



**The Minnesota Literacy Council created this curriculum with funding from the MN Department of Education. We invite you to adapt it for your own classrooms.**

# **MASTER**

## **On The Job: Week 3 of 3**

### **Unit Overview:**

This three-week unit will focus on using English at work.

**Week one of this unit has a reading and writing focus.** Students will use and write about various written materials commonly found in the workplace (paychecks, timesheets, signs). Students will also write notes to a supervisor.

**Week two of this unit has a speaking and listening focus.** Students will say and write phrases and dialogues for common interactions in the workplace (asking questions, reporting problems, reporting mistakes). Students will leave (simulated) voicemail messages for a supervisor.

**Week three of this unit has a focus on workers' rights.** Students will read and listen to information about workers' rights topics (wages, overtime, workers' comp, safety and health, unions). Students will watch a video about workers' compensation.

Throughout the three weeks of this unit, students will use regular and irregular past tense verbs, both in writing and speaking.

### **Unit Objectives:**

- Students will discuss and use appropriate vocabulary and phrasing to use when speaking with a supervisor or manager in English.
- Students will read, comprehend and fill out written materials on the job, including paychecks, timesheets and signs.

- Students will write for a work context, especially notes to supervisors.
  - Students will be able to listen and ask questions about workers' rights.
  - Students will use past tense in the context of writing about and talking about what happened on the job.
- 

## **MATERIALS**

### **BOOKS**

Robinson, C and Rowekamp, J. Speaking Up at Work. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985. ISBN: 0-19-434196-8

Sabbagh, S and Jenkins, R. Stand Out 3 USA: Heinle, 2002 ISBN: 08388422209

Newman, C. Lifeprints 3 New York: New Readers Press, 2002. ISBN:1-56420-314-x

### **VIDEO SERIES**

Division of Adult Career Education (DACE) of the Los Angeles Unified School District. English for All. Los Angeles, 2003.

### On the Job: Monday, Week 3 of 3

Workers' Rights (Day 1 of 4)

Lesson Objectives:	Materials
Students will discuss <b>workers' rights</b> . Students will listen to information about <b>workers' comp.</b> and summarize the information. Students will fill out an <b>accident report</b> .	<u>Workers' rights:</u> Worker's Rights Packet - pgs 1-2  <u>Workers' comp:</u> <b>English for All:</b> episode 3 "Support Systems for Injured Workers", Introduction and Comprehension sections  <u>Accident report:</u> Ask your coordinator for handout

#### Activity Ideas:

##### Workers' rights:

1. Facilitate a student discussion about what "workers' rights" are. Here are some potential questions: What is a "right"? What rights do you have in this country? What rights do you have in your job? How are your rights different in other countries?
2. Read "Workers' Rights" handout. Discuss. Be sure to cover the following key vocab terms: wage(s), minimum wage, overtime, discrimination, harassment, union, as well as any others that come up.
3. Note that this handout is meant to be double-sided with the "contact info" section on the reverse side. You do not need to spend class time reading this information - just let students know it is there for their use.
4. Let Ss know they will get more information about many of these topics in the upcoming class sessions this week.

##### Workers' comp:

Watch and discuss the **English for All** video, episode 3 "Support Systems for Injured Workers" section entitled "Comprehension". (Ask your coordinator to help you set up computer equipment to be able to watch the video.)

To get an idea of what this episode is about, you can read the script of the video here: [http://www.myefa.org/pdfs/episode3\\_eng.pdf](http://www.myefa.org/pdfs/episode3_eng.pdf). Please note that this is NOT meant to be printed off and handed out to students, it is only to help you be prepared for class.

1. Ask Ss if they know what "worker's compensation" is. If some do, let them explain for others. If no one does, ask them to pay attention to the next activity so they can learn.
2. Watch the **English for All** video, episode 3, section entitled "Introduction". "comprehension".
3. Answer any student questions about what they saw/heard.
4. Continue watching the video. Watch the section entitled "Comprehension".
5. Have Ss re-tell the story with a partner, then together as a whole class summarize what happened.
4. If time/interest, play the Comprehension section again, stopping for student questions.

##### Accident reports:

1. Look at "Accident report" handout (ask your coordinator for a copy). Read through the story. Have Ss fill out the accident report.
2. Display a copy of the accident report form on OHP. Working together as a class, fill out the report for Alejandro's injury in the video.
3. If time, look at the verbs in the reading from the handout and have students identify regular past tense verbs (take -ed) and irregular past tense verbs (don't take -ed, e.g. write-wrote, take-took, etc.)
4. Watch a short section of the video again. Ask Ss to listen for past tense verbs and write down the ones they hear in two lists - regular and irregular. Check over your lists together.

