

Radiation and Pregnant Workers



For more information on this topic, see **HAZARDS: Take 7 Steps to Protect Workers from Radiation**

KNOW THE LAWS: Radiation and Pregnant Workers Here are the requirements in each jurisdiction for protecting pregnant workers from radiation:

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| | <p><i>Canada OHS Regs.</i> don't include special requirements for protecting pregnant workers from radiation but do include general protections for pregnant workers that apply to radiation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. An employee who's pregnant or nursing may cease to perform her job if she believes that, by reason of the pregnancy or nursing, continuing any of her current job functions may pose a risk to her health or to that of the foetus or child. On being informed of the cessation, the employer, with the consent of the employee, must notify the JHSC or the health and safety representative [Sec. 132(1)].2. The employee must consult with a qualified medical practitioner, as defined in Sec. 166, of her choice as soon as possible to establish whether continuing any of her current job functions poses a risk to her health or to that of the foetus or child [Sec. 132(2)].3. Without prejudice to any other right conferred by this Act, a collective agreement or other agreement, or any terms and conditions of employment, once the medical practitioner has established whether there's a risk as described above, the employee may no longer cease to perform her job under Sec. 132(1) [Sec. 132(3)].4. For the period during which the employee doesn't perform her job under Sec. 132(1), the employer may, in consultation with the employee, reassign her to another job that wouldn't pose a risk to her health or to that of the foetus or child [Sec. 132(4)]. <p><i>Radiation Protection Regs.:</i> 1. A pregnant woman who is or becomes a radiation worker must forthwith inform her employer in writing of her pregnancy [Sec. 5(1)].</p> |
| FED | <p>2. After being informed of a radiation worker's pregnancy, the employer must reassess the worker's employment duties or training activities, as the case may be, and modify the duties or activities, where reasonable to do so, to ensure that the worker's effective dose of ionizing radiation doesn't exceed the applicable maximum effective dose limits specified in Table 1 of Schedule 1 [Sec. 5(2)].</p> <p><i>OHS Regs.:</i> 1. If a worker declares her pregnancy to the employer, her effective dose of ionizing radiation, for the remainder of the pregnancy, from external and internal sources, must be limited by the employer to the lesser of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">a. 4 mSv; orb. the dose limit specified for pregnant workers under the <i>Nuclear Safety and Control Act</i> (Canada) [Sec. 7.19(2)]. |
| AB | <p>2. The employer must ensure that every worker who exceeds, or may exceed, the action level, ionizing radiation is fully informed of any potential reproductive hazards associated with exposure to ionizing radiation [Sec. 7.21(1)].</p> <p>3. When requested by a pregnant worker or by a worker intending to conceive a child, the employer must make counselling available with respect to the reproductive hazards associated with exposure to ionizing radiation [Sec. 7.21(2)].</p> |
| BC | <p><i>Workplace Safety & Health Regs.</i> don't include special requirements for protecting pregnant workers from radiation but do include general protections for pregnant workers that apply to radiation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. When a worker informs her employer that she's pregnant or nursing, the employer must: <ol style="list-style-type: none">a. inform the worker of any known or foreseeable risk that conditions at the workplace pose or may pose to the safety or health of the worker or to her unborn or nursing child; andb. so far as is reasonably practicable: <ol style="list-style-type: none">i. take steps to minimize the exposure of the worker to the condition that creates the risk; orii. if alternate work is available that involves no risk or less risk and the worker's reasonably capable of performing that work, assign the worker temporarily to that alternative work without loss of pay or benefits [Sec. 2.5]. |
| MB | <p><i>OHS Regs.</i> don't include special requirements for protecting pregnant workers from radiation.</p> <p><i>Radiation Health and Safety Regs.:</i> 1. A radiation worker, a medical radiation technologist in training or a student who knows or suspects that she's pregnant must report those facts or suspicion to her employer or the person in charge of her training [Sec. 15(1)].</p> |
