PREVENTION LINK

DISABILITY PREVENTION AT WORK

TRAINING + SERVICES

Promoting a Culture of Safety & Improved Return to Work Outcomes

preventionlink.ca

OCCUPATIONAL DISABILITY RESPONSE TRAINING
PREVENTION LINK

RETURN TO WORK
PREVENTION LINK

LIGHTHOUSE INITIATIVE
PREVENTION LINK

This project is administered by Prevention Link,
governed by the Ontario Federation of Labour's Executive Committee,
and supported by the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board.

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PREVENTION LINK

DISABILITY PREVENTION AT WORK

Who we are

Prevention Link is an innovative disability prevention program that focuses on the link between the primary and secondary prevention of occupational injury, illness and disease in workplaces throughout Ontario.

The program, supported by the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board and governed by the Ontario Federation of Labour's Executive Committee, offers training, mentoring, outreach and advisory services for unionized and non-unionized workers, workplace representatives and employers wishing to engage in cost-effective, collaborative and results-based outcomes.

Our holistic and comprehensive disability prevention program supports the vision, goals and priorities outlined in the Chief Prevention Officer's strategic framework for building healthy and safe Ontario workplaces.

What we do

Building on more than 30 years of success operating as the Occupational Disability Response Team, the expanded and revitalized Prevention Link Program has evolved into one of Ontario's only comprehensive prevention programs.

Prevention Link has been improved to better represent its renewed 'secondary prevention' focus. We are building on the experience and success of workplace representatives to enhance primary and secondary prevention of workplace injury and illness. Initial prevention of injury and illness as well as preventing re-injury after return to work benefit both workers and employers across Ontario.

Our Mission

We aim to improve the well-being of Ontario's most vulnerable workers, including injured workers, young workers and those that are new to working in our province. As a leading provider of workplace disability prevention training and advisory services, we apply evidence-based secondary prevention research to inform the primary prevention of occupational disability.

Our Vision

We envision a province where occupational illnesses and injuries are eliminated to enable healthy, safe and accommodating workplaces for all workers in every workplace.

Our Structure

Prevention Link takes a holistic approach to disability prevention by utilizing best practices and applying principles of occupational disability prevention from a secondary prevention perspective.

Prevention Link is supported by three distinct pillars:

- Occupational Disability Response Training (ODRT)
- Return to Work – Disability Prevention Services (RTW - DPS)
- Lighthouse Initiative (LI) – Education, awareness, and outreach to workers most at risk of occupational injury, illness and disease

OCCUPATIONAL DISABILITY RESPONSE TRAINING

PREVENTION LINK

Prevention Link offers high-quality, comprehensive courses covering important topics beneficial to workers, unions, and employers alike. Our courses explore a wide range of topics from mental health, workers' compensation, disability accommodation and return to work. Workshops and multi-day programming available.