# Workers' rights

If you have a job in the U.S.,

1. You have the right to a safe and healthy workplace. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is the government department that is responsible for monitoring safety and health on the job.
2. You have the right to refuse to work if you believe that the job or the conditions are dangerous. You can call OSHA at 1-800-321-6748 to report an immediate danger.
3. You have the right to report a safety problem or a dangerous situation at work. It is illegal for your employer to fire you for reporting a workplace problem.
4. You have the right to be paid for the hours you work. The federal minimum wage is \$6.55 per hour. You cannot be paid less than this. This amount will increase to \$7.25 in July, 2009.
5. You have the right to be paid more for overtime hours you work. If you work more than 40 hours in a week, you should be paid at least time-and-a-half for the hours over 40.
6. You have the right to ask for payment for medical care (workers' compensation) if you get injured or sick because of your job. You may also receive payment for lost wages if you miss work because of your injury.
7. You have the right to work without discrimination or harassment. Discrimination or harassment is unfair or unequal treatment because of your race, color, sex, national origin, religion or disability. Contact the US Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC) at 1-800-669-4000 to report discrimination or harassment.
8. You have the right to take up to 12 weeks off of work (without pay) for serious medical problems. You can also take time off if someone in your family has a serious medical problem and you need to take care of them, or when you have a new baby. You only have this right if you work for a government agency or an employer that has 50 or more employees.
9. You have the right to join a union, or form a new union.

## Who has these rights?

These rights are for everyone who has a job in the United States. This includes U.S. citizens and immigrants. People who are working illegally STILL HAVE these rights.

## **Contact information**

If you have a question or a concern about your rights as a worker, here are some places you can contact. These are all organizations or government agencies that will provide service free of charge. You can also choose to hire a lawyer, but you will have to pay him/her.

Note: all government agencies are required to provide a translator for you if you need one.

For all concerns/questions about workers' rights, contact:

Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry  
1-800-342-5354  
<http://www.doli.state.mn.us/>

If you have a concern/question about safety or health conditions on the job, contact:

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)  
1-800-321-6748  
<http://www.osha.gov/>

If you have a concern/question about discrimination or harassment, contact:

US Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC)  
1-800-669-4000  
<http://www.eeoc.gov/>

or

Minnesota Department of Human Rights  
1-800-657-3704  
<http://www.humanrights.state.mn.us/>

If you have a concern/question about worker's compensation, contact:

Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry - Workers' Compensation Division  
651-284-5005  
<http://www.doli.state.mn.us/workcomp.html>

If you want to talk to a lawyer but don't have money to pay for one, contact:

Law Help MN  
[www.lawhelpMN.org](http://www.lawhelpMN.org)

## On the Job: Tuesday, Week 3 of 3

Workers' Rights (Day 2 of 4)

Lesson Objectives:	Materials
Students will continue discussing the topic of <b>workers' rights</b> . Students will read a non-fiction reading about <b>labor unions and answer true/false comprehension questions about the reading</b> Students will watch a video about <b>workers' comp.</b> and <b>retell</b> the story.	<u>Workers' rights:</u> Workers' rights packet, pgs 1-2  <u>Unions:</u> <b>Speaking Up at Work:</b> 146-148  <u>Workers' comp:</u> <b>English for All:</b> episode 3 "Support Systems for Injured Workers", Comprehension and Life Skills sections

