

Precarious employment is linked to workplace injuries in Ontario, Canada

Faraz Vahid Shahidi

Institute for Work & Health

Andrea Larney

Institute for Work & Health

Datasets used

Labour Force Survey
Workplace Safety and
Insurance Board
Compensation Claims

Policy areas this research can inform

Health
Labour
Society and community

Context

Precarious employment, referring to work that is unstable and insecure, has important implications for workplace health and safety. Workers in precarious employment often face overlapping risks, including inadequate training, high job turnover, fear of reprisal for reporting unsafe conditions, and gaps in regulatory protections. Economic insecurity may also require them to work longer hours, take on multiple jobs, or accept dangerous work. For all these reasons, precarious employment is hypothesized to increase the likelihood of experiencing an injury on the job. This study tested that hypothesis by examining the association between precarious employment and workplace injuries in Ontario, Canada.

Key finding

Precariously employed workers were two to three times more likely to experience an injury on the job relative to those in more stable and secure employment.

Policy implications

Precarious employment appears to be an 'upstream' occupational hazard, contributing to an increased risk of injury among workers in Ontario. Efforts to improve the stability and security of employment may help to reduce the rate at which workplace injuries occur, in addition to lowering related costs for workers, employers, and government. Policy interventions could include legislative reforms that strengthen minimum employment standards, such as stronger job protections, stricter scheduling rules, and higher minimum wages. Employers can also play a role by adopting workplace practices that enhance working conditions and address the health and safety concerns of precariously employed workers.

Read the full article here

Shahidi, F. V., Liao, Q., Landsman, V., Mustard, C., Robson, L. S., Biswas, A., & Smith, P. M. (2024). Is precarious employment an occupational hazard? Evidence from Ontario, Canada. *Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, 81(8), 381–387. <https://doi.org/10.1136/oemed-2024-109535>

Citation

Shahidi, F. V., & Larney, A. (2026). Precarious employment is linked to workplace injuries in Ontario, Canada. *Canadian Research Data Centre Network Research-Policy Snapshot Digest*, 5(1), 5. <https://hdl.handle.net/11375/32713>



There are jobs where **precarious conditions** are more common.

Examples of precarious conditions:



low wages



temporary employment



involuntary part-time work



irregular hours



Workers in these jobs have **3x the risk of work injury or illness.**



And during the pandemic, these workers had **5x the risk of work-related COVID-19.**

To learn more about this Institute for Work & Health study, visit: bit.ly/precarious-jobs-injury-risks



Institute
for Work &
Health

Research Excellence
Safe Work
Healthy Workers

Citation

Shahidi, F. V., & Larney, A. (2026). Precarious employment is linked to workplace injuries in Ontario, Canada. *Canadian Research Data Centre Network Research-Policy Snapshot Digest*, 5(1), 5. <https://hdl.handle.net/11375/32713>

