

FACT SHEET - Health and safety reform

How will the HSW Act change for small, low-risk businesses?

- To meet the primary duty of care on a business to ensure work health and safety, small low-risk businesses will only need to:
 - manage the critical risks that could cause death, or serious injury or illness, and
 - provide worker supervision, training and instruction, and personal protective equipment but only for critical risks, and
 - provide first aid, emergency plans, and the basic workplace facilities to maintain worker welfare such as the provision of drinking water, suitable lighting and ventilation.

What are critical risks?

- Critical risks are those that cause death, or serious injury or illness;
 - those serious injuries or illness set out in section 23 of the HSW Act as notifiable to the regulator – such as amputations, serious burns or lacerations, serious head, brain, spinal or eye injuries, or serious illnesses requiring hospital admission, and
 - the occupational diseases set out in Schedule 2 of the Accident Compensation Act 2001 – such as cancers that are caused by work.

When will these changes take effect?

- Legislation enabling these changes is expected to be introduced before the end of the year and passed in early 2026.