Activity Ideas:
<u>Workers' rights:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Ask Ss to remember what they learned yesterday about workers' rights.</li><li>2. Have Ss take out the handout they received yesterday about workers' rights. Give out copies to any Ss not in class yesterday.</li><li>3. Read it through briefly.</li><li>4. Review/teach key vocab from yesterday: wage(s), minimum wage, overtime, harassment, union, as well as any others that come up.</li></ol> <u>Labor unions:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Pre-reading - ask students what they know about labor unions or who a worker can speak to if they have a problem with their employer..</li><li>2. Give out copies of Speaking Up at Work, pgs 146-147. Have students read the reading, either alone, taking turns aloud or in pairs. If students have questions you may want to see if a fellow student can answer it before answering it yourself.</li><li>3. Have students write true on a sheet of paper and false on a sheet of paper. Read each of the sentences in the first activity on page 148. After each sentence ask the students to hold up the paper to show whether they think the sentence is true or false. Call on a student or two to explain why the sentence is true or false.</li></ol> <u>Workers' comp:</u> <p>Watch and discuss the <b>English for All</b> video, episode 3 "Support Systems for Injured Workers". sections entitled "Comprehension" and "Life Skills". (Ask your coordinator to help you set up computer equipment to be able to watch the video.)</p> <p>To get an idea of what this episode is about, you can read the script of the video here: <a href="http://www.myefa.org/pdfs/episode3_eng.pdf">http://www.myefa.org/pdfs/episode3_eng.pdf</a>. Please note that this is NOT meant to be printed off and handed out to students, it is only to help you be prepared for class.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Ask Ss what they remember from the video they saw last night.</li><li>2. Watch the "Comprehension" section (they watched this last night). Briefly discuss the basics of what happened. Ask Ss to predict what they think will happen next.</li><li>3. Watch the "Life Skills" section of the video.</li><li>4. Answer any student questions about what they saw/heard. Have Ss re-tell the story with a partner, then together as a whole class summarize what happened.</li></ol>

5. If time/interest, play the "Life Skills" section again, stopping for student questions.

# Workers' rights

If you have a job in the U.S.,

1. You have the right to a safe and healthy workplace. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is the government department that is responsible for monitoring safety and health on the job.

2. You have the right to refuse to work if you believe that the job or the conditions are dangerous. You can call OSHA at 1-800-321-6748 to report an immediate danger.

3. You have the right to report a safety problem or a dangerous situation at work. It is illegal for your employer to fire you for reporting a workplace problem.

4. You have the right to be paid for the hours you work. The federal minimum wage is \$6.55 per hour. You cannot be paid less than this. This amount will increase to \$7.25 in July, 2009.

5. You have the right to be paid more for overtime hours you work. If you work more than 40 hours in a week, you should be paid at least time-and-a-half for the hours over 40.

6. You have the right to ask for payment for medical care (workers' compensation) if you get injured or sick because of your job. You may also receive payment for lost wages if you miss work because of your injury.

7. You have the right to work without discrimination or harassment. Discrimination or harassment is unfair or unequal treatment because of your race, color, sex, national origin, religion or disability. Contact the US Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC) at 1-800-669-4000 to report discrimination or harassment.

8. You have the right to take up to 12 weeks off of work (without pay) for serious medical problems. You can also take time off if someone in your family has a serious medical problem and you need to take care of them, or when you have a new baby. You only have this right if you work for a government agency or an employer that has 50 or more employees.

9. You have the right to join a union, or form a new union.

## Who has these rights?

These rights are for everyone who has a job in the United States.

This includes U.S. citizens and immigrants. People who are working illegally STILL HAVE these rights.

## Contact information

If you have a question or a concern about your rights as a worker, here are some places you can contact. These are all organizations or government agencies that will provide service free of charge. You can also choose to hire a lawyer, but you will have to pay him/her.

Note: all government agencies are required to provide a translator for you if you need one.

For all concerns/questions about workers' rights, contact:

Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry  
1-800-342-5354  
<http://www.doli.state.mn.us/>

If you have a concern/question about safety or health conditions on the job, contact:

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)  
1-800-321-6748  
<http://www.osha.gov/>

If you have a concern/question about discrimination or harassment, contact:

US Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC)  
1-800-669-4000  
<http://www.eeoc.gov/>

or

Minnesota Department of Human Rights  
1-800-657-3704  
<http://www.humanrights.state.mn.us/>

If you have a concern/question about worker's compensation, contact:

Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry - Workers' Compensation Division  
651-284-5005  
<http://www.doli.state.mn.us/workcomp.html>

If you want to talk to a lawyer but don't have money to pay for one, contact:

Law Help MN  
[www.lawhelpMN.org](http://www.lawhelpMN.org)

### On the Job: Wednesday, Week 3 of 3

Workers' Rights (Day 3 of 4)

Lesson Objectives:	Materials
Students will read about <b>wage and overtime rules</b> and answer questions about the reading. Students will retell events from a video about <b>workers' comp</b> . Students will identify regular and irregular <b>past tense</b> verbs.	<u>Wage/overtime:</u> Workers' rights packet, pgs 3-4  <u>Workers' comp:</u> <b>English for All:</b> episode 3 "Support Systems for Injured Workers", Comprehension, Life Skills and Grammar sections

#### Activity Ideas:

##### Minimum wage and overtime:

1. Ask Ss to tell you what they have learned this week about workers' rights.
2. Let them know tonight they will learn more about minimum wage and overtime. Ask students if they are familiar with these terms and what they know about them.
3. Give out the handout entitled "Workers' rights: Wages and overtime".
4. Briefly discuss the vocabulary, read through the reading (once silently, once together), review the vocabulary, discuss the questions.
5. Note that this handout is meant to be double-sided with the "contact info" section on the reverse side. You do not need to spend class time reading this information - just let students know it is there for their use.

