

# Safety headgear

## Rights and responsibilities

On September 1, 2021, the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Regulation was changed. One of the changes relates to safety headgear, such as hard hats, in the workplace.

This resource will tell you more about what this change means for you as a worker, and what options you have.

### What are my employer's responsibilities?

Keeping workers safe on the job is a key responsibility for all employers. In the past, many employers relied on hard hats as the best way to protect workers from head injury on construction sites and other worksites.

With the changed OHS Regulation, employers must now take steps to eliminate or minimize the risk of head injury from thrown or falling object. For example, they could set up safe zones on the worksite where there is no risk of objects falling from above. Or they could install safety nets to prevent falling objects from hitting anyone working below.

However, there will still be some workplaces where the employer can't eliminate or reduce the risk to a level that protects your safety. In those cases, hard hats are still needed.

### What are my options if I can't wear a hard hat?

If you can't wear a hard hat because you wear religious headwear such as a turban, you have some options.

First, talk to your employer or supervisor to find out what they have done to eliminate or reduce risks to the lowest level practicable before relying on safety headgear to protect you from head injuries. If you have a worker representative or joint health and safety committee at your workplace, you can also talk to them about what your employer has done to reduce risks so that hard hats are not needed.

In some cases, you might have questions or concerns about the steps your employer has taken to reduce the risk. For help with cases like this, you or your employer can talk to one of our prevention officers by calling our Prevention Information Line at 1.888.621.7233.

Safety headgear such as hard hats may still be needed in some workplaces if the risk of head injury can't be reduced to the lowest level possible. If you can't wear a hard hat because of religious or other reasons, your employer may have to offer accommodation. For more information about this, please see [OHS Guideline G-P2-21\(1\)](#).

The chart on the next page illustrates the steps you can follow if you have questions or concerns about the use of safety headgear in the workplace.

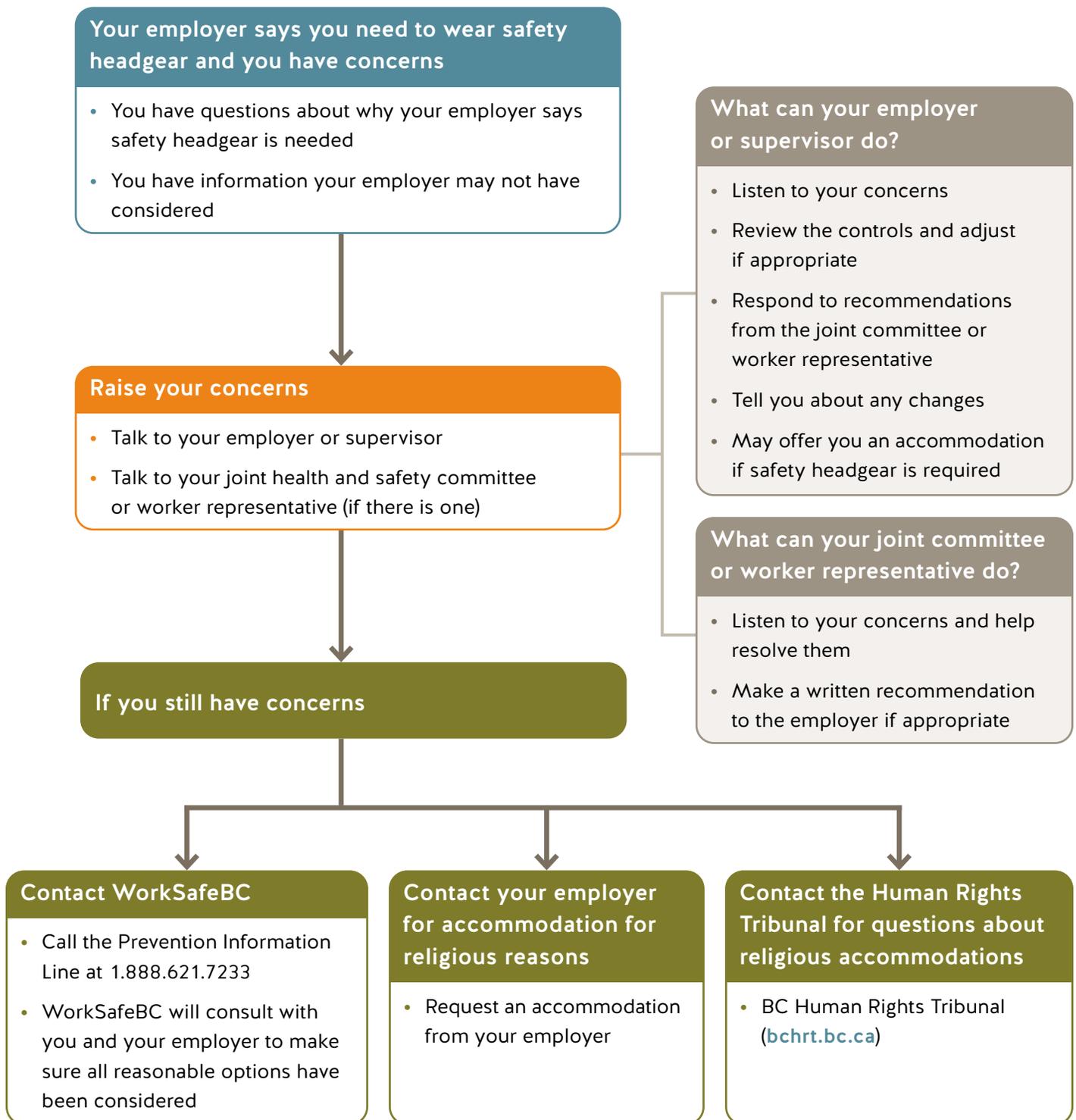
### Who can I contact for more information?

We're here to help. Call 1.888.621.7233 if you have questions about your safety on the job, including questions about the use of hard hats. Your employer can also call this line if they have any health and safety questions.

If you or your employer want to read the OHS Regulation requirement for safety headgear ([section 8.11](#)), you can find it at [worksafebc.com/searchable-regulation](https://www.worksafebc.com/searchable-regulation). See [OHS Guideline G8.11\(1\)](#) for more information and suggestions about how employers can reduce workplace risks.

If you have questions about your right to wear religious headwear such as a turban, or if you have any disagreements with your employer about these rights, you can contact the British Columbia Human Rights Tribunal. Visit [bchrt.bc.ca](https://www.bchrt.bc.ca) or call 1.888.440.8844.

## Steps you can take if you have concerns about safety headgear



Keep in mind that your employer has a responsibility to protect workers from head injury risks. Safety headgear may still be needed if the risk cannot be reduced to the lowest level possible.

Visit [worksafebc.com/safety-headgear](http://worksafebc.com/safety-headgear) for more information and resources.