

## A workplace policy on HIV/AIDS: putting it into practice

The main points of a workplace policy are covered in a separate guideline:

['A workplace policy on HIV/AIDS: what it should cover'](#).

The policy, once drafted, needs to be agreed and implemented. It will be more appropriate and the implementation more effective if it is based on consultation and collaboration between employers and the workforce, whether a trade union or workplace representative. Partnership with trade unions can also reduce costs for the company, since unions can help organize programmes and provide trainers and educators.

### Note

This guideline supposes a medium-sized or large workplace. In a smaller enterprise there may just be one person with responsibility to act on HIV/AIDS: even so, the same basic steps can be adapted and followed. (A special guideline for smaller enterprises is being prepared.)

### ILO Programme on HIV/AIDS and the world of work

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1. An HIV/AIDS committee is set up with representatives of top management, supervisors, workers, trade unions, human resources department, training department, industrial relations unit, occupational health unit, health and safety committee, and persons living with HIV/AIDS, if they agree. There should be a representative balance between men and women. In smaller workplaces, an existing committee may be used or responsible officer appointed, but ensure that regular reports are made to the highest decision-making body in the enterprise/public sector workplace.
2. Committee decides its terms of reference and decision-making powers and responsibilities: these must be approved by existing decision-making bodies (e.g. workplace committee, executive board).
3. Review of national laws and their implications for the enterprise; this should go beyond any specific laws on HIV/AIDS and could include anti-discrimination laws, for example, and relevant ILO Conventions.
4. Committee assesses the impact of the HIV epidemic on the workplace and the needs of workers by carrying out a confidential baseline study - important for planning a programme and for monitoring the effectiveness of the response.
5. Committee establishes what health and information services are already available - both at the workplace and in the local community: useful in avoiding duplication, and information about community services is an essential part of a 'no/low-cost' response in enterprises with few resources. Alliances can be made between businesses, as well as links with NGOs. For information on local UNAIDS facilities, see [www.unaids.org](http://www.unaids.org), and search under *Geographical area/By country*.
6. Committee formulates a draft policy: draft circulated for comment then revised and adopted - the wider the consultation, the fuller the sense of 'ownership' and support. The policy should be written in clear and accessible language.
7. Committee draws up a budget, seeking funds from outside the enterprise if necessary and identifies existing resources in the local community; although funds are important, the absence of funding should not mean that no action is possible.
8. Committee establishes plan of action, with timetable and lines of responsibility, to implement policy, it is important to have at least one named HIV/AIDS coordinator/focal point to ensure implementation, especially where it is not possible to set up a committee just for HIV/AIDS.
9. Policy and plan of action are widely disseminated (for example, via notice boards, mailings, pay slip inserts, special meetings, induction courses, training sessions) and programmes of information, education and care are put in place.
10. Committee monitors the impact of the policy and revises it as necessary. The HIV epidemic is evolving rapidly and so is the response. Workplace policies and programmes must not stand still. Regular updates on developments concerning HIV/AIDS in the world of work can be found on the [ILOAIDS website](#).