



CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION (COR)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What are the advantages of attaining a COR?

By implementing an effective Health and Safety Management System, you can reduce workplace incidents, lower WCB rates, and improve overall efficiency at your work site. Maintaining a COR ensures ongoing review of an employer's Health and Safety Management System so that gaps can be identified and corrected. It also provides employers with an Alberta government-issued certificate recognizing their efforts to maintain a healthy and safe work place. And of course, having a COR qualifies employers for WCB premium refunds of up to 20 per cent.

Does it matter which certifying partner I choose?

There are benefits in selecting a Certifying Partner familiar with your industry. The construction industry pays a levy to the ACSA through their WCB premiums. Construction industries are considered automatic members of the ACSA. Employers not paying the levy through WCB can pay an associate membership fee to partner with the ACSA.

Is it compulsory to have a COR?

The COR audit program is a voluntary program. There are no penalties if an employer does not meet the minimum standard or chooses not to participate in the program, though COR status is required for employers to remain eligible for PIR refunds from the WCB, and for some companies who require it as a demonstration of a health & safety program.

How do I become a certified auditor?

Individuals will be required to take the 3-day Auditor Training Program (ATP) offered by the ACSA. For certification there are two levels:

First Level of the ATP Program – Certificate of completion

This course has an individual online open book test and skills check component. Participants must achieve a minimum of 80% on the online test and complete fourteen (14) skill checks for course certification.

Second Level of the ATP Program – Certified Auditor Certificate

To become a Certified Auditor with the ACSA an individual qualification audit must be submitted to the ACSA within 66 days, following the last day of the ATP course.

Can I fix the date for my COR expiry?

Yes, you can. COR audits must be performed when employers have active worksites that are representative of their operations. This leaves many employers with a narrow window of opportunity to conduct their annual audits, especially if the operation's activity levels are weather dependent.

Many of these employers must maintain their COR to bid work and do not want their COR to lapse. To avoid this, they schedule their recertification audits well before their COR expiry dates, to allow time for audit review and issuance of a new COR. Over time, this practice will lead to earlier and earlier recertification audits, to the point where some employers would not have active worksites.

The option to set a fixed COR expiry date allows an employer the opportunity to have their COR expiry date "fixed" in time. Once the date is set, an employer may conduct their recertification audit up to 60 days prior

to this date without resetting their expiry date to match the actual audit date. This will allow sufficient time to ensure a new COR can be issued before the current COR expires.

How do I amend my existing COR?

Simple changes to an employers COR (new legal name, WCB account number, or industry reclassification) will be processed by the WCB and notification of these changes will be sent to the ACSA. However, fundamental changes to the employer's operation may invalidate the original COR, since the certification audit would no longer be representative of the employer's operation and/or management structure. Examples of changes that may warrant re-certification of your health and safety management system include:

- Acquisition of another employer
- Merger with another employer
- Addition of another division with a different industry
- Addition of new facilities
- Management restructuring

If your employer has gone through a fundamental change, please contact the ACSA.

My employer wants a COR, but prefers to utilize a third party for all of our audits annually, do they need to have a certified auditor 'on staff'?

In the past, yes this was a requirement. Effective 2024, the ACSA has made a few changes to this requirement. This depends on the circumstances within your organization. Auditors must keep up with their certification if they fall under the following scenarios:

- Conducting COR maintenance (internal) audits for their organization
- Participating in the COR Peer Auditor program
- Approved ACSA consultant auditor

As long as one full time employee, or combination of employees, holds the 4 minimum required courses and you do not fall under any of the scenarios mentioned above, that individual may not have to hold active auditor certification.

I utilized a third-party auditor for my COR maintenance years and did not conduct annual audits myself, can I attend the Auditor re-certification course?

No, the one-day recertification course is for auditors who maintain their auditor certification by completing an audit annually. Any breaks in that auditor cycle will require the individual to attend the three-day Auditor Training Program (ATP).

What does it mean when my documentation is out of scope?

A document could be considered 'out of scope' for various reasons. Perhaps the date of the document is outside of the timelines of the audit. Most audits look at 12 months of records. For example, if an audit is considering documents from December 1, 2022 - December 1, 2023, then a completed inspection report from July 2022 would be considered 'out of scope'. Another reason a document may be considered 'out of scope' is if it's not relevant to any questions asked in the audit. For example, an Alcohol and Drug Policy. Documents may also be considered 'out of scope' if the company being audited cannot be validated within the document reviewed. For example, we are auditing ABC Company, but the document has XYZ Company's name on it and has no clear participation from ABC Company. A tip to ensuring we review documentation in scope, is to consider "Is this relevant to the audit? Is it within the timeframes we are auditing?".



When should I be conducting my company audit and why?

COR Certification audits are required to be performed during an employer's peak season. Performing the audit during typically medium/high times of activity helps to ensure that the audit is representative of all operations and that audit scope requirements can be met.

COR Maintenance audits are recommended to be performed on or before the anniversary date of an employer's COR Certification date. This ensures the maintenance audit is also representative of peak season operations.

Who can I contact if I still have questions?

Your ACSA team is always here to help. Please reach out by email COR@youracsa.ca or call 1-800-661-ACSA (2272).