

# How Do You Keep Workers Safe at Work When They Telecommute?



OHS laws require you to protect the health and safety of your workers while they do their jobs. But what happens when they do their [jobs from home](#)?

Adding to the confusion is that the [OHS laws themselves](#) don't specifically say whether a home office counts as a workplace. However, in 10 jurisdictions (all but Manitoba, New Brunswick, Ontario and Yukon), the definition of a workplace where the OHS laws apply is broad enough to include a home office or other remote setting beyond an employer's physical control. So, if you operate in any of those 10 jurisdictions, you probably do have to take steps to protect telecommuters.

The next question is what are you [supposed to do to meet that obligation](#). The current consensus is that employers must do an [inspection or assessment to identify the hazards](#), including [ergonomic](#), [fire](#) and [electrical](#), contained in the workspace. What's less clear, however, is whether the employer may actually enter a worker's home. The alternative is to have the worker take photographs or inspect the space virtually. Last but not least, employers are supposed to [monitor workers](#) and ensure that their [first aid](#) and rescue needs are provided for.