

## Managing the risk of fatigue at work: A component of the certificate of recognition (COR) audit

Fatigue is a change in physiological state described as feeling tired or drowsy. Fatigue can diminish a person's ability to function at the desired level. Being fatigued directly affects a person's ability to carry out even simple tasks by impairing or reducing reaction time, alertness, decision making, information processing, memory, concentration, and the ability to communicate effectively.

Fatigue is normal. Most workers will be fatigued at some point on the job. In the presence of workplace hazards, fatigue can increase or contribute to the potential for errors, harm, and adverse outcomes. Employers are responsible for managing the risk of harm at work when workers may be fatigued.

The WorkSafe resource, [Fatigue risk in the workplace](#), explains fatigue, its effects, and its contributing factors. It also provides information to help employers address fatigue risk in the workplace.

### Fatigue risk management and COR certification

All employers seeking certificate of recognition (COR) certification must be able to prove — by means of an audit — that their occupational health and safety management system (OHSMS) meets the COR program standards.

One element required in an OHSMS is hazard identification and control. Employers need to identify hazardous workplace activities or tasks



where being fatigued could increase the risk of harm. Employers also need to manage and control fatigue risk when indicated by a risk assessment.

During the COR audit, internal and external auditors will verify that fatigue risks are considered in the employer's hazard identification, assessment, and control processes. When reviewing the audit result as part of the quality assurance process, the certifying partner will confirm that the risk of fatigue is included as a component of the COR audit.

## Regulatory requirements

Occupational Health and Safety Regulation, [section 4.19](#) (in part):

- (1) A worker with a physical or mental impairment which may affect the worker's ability to safely perform assigned work must inform his or her supervisor or employer of the impairment, and must not knowingly do work where the impairment may create an undue risk to the worker or anyone else.
- (2) A worker must not be assigned to activities where a reported or observed impairment may create an undue risk to the worker or anyone else.

*Workers Compensation Act*, [section 22](#) (in part):

Every worker must ... ensure that the worker's ability to work without risk to that worker's health or safety, or to the health or safety of any other person, is not impaired by alcohol, drugs or other causes.

## Resources

Visit [worksafebc.com](https://worksafebc.com) for more information and resources on [fatigue impairment](#), the [certificate of recognition](#) program, and [occupational health and safety management systems](#).