is treated as an employer in managing dangers in the workplace. Volunteers also should work safely and also ensure that they keep their friends and colleagues safe.

# Who can help?

You don't have to work out what to do on your own. You can ask for help from your workplace health and safety representative, manager, supervisor or union.

The Department of Labour has also set up a special phone number that anyone can ring for information about our new health and safety laws. It's called "Workinfo". It has people who speak several Pacific languages. You can call the number any time Monday to Friday, from 8am to 5pm, on **0800 20 90 20**. All calls from anywhere in New Zealand are free.

Workinfo also has a website which has lots of information available. It's **[www.workinfo.govt.nz](http://www.workinfo.govt.nz)**

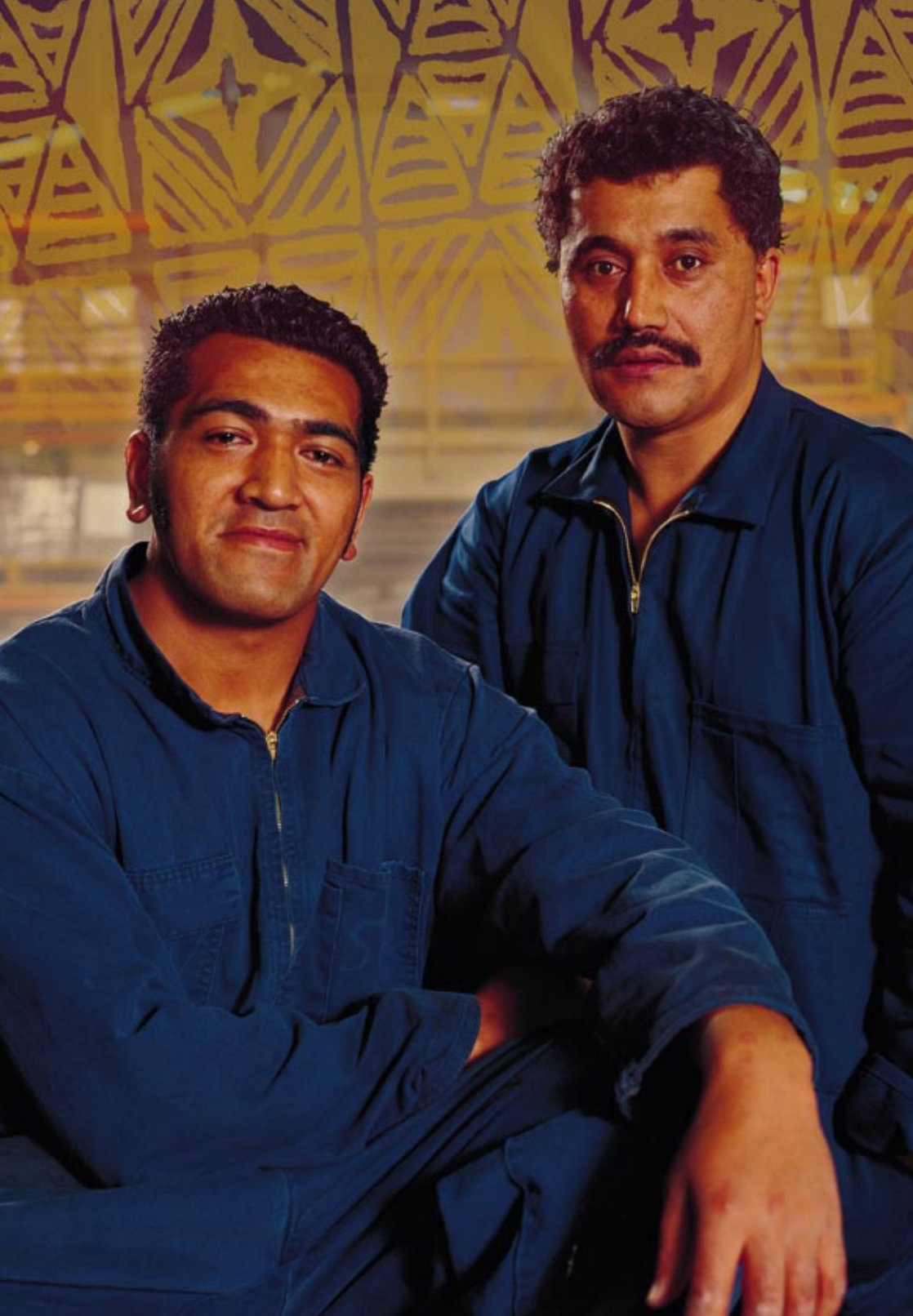
Your health and safety representative is:

Your manager or supervisor is:

You can contact your union or the Council of Trade Unions on **[www.union.org.nz](http://www.union.org.nz)**.

This pamphlet is a guide only and may not be accurate for all situations.

It should not be used instead of legislation or legal or other expert advice.



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