

How to elect Health & Safety Reps at your workplace

Making our workplaces safe is essential. In the finance sector, more than two thirds of us suffer from mental or physical health problems sustained at work. It's not good enough, but you can make your workplace safer by electing a Health and Safety Rep.



A Health and Safety Rep (HSR) is an employee who is trained and has legal powers to represent their colleagues in matters of workplace health and safety. A good Health and Safety Rep can help prevent injury and illness at work by giving employees a voice and by ensuring management reduces or eliminates unsafe work practises.

Here's a step-by-step guide to electing an HSR in your workplace. For more information, contact your FSU organiser or call the FSU Member Rights Centre on 1300 366 378.

Step 1 - Setting up a working group

A working group is the group of people your HSR will represent and is negotiated through discussions between employees and management.

A working group should include all employees working under similar conditions – for example, a working group might cover all employees (including contractors, part timers, etc.) working in the same location, e.g., a bank branch, call centre or a central site. Your organiser can help you define what kind of working group/s might make sense in your workplace.

You can use our FSU template to inform management of your proposed working group. Once you agree on a working group, get agreement from management about your getting HSR training from a union approved HSR training provider.

Step 2 - Electing your HSR

Elections are run by employees, not by management. Once you decide which union member should nominate to become HSR, an FSU Rep should set the date and method for the election and open nomination to all employees in the working group (including non-union members).

If only one nomination is received for the role of HSR, then that person is elected. Otherwise, an FSU Rep should conduct the election. Once the HSR is elected, notify management of the outcome.

Step 3 - Working together

HSRs are entitled to attend HSR training of their choice and paid for by your employer. Talk with your FSU organiser to find a union approved HSR training provider.

An effective HSR listens to their colleagues, educates their workplace about health and safety and works closely with their FSU Reps to identify and resolve issues at work.