QUICK START IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE
CARER-FRIENDLY WORKPLACE STANDARD

Carer-employees, also known as worker-carers, are labour force participants that simultaneously take on an unpaid caring role for someone in need. Without effective workplace supports, employees who must balance work and care responsibilities are more likely to experience reduced performance and increased absenteeism, or decide to retire early or quit their jobs. These consequences not only have a substantial impact on employees, but also on their employers and Canada's economic stability. The loss of skilled labour and increased turnover due to qualified and experienced workers leaving their employment to care for others translates into over $1.3 billion in lost productivity per year.[1]

Implementing effective carer-inclusive and accommodating workplace practices will ensure your carer-employees are both supported and productive. Whether you want to gain a competitive advantage or ensure compliance with local legal requirements, creating a carer-friendly workplace is a sound investment.

This guide will help your organization implement a comprehensive carer-inclusive and accommodating program. It will help you define organizational roles, develop policies and practices, engage senior leaders and employees, communicate and more. You should use this guide alongside the CSA Group Standard for carer-inclusive and accommodating organizations, regardless of employer size or industry sector. Any clauses referenced throughout this document correspond to the Canadian Standards Association documents B701-17: Carer-inclusive and accommodating organizations (the Standard) and B701HB-18: Helping carer-employees in your organization.

Three Steps to Success

- BUILD THE FOUNDATION
- PUT INTO PRACTICE
- MONITOR PROGRESS AND IMPACT

WHY EMPLOYERS SHOULD SUPPORT CARER-EMPLOYEES

35% of **Canadian workforce participants** are carer-employees[2]

61% of carers are in their peak earning years (ages 45–64), with valuable skills and experience[3]

19% of carer-employees experience physical and emotional health challenges[2]

70% of employer disability **claim costs** are related to mental health concerns[4]

15% reduce their work hours[2]

10% turn down job opportunities[2]

26% take a leave of absence from their job[2]

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1. Conference Board of Canada, 2012, Making the Business Case for Investments in Workplace Health and Wellness.
2. Statistics Canada, 2013, Family Caregiving: What are the Consequences.
3. Statistics Canada, 2020, Caregivers in Canada 2018.
4. Mental Health Commission of Canada & Morneau Shepell, 2017, Understanding Mental Health, Mental Illness and their Impacts in the Workplace.
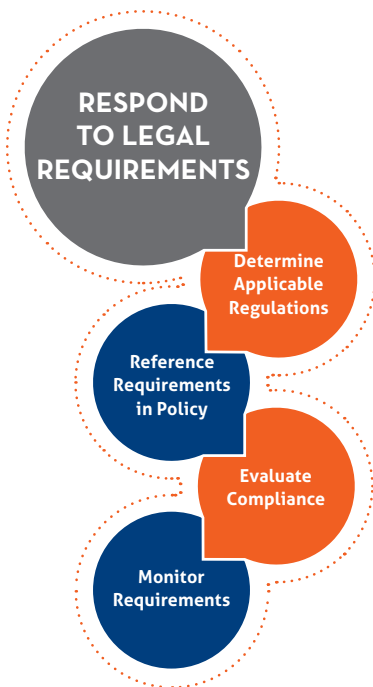
1 Commit leaders and resources

- Allocate resources to the program and assign someone with full authority to manage the implementation and maintenance of the Standard
- Oversee the transition to a carer-friendly workplace and track the company's progress in becoming more inclusive of carers
- Highlight success stories and demonstrate commitment through a visible, systematic plan to support employees confronting caregiving challenges

2 Engage workers

- Respect and recognize workers for their hard work and successes
- Pay employees for carer-employees training and engagement
- Openly communicate and engage with workers in all stages of implementation, to determine what type of accommodations they need and will use

3 Develop carer-friendly policies

- Review human rights requirements and commit to necessary accommodations
- Draft a policy, keeping organizational goals and objectives in mind
- Regularly conduct a care census and review the program's relevancy
- Continually improve based on feedback and data analysis