##### Workers' comp:

Watch and discuss the **English for All** video, episode 3 "Support Systems for Injured Workers". sections entitled "Comprehension", "Life Skills" and "Grammar". (Ask your coordinator to help you set up computer equipment to be able to watch the video.)

To get an idea of what this episode is about, you can read the script of the video here: [http://www.myefa.org/pdfs/episode3\\_eng.pdf](http://www.myefa.org/pdfs/episode3_eng.pdf). Please note that this is NOT meant to be printed off and handed out to students, it is only to help you be prepared for class.

1. Ask Ss what they remember from the video they have been watching this week.
2. Watch the "Comprehension" section (they watched on Monday and Tuesday). Briefly discuss the basics of what happened.
3. Give out the handout on Worker's Comp. Work through it together - try to be sure Ss are understanding as much as possible about the topic of worker's comp, not just doing the exercise on the paper. This may also be an appropriate time to lead a brief class discussion on whether they know anyone who has received worker's comp, and, if appropriate, whether or not someone who is working in the U.S. illegally has a right to worker's comp (the answer is YES!)
4. After spending some time reviewing worker's comp, continue watching the video. Now watch the "Life Skills" section of the video. (They watched this yesterday). Review what happened.

##### Past Tense

1. Continue watching the video; now watch the "Grammar" section.
2. After watching it, be sure all students remember/understand the difference between

regular verbs (take -ed) and irregular verbs (don't take -ed, e.g. write-wrote, take-took, etc.)

3. Watch a short section of the video again. Ask Ss to listen for past tense verbs and write down the ones they hear in two lists - regular and irregular. Check over your lists together.

# Workers' Rights: Wages and overtime

**Before you read.** Look at these words. Do you understand all of them?

wages  
salary  
minimum wage  
overtime  
time-and-a-half  
exempt  
non-exempt

*Read the paragraphs.*

All workers in the U.S. have rights. One important right is, of course, the right to be paid for your work. In general, there are two ways that workers get paid for their work, wages or salary. A wage is usually a certain amount of money per hour. A salary is usually a certain amount of money per year. Workers who are paid a wage have to be paid at least minimum wage. Right now the federal minimum wage is \$6.55 per hour.

Most workers also have the right to be paid overtime. A work week is defined as forty hours. If you work more than 40 hours in one week, you have a right to be paid at least time-and-a-half for any hours you work over forty. This extra money is called overtime. An employer is not required to pay workers overtime just because they work on weekends.

Did you notice that the paragraph above says "most workers"? Not all workers have to be paid overtime. Some workers are EXEMPT, which means their employers do not have to pay them overtime. Most workers are NON-EXEMPT, which means their employers have to pay them overtime. The word "exempt" means that you don't have to do something or don't have the same requirements as others.

Who is an exempt employee? Mostly, exempt employees are professionals such as teachers, doctors or accountants. These people are usually paid a salary, not a wage. Some other exempt employees include certain sales people who earn money in commission, some drivers and mechanics and seasonal employees. If you are not being paid overtime, ask your employer if you are exempt, and why.

**After you read.** Look back at the list of words at the top. Do you understand all of those words?

*Questions to think about and talk about:*

1. What is the difference between a wage and a salary? What do you think is a typical wage for a construction worker in Minnesota? What do you think is a typical salary for a new teacher in Minnesota?
2. Karen works as a painter. She gets paid \$10.00 per hour. She worked 45 hours last week. She gets paid time-and-a-half for her overtime hours. How much should she get paid for last week?
3. Jesse works as a grocery store clerk. He gets paid \$7.50 per hour. Last week he worked 28 hours, including 7 hours on Saturday. Should he get paid overtime?
4. What does it mean if your boss tells you that you are an exempt employee?
5. Do workers who earn a salary get paid overtime?
6. Do you prefer to earn a wage or a salary? Why?

## Contact information

If you have a question or a concern about your rights as a worker, here are some places you can contact. These are all organizations or government agencies that will provide service free of charge. You can also choose to hire a lawyer, but you will have to pay him/her.