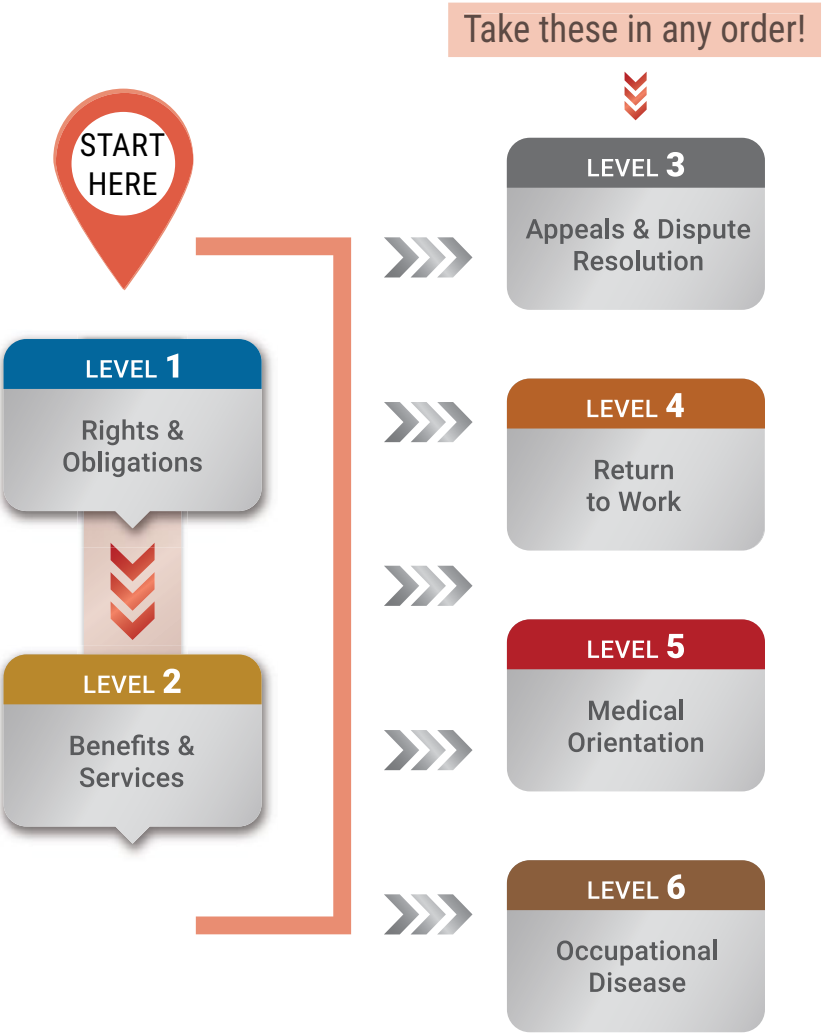
Ensuring that injured, ill, and disabled workers are protected in the workplace is everyone's responsibility. This requires education, awareness and commitment from workers, unions, employers and the community at large.

Prevention Link's dynamic training has been developed by experienced advocates who bring their commitment, diversity and hands-on knowledge to our programming. Participants gain the necessary skills, confidence and community-building to benefit their individual workplaces and the workers they represent.

Find the latest training dates on our website: preventionlink.ca. None of the dates work? We can provide training just for your members, staff or workplace! Contact us to schedule at your convenience at info@preventionlink.ca.

Who should attend:

WSIB Representatives
RTW Specialists
Health & Safety
Workplace Leadership
Union Stewards



The schedule is designed to allow flexibility in planning and taking on a variety of topics. We made it easier for participants to register for our core curriculum. Once you complete Level 2, you can take any level, in any order, afterwards. Topical courses are usually shorter and do not require any prerequisites.

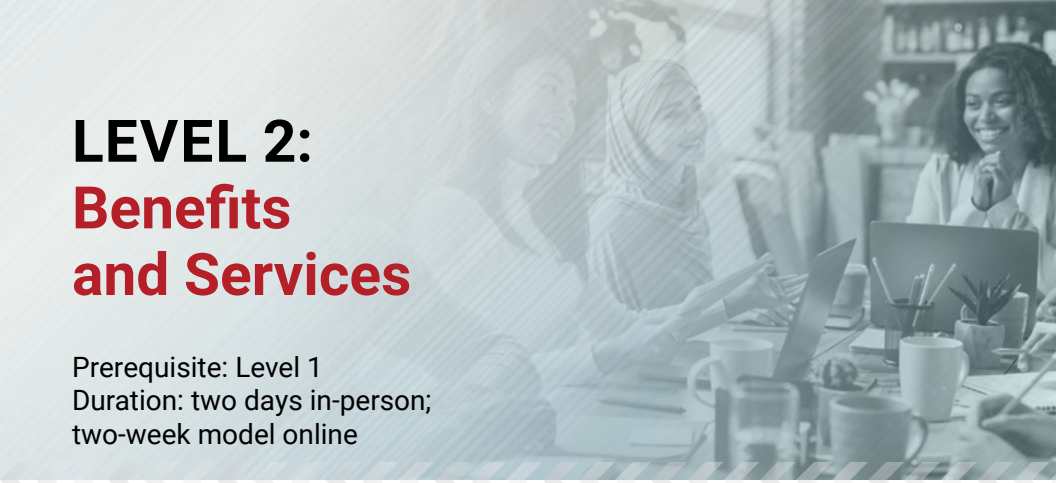
LEVEL 1: Rights and Obligations

Duration: two days in-person;
two-week model online

The first of six core certification courses offered within Prevention Link's disability prevention curriculum. This introductory course begins by exploring the history of Ontario's compensation system and the development of legislation and the general principles within the system.