DEVELOPING THE POLICY

- Set Goals & Objectives
- Review Requirements
- Commit to Accommodations
- Build in Checks
- Continually Improve

4 Review current legal requirements

- Explore relevant leave legislation, such as the Compassionate Care Benefit and emergency leave, and reference any laws or legal requirements in the drafted policy
- Regularly review compliance with requirements and implement necessary changes

RESPOND TO LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

- Determine Applicable Regulations
- Reference Requirements in Policy
- Evaluate Compliance
- Monitor Requirements

5 Meet social and ethical responsibilities

- Recognize your organization's responsibility for the health and well-being of your workers and communicate this commitment
- Confidentially or anonymously survey your workers about their family demands outside of work
- Publicly commit to the best practices in providing accommodations in the workplace

1 Examine policies and programs

- Identify existing organization's family-friendly programs, EAPs for ways to support carers and current relevant HR policies

2 Identify opportunities

- Ensure that your EAP offers resources for carer-employees
- Define carer-employees' accommodations in collective agreements
- Consult stakeholders to identify any gaps and barriers in existing programs and policies

3 Define organizational goals

- Develop specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (SMART) objectives that address identified gaps and barriers
- Consider mental and physical health, quality of life, satisfaction, retention and performance when working to decrease carer-employees' burden and absenteeism

4 Maintain confidentiality

- Protect worker confidentiality and establish a procedure for disclosing information to necessary parties
- Keep records secure and password-protected

5 Build awareness

- Define competency and specify training requirements
- Ensure that management and workers are aware of their role and resources
- Evaluate training methods at regular intervals and modify when necessary

6 Promote services

- Designate a workplace member for internal communication
- Share your progress and solicit ideas and inputs from workers and stakeholders

7 Cultivate a carer-inclusive culture

- Foster a carer-friendly environment, discussing challenges and accommodations
- Establish ways for co-workers to support carer-employees

8 Actively support carer-employees

- Regularly meet to implement evidence-based practices
- Develop an explicit care strategy that meets your organization's care demographics

9 Plan for the unexpected

- Develop an emergency response plan — start by making a list of the relevant "leaves of absence"
- Allocate resources to these programs and communicate their availability to workers

RESOURCES FOR WORKER-CARERS

Financial Assistance & Relief	Consolation Services	Communication & Networking Opportunities	Access to Available Services	Awareness & Training
Flexible Work Schedules	Leave For Caregiving Responsibilities	Accessible Parking	Access to Personal Communications Devices	Non-contiguous Paid Leave

1 Measure ongoing effectiveness

- Commit to developing a system to continually measure, analyze, and improve with feedback from workers and stakeholders
- Evaluate your carer-employees policy with this guideline whenever possible

2 Conduct regular internal assessments

- Set up a representative audit team and develop a checklist with all stakeholders
- Conduct audits, communicate results and develop action plans to correct any nonconformities

3 Complete management reviews and plan for continuous improvement

- Provide updates on audit results, compliance with legal requirements, organizational performance and improvement opportunities
- Record and retain the reviews, and make them available upon request

A HUMAN RESOURCE STRATEGY THAT ADDRESSES THE UNIQUE RISK-PROFILE OF YOUR EMPLOYEES

Follow these 3 easy steps to remain an employer of choice

The Carer-Inclusive and Accommodating Organizations Workplace Standard (CSA B701-17) and the Helping Worker-Carers in your Organization Handbook (CSA B701HB-18) are available to support your organization in becoming more carer-inclusive. By using this guide, alongside CSA B701-17 and B701HB-18, you will create practical and effective workplace accommodations that will better your workers' morale while reducing costs and improving productivity.

DOWNLOAD STANDARD

DOWNLOAD HANDBOOK

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Gender Health and Caregiver Friendly Workplaces