Note: all government agencies are required to provide a translator for you if you need one.

For all concerns/questions about workers' rights, contact:

Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry  
1-800-342-5354  
<http://www.doli.state.mn.us/>

If you have a concern/question about safety or health conditions on the job, contact:

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)  
1-800-321-6748  
<http://www.osha.gov/>

If you have a concern/question about discrimination or harassment, contact:

US Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC)  
1-800-669-4000  
<http://www.eeoc.gov/>

or

Minnesota Department of Human Rights  
1-800-657-3704  
<http://www.humanrights.state.mn.us/>

If you have a concern/question about worker's compensation, contact:

Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry - Workers' Compensation Division  
651-284-5005  
<http://www.doli.state.mn.us/workcomp.html>

If you want to talk to a lawyer but don't have money to pay for one, contact:

Law Help MN  
[www.lawhelpMN.org](http://www.lawhelpMN.org)

## On the Job: Thursday, Week 3 of 3

Workers' Rights (Day 4 of 4)

Lesson Objectives:	Materials
Students will list and explain what they know about <b>workers' rights</b> . Students will <b>health and safety rules (and OSHA)</b> . Students will continue learning about <b>worker's comp</b> .	<u>Workers' rights:</u> Workers' rights packet, pgs 1-2  <u>Health &amp; safety rules:</u> Workers' rights packet, pgs 5-6  <u>Workers' comp:</u> <b>English for All:</b> episode 3 "Support Systems for Injured Workers", Comprehension, Life Skills and Special Skills sections

### Activity Ideas:

#### Workers' rights:

1. In groups/pairs, have Ss make a list of the workers' rights they've learned about this week, without looking at their handouts or notes. Then check the list together as a group.
2. Review one more time the handout about workers' rights (used all week). Pretend that you do not understand some of the information and ask Ss to explain it to you.

#### Health and Safety rules:

1. Let Ss know that tonight they will receive more information about health and safety rules.
2. Give out the handout entitled "Workers' rights: Safety and health".
3. Briefly discuss the vocabulary, read through the reading (once silently, once together), review the vocabulary, discuss the questions.
4. Note that this handout is meant to be double-sided with the "contact info" section on the reverse side. You do not need to spend class time reading this information - just let students know it is there for their use.

#### Workers' comp:

Watch and discuss the **English for All** video, episode 3 "Support Systems for Injured Workers". sections entitled "Comprehension", "Life Skills" and "Special Skills". (Ask your coordinator to help you set up computer equipment to be able to watch the video.)

To get an idea of what this episode is about, you can read the script of the video here: [http://www.myefa.org/pdfs/episode3\\_eng.pdf](http://www.myefa.org/pdfs/episode3_eng.pdf). Please note that this is NOT meant to be printed off and handed out to students, it is only to help you be prepared for class.

1. Ask Ss what they remember from the video they have been watching this week.
2. Watch the "Comprehension" section (they watched on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday). Briefly discuss the basics of what happened.
4. Continue watching the video. Now watch the "Life Skills" section of the video. (They watched this on Tuesday and Wednesday). Review what happened.
5. Now watch the "Special Skills" section (they have not watched this yet.)
6. Answer any student questions about what they saw/heard. Have Ss re-tell the story with a partner, then together as a whole class summarize what happened.
7. If time/interest, play the "Special Skills" section again, stopping for student questions.

# Workers' rights

If you have a job in the U.S.,

1. You have the right to a safe and healthy workplace. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is the government department that is responsible for monitoring safety and health on the job.
2. You have the right to refuse to work if you believe that the job or the conditions are dangerous. You can call OSHA at 1-800-321-6748 to report an immediate danger.
3. You have the right to report a safety problem or a dangerous situation at work. It is illegal for your employer to fire you for reporting a workplace problem.
4. You have the right to be paid for the hours you work. The federal minimum wage is \$6.55 per hour. You cannot be paid less than this. This amount will increase to \$7.25 in July, 2009.
5. You have the right to be paid more for overtime hours you work. If you work more than 40 hours in a week, you should be paid at least time-and-a-half for the hours over 40.
6. You have the right to ask for payment for medical care (workers' compensation) if you get injured or sick because of your job. You may also receive payment for lost wages if you miss work because of your injury.
7. You have the right to work without discrimination or harassment. Discrimination or harassment is unfair or unequal treatment because of your race, color, sex, national origin, religion or disability. Contact the US Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC) at 1-800-669-4000 to report discrimination or harassment.
8. You have the right to take up to 12 weeks off of work (without pay) for serious medical problems. You can also take time off if someone in your family has a serious medical problem and you need to take care of them, or when you have a new baby. You only have this right if you work for a government agency or an employer that has 50 or more employees.
9. You have the right to join a union, or form a new union.

