

Call for PSAC 901 Joint Health and Safety Committee Members

The Public Service Alliance Canada Local 901 Union (PSAC 901) is seeking TAs/TFs and Postdocs from all faculties to serve as union members on joint health and safety committees (JHSC). **These are paid positions with a pay rate equal to the TA/TF hourly rate of \$38.54.** There are four committees: Arts and Science, Health Sciences, Engineering and Applied Science, and University Administrative Services (covering all other faculties); and, each committee consists of union members from the various Queen's unions as well as management members from the university administration. PSAC 901 is seeking four JHSC reps from Unit 1 (TA/TF) – one rep for each of the four committees; and, four JHSC reps from Unit 2 (Postdocs) – one rep for each of the four committees.

The JHSC committee members work together to ensure a safe workplace for all. JHSC members conduct team safety inspections of laboratories, offices, and buildings specific to their committee. They report hazards they encounter, as well as hazards communicated to them by students and staff, in writing and at committee meetings. Hazards are discussed at meetings and consensus is reached on a course of corrective action recommended to the university. By taking part in JHSC, PSAC 901 representatives provide the point of view of TAs, TFs, and Postdocs to the committees and thus broaden their perspective, which improves the safety of everyone.

Aside from their committee work PSAC901 JHSC representatives also encourage the adequate education and training programs of TAs/TFs in order that they know their rights, responsibilities, and duties under the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

Experience with JHSC, knowledge of technical safety aspects or of the Occupational Health and Safety Act are not necessary as training will be provided. Reliability, objectivity, approachability, and an interest in safety are necessary.

SPECIFIC DUTIES OF JOINT HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

1. Prepare for and participate in Joint Health and safety committee meetings.
 - a. The preparation time for most committees is 1 hour and consists of reading inspection reports and, if needed, conducting further research into an issue in order to better participate in its discussion.
 - b. Meeting frequencies and durations are as follows
 - i. The Arts and Science Committee meets 5-6 times per year.
 - ii. The Engineering and Applied Science Committee meets 3-4 times per year.
 - iii. The Health Science Committee meets 6 times per year.
 - iv. The University Administrative Services Committee meets 4 times per year.
 - v. Meetings are typically 1 hour long.
 - c. JHSC reps must be able to discuss safety issues objectively, based on evidence, and must be able to reach consensus on recommendations.
2. Prepare for safety inspections
 - a. JHSC committee reps conduct safety inspections of university buildings; typically in pairs. The common procedure is to pair a novice member with a more experienced one during inspections. Inspection teams change for different buildings and typically a member will do around 4 inspections per year.

- b. Preparation for an inspection consists of planning an inspection route, determining what personal protective equipment is necessary, and arranging to have for use of said equipment on inspection day.
 - c. During an inspection, immediate hazards must be acted on immediately; such as by cordoning off a hazardous area.
3. Conduct safety inspections
 - a. Proceeding at their own pace and seeing what they deem necessary, JHSC members inspect workplaces
 - b. Hazards or possible hazards are recorded.
 - c. JHSC reps do not operate equipment but rather ask for it to be demonstrated for them.
 - d. They verify that adequate safety engineering controls are in place and are being used.
 - e. JHSC reps prepare an inspection report detailing their findings within 5 business days of an inspection.
 4. Other duties:
 - a. Attend a paid training session in September/ early October for PSAC 901's JHSC rep. Opportunities for additional paid training as well as training leading to certification exist if the member is interested.
 - b. Provide copies of all inspection reports submitted to the committee and all committee minutes to the PSAC 901 Health and Safety Executive.
 - c. Write an activities report once per term to the PSAC 901 Health and Safety Executive.
 - d. Attend PSAC 901 Health and Safety Committee meetings (every 2 to 4 months).
 - e. Promote worker safety to fellow PSAC 901 members by:
 - i. Encouraging them to talk to their supervisors first regarding specific safety issues.
 - ii. Reporting issues raised by them to JHSC meetings
 - iii. Encouraging them to learn about their rights, responsibilities, and duties.
 - f. Create and provide timesheets of activities for remuneration.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Be a member of PSAC 901 and be willing to serve on a JHSC Committee for at least 8 months.
- Be a member of the particular faculty associated with the committee. The faculties associated with the University Administrative Services Committee are Law, Business, and Religion.
- Be able to do committee work by consensus.
- Be dependable: the safety of fellow TAs, TFs, and Postdocs is only improved if their JHSC representative is diligent in their duties.
- Keep organized and thorough notes.
- Self-organizing and taking initiative are key assets that lead to good quality inspections.
- Have a flexible enough schedule to participate in meetings and go on inspections.
- Technical knowledge of safety hazards or the Occupational Health and Safety Act are not required. Training will be provided.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Applications are due September 27th, 2015. Applicants should send a max 300 word statement of interest explaining why they want the position, how they fulfill the required qualifications, and the committee they are applying for to: **healthandsafety@psac901.org** . All applicants shall receive a response. If more than one application is received per position interviews will be conducted.