| NB | <p>2. Where the pregnant person desires to continue in employment or training, the employer or person in charge of her employment or training may, together with the pregnant person, reassess and revise as indicated the employment duties or training activities to ensure the maximum permissible dose for a pregnant person isn't exceeded [Sec. 15(2)].</p> |
| NL | <p>3. A radiation worker, or a medical radiation technologist in training or student who's pregnant or who suspects she's pregnant shall not while occupied as a radiation worker or a medical radiation technologist in training or a student receive a dose to the abdomen in excess of 500 millirem during the remaining period of pregnancy [Sec. 13(5)].</p> <p><i>OHS Regs.</i> (in effect as of June 1, 2015): 1. A pregnant occupational worker must, without delay, inform the employer of the pregnancy [Sec. 345(1)].</p> |
| NT | <p>2. An employer for whom an occupational worker or trains must advise the worker of the above obligation [Sec. 345(2)].</p> <p>3. On being informed by a pregnant occupational worker of a pregnancy, the employer must, in order to comply with Sec. 340(2), reassess and, if necessary, revise the work of the worker so as not to expose the worker to ionizing radiation [Sec. 345(3)].</p> |
| NS | <p><i>OHS General Reg.</i> doesn't include special requirements for protecting pregnant workers from radiation.</p> |
| NU | <p><i>General Safety Reg.</i> doesn't include special requirements for protecting pregnant workers from radiation.</p> <p>*Note: The above reflects the current law at the time of publication. The new OHS regulations that are in effect in NWT on June 1, 2015 are expected to take effect later in 2015 in NU.</p> |
| ON | <p><i>X-Ray Safety Reg.:</i> 1. An employer who employs a person as an X-ray worker must, at the time that employment begins, if the worker is female, inform her of the dose equivalent limit mentioned in Sec. 10(2) applicable to a pregnant X-ray worker [Sec. 9(1)(c)].</p> <p>2. An employer must take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances to ensure that the mean dose equivalent received by the abdomen of a pregnant X-ray worker doesn't exceed 5 millisieverts during the pregnancy [Sec. 10(2)].</p> |
| PE | <p><i>OHS Regs.</i> don't include special requirements for protecting pregnant workers from radiation.</p> <p><i>An Act respecting occupational health and safety</i> doesn't include special requirements for protecting pregnant workers from radiation but do include general protections for pregnant workers that apply to radiation:</p> |
| QC | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. A pregnant worker who furnishes to her employer a certificate attesting that her working conditions may be physically dangerous to her unborn child, or to herself by reason of her pregnancy, may request to be re-assigned to other duties involving no such danger that she's reasonably capable of performing. Certificate. <p>The form and tenor of the certificate are determined by regulation and Sec. 33 applies to its issuance [Sec. 40].</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">2. If a requested re-assignment isn't made immediately, the pregnant worker may stop working until she's re-assigned or until the date of delivery [Sec. 41]. |
| SK | <p><i>Radiation Health and Safety Regs., 2005:</i> 1. An occupational worker who becomes aware that she's pregnant must immediately inform the owner or operator of the ionizing radiation equipment or ionizing radiation installation that she's pregnant [Sec. 8(1)].</p> <p>2. An owner or operator who employs occupational workers or who's in charge of training occupational workers must advise those occupational workers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">a. of their above obligation; andb. that, if an occupational worker suspects she's pregnant, she should inform the owner or operator [Sec. 8(2)]. <p>3. On being informed by an occupational worker that she's pregnant or suspects she's pregnant, the owner or operator of the ionizing radiation equipment or ionizing radiation installation must, in order to comply with Sec. 3(1), reassess and, if necessary, revise the employment duties or educational activities of the worker [Sec. 8(3)].</p> |

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Radiation Protection Regs.:1. An x-ray worker, radiation technician in training or student who knows or suspects that she's pregnant shall report such fact or suspicion to her employer or the person in charge of her training. [Sec. 12(1)].
2. If a pregnant person wants to continue in employment or training, the employer together with the pregnant person, must reassess and revise as indicated the employment duties or educational activities, as the case may be, so that the maximum permissible dose of .1 rad per month during the remaining period of pregnancy isn't exceeded [Sec. 12(2)].