## Who has these rights?

These rights are for everyone who has a job in the United States. This includes U.S. citizens and immigrants. People who are working illegally STILL HAVE these rights.

## Contact information

If you have a question or a concern about your rights as a worker, here are some places you can contact. These are all organizations or government agencies that will provide service free of charge. You can also choose to hire a lawyer, but you will have to pay him/her.

Note: all government agencies are required to provide a translator for you if you need one.

For all concerns/questions about workers' rights, contact:

Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry  
1-800-342-5354  
<http://www.doli.state.mn.us/>

If you have a concern/question about safety or health conditions on the job, contact:

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)  
1-800-321-6748  
<http://www.osha.gov/>

If you have a concern/question about discrimination or harassment, contact:

US Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC)  
1-800-669-4000  
<http://www.eeoc.gov/>

or

Minnesota Department of Human Rights  
1-800-657-3704  
<http://www.humanrights.state.mn.us/>

If you have a concern/question about worker's compensation, contact:

Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry - Workers' Compensation Division  
651-284-5005  
<http://www.doli.state.mn.us/workcomp.html>

If you want to talk to a lawyer but don't have money to pay for one, contact:

Law Help MN  
[www.lawhelpMN.org](http://www.lawhelpMN.org)

# Workers' Rights: Safety and health

**Before you read.** Look at these words. Do you understand all of them?

safety  
health  
hazard  
OSHA  
pay a fine  
fire an employee

*Read the paragraphs.*

All workers in the U.S. have the right to work at a place that is safe and healthy. Employers have the responsibility to make sure the worksite is free of safety and health hazards, or dangerous situations. Here are some examples of how employers keep their workers safe and healthy:

- \* Construction workers wear hard hats to protect their heads from falling objects.
- \* Workers who work with dangerous chemicals wear gloves, masks and protective clothing.
- \* Window washers get training on how to correctly use their ladders and other equipment.

The government department that is in charge of safety and health is called the Occupational Health and Safety Administration. Most people call it OSHA. OSHA inspectors sometimes come to jobsites to make sure there are no health or safety hazards. If there are hazards, employers have to make changes. OSHA can also make employers pay a fine for having a dangerous situation at work. For this reason, sometimes employers are nervous about OSHA visits.

If you see a safety or health problem at your job, you have several different rights. First, you have the right to tell your employer. Second, you have the right to ask your employer for more training or equipment, if that's what you need to make the situation safer. Third, you have the right to tell OSHA. If you choose to report to OSHA, you can ask them not to use your name. If your employer fires you because you reported a safety problem, you can file a report with OSHA. It is NOT LEGAL for your employer to fire you because you make a report to OSHA.

**After you read.** Look back at the list of words at the top. Do you understand all of those words?

*Questions to think about and talk about:*

1. What do the letters OSHA stand for?
2. Give an example (your own idea or experience) of a safety or health hazard on the job.
3. Jim is a carpenter. Today he is working on a tall house and he needs to go up on a tall ladder. The ladder his boss gives him is old and broken. What can Jim do?
4. Why do you think employers are sometimes nervous about OSHA?
5. Did you ever see or hear about OSHA at your job? When? What happened?

## Contact information

If you have a question or a concern about your rights as a worker, here are some places you can contact. These are all organizations or government agencies that will provide service free of charge. You can also choose to hire a lawyer, but you will have to pay him/her.

Note: all government agencies are required to provide a translator for you if you need one.

For all concerns/questions about workers' rights, contact:

Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry  
1-800-342-5354  
<http://www.doli.state.mn.us/>

If you have a concern/question about safety or health conditions on the job, contact:

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)  
1-800-321-6748  
<http://www.osha.gov/>

If you have a concern/question about discrimination or harassment, contact:

US Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC)  
1-800-669-4000  
<http://www.eeoc.gov/>

or

Minnesota Department of Human Rights  
1-800-657-3704  
<http://www.humanrights.state.mn.us/>

If you have a concern/question about worker's compensation, contact:

Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry - Workers' Compensation Division  
651-284-5005  
<http://www.doli.state.mn.us/workcomp.html>

If you want to talk to a lawyer but don't have money to pay for one, contact:

Law Help MN  
[www.lawhelpMN.org](http://www.lawhelpMN.org)