

A Bill for an Act relating to Occupational Health and Safety in Victorian Schools 2020 Bill

To be enacted by the YMCA Victoria Youth Parliament;

Occupational Health and Safety in Victorian Schools 2020 Bill

A Bill for an Act to establish an Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) board to audit schools on whether they are meeting the standards recommended by the Victorian Government and health professionals. In addition, the Bill shall develop better standards to follow to ensure the Occupational Health and Safety of Victorian schools.

This Bill seeks to address the lack of specific occupational and health practices currently observed in Victorian schools for the safety and health of students; ultimately endeavouring to raise the standards of appropriate Occupational Health and Safety within schools.

PART I—Preliminary

Clause 1 Purpose

The main purposes of this Act are—

- (a) to improve Occupational Health and Safety standards in Victorian schools;
- (b) to decrease the likelihood of the spread of germs and sickness in schools;
- (c) to improve working conditions for Victorian students.

Clause 2 Commencement

This Bill shall commence one year after receiving assent from the Youth Governor of Victoria.

Clause 3 Definitions

In this Bill, we define the following to mean—

- (a) **OH&S** means Occupational Health and Safety;
- (b) **Sealed dispenser systems** means a closed system that can be refilled by inserting into the dispenser a sealed cartridge of soap;
- (c) **Ergonomic** means designed for efficiency, comfort and support;
- (d) **School community** means students, teachers, parents and anyone else associated with or working for a school;
- (e) **The Board** shall mean a group of members assigned from the Victorian Department of Education and Training to oversee the requirements of the Bill.

PART II—Establishment

Clause 4 Establish a Victorian occupational health and safety board

- 4.1 The Board shall be established and contain members from each of the following—
 - (a) representatives from the Department of Education and Training Victoria;
 - (b) teachers;
 - (c) medical professionals;
 - (d) a representative from WorkSafe Victoria;
 - (e) a student from VicSRC.
- 4.2 The Board shall reserve the right to audit any Victorian school on their OH&S practises.
- 4.3 The Board shall have the right to introduce OH&S changes to schools as deemed necessary.

Clause 5 Hand hygiene products

- 5.1 All Victorian schools shall have soap available in all bathrooms within school premises.
- 5.2 Soap dispensers shall be motion sensor dispensers and must be a sealed dispensing system.
- 5.3 Hand sanitizer dispensers shall be located at the entrance of every classroom or classroom space in the school.
- 5.4 These dispensers shall only be refilled by a cleaner or staff member.

Clause 6 Bag safety

- 6.1 Students can only carry a maximum of 20% of their body weight in school backpacks.
- 6.2 Schools shall provide customisable trolley bags for students to use.
- 6.3 Schools shall educate school communities on the dangers of carrying excessive weights, the health consequences of this and the ways to avoid injury.
- 6.5 Schools must create student oriented OH&S practices based on the guidelines set by The Board and other best practice guidelines as deemed necessary.

Clause 7 Adjustable chairs and tables

- 7.1 Every school classroom shall have tables with adjustable legs ranging from 40cm to up 100 centimetres.
- 7.2 Posture correcting chairs shall be available in every classroom for students to use.

Clause 8 Classes shall be required to wipe down tables once the period is over

- 8.1 Tables shall be wiped down with sanitising wipes or sanitising spray by students after the completion of each class.
- 8.2 Sanitizers are required to be alcohol-based.
- 8.3 All sanitizers need to have an ethanol or isopropanol concentration of above 75%.