Participants learn the basics of a disability prevention framework including types of workplace injuries and illnesses and the legal tests applied by the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) when considering entitlement. The method to report an injury, the steps to initiate a claim and reporting strategies including time limits and potential penalties are reviewed.

Worker and employer obligations are covered as well as roles and responsibilities regarding return to work (RTW). The WSIB RTW policies are discussed with a focus on the Duty to Accommodate. The role and responsibilities of workplace parties in the return to work process with the primary goal of returning workers to their pre-injury job with the injury employer are examined. Disability prevention, best practices and shared responsibilities are discussed and ways in which unions should participate in return to work are explored. Leading research shows that a collaborative and cooperative approach to return to work following the hierarchy of jobs leads to better outcomes for both workers and employers. Protections under other legislation are also discussed should a RTW plan not provide sufficient protection to a worker.



LEVEL 2: Benefits and Services

Prerequisite: Level 1
Duration: two days in-person; two-week model online

Participants will be familiar with the significance of legislation (WSIA), regulations, and policies including the history of legislative change and Bills that have amended the WSIA. Participants will explore these changes to the legislation and their effects on benefits. Benefits and services available under three distinct eras of legislation are discussed.

Non-Economic Loss (NEL) calculations and Loss of Earnings (LOE) calculations including maximum and minimum levels and exclusion periods and offsets are examined. Participants will explore detailed examples of benefit calculations and parameters affecting the final numbers.

The structure of the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) and the internal and external appeal systems are described. The adjudication process is detailed and participants follow the flow of a claim through the process including problem resolution and the appeal process at all levels.

The structure of a Board file is presented and through an extensive sample file examination, participants explore how to effectively review a file and make a case plan to move a claim forward and different types of evidence to use. They will learn skills to communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing, with the many professionals involved including workers, employers, witnesses and health care professionals.

Participants learn which employers are covered, optional insurance and how the system is funded including how incentive programs and experience rating functions and when claim costs can be transferred.

LEVEL 3:
Appeals and Dispute Resolution

Prerequisite: Levels 1 & 2
Duration: one week in-person

In this hands-on course, participants will learn the structure, practices and procedures of the appeals branch of the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) and of the Workplace Safety and Insurance Appeals Tribunal (WSIAT). Participants will review how to begin the appeals process, the professional responsibilities of the parties and the legal principles involved. The various methods of resolution will be reviewed and the procedure for in-person hearings will be examined in detail.

Participants will develop oral and written advocacy skills as they prepare for a hearing by reviewing a claim file, gathering additional evidence, researching law, policy and precedent and preparing witnesses.

Hearing presentations are discussed and participants are provided with the order of proceedings for an in-person oral hearing and additional information and resources regarding advocacy. Opening and closing statements, objections, questioning, cross-questioning, redirecting and use of legal precedents is explored.

In addition to the information presented, participants will have hands-on experience with a claim file and gain experience in representing both worker and employer interests at the WSIB appeal level and at the WSIAT level by preparing and presenting an appeal before an Appeals Resolution Officer and a Vice Chair or Panel respectively.

LEVEL 4:
Return to Work

Prerequisite: Levels 1 & 2
Duration: one week in-person

This course is designed for those who will, or currently, assist injured workers individually or collectively through a therapeutic return to work (RTW) and provides workplace parties with the tools necessary to develop strategies that ensure successful outcomes. Through the exploration of leading research, law and evidence-based best practices, participants learn the principles of good return to work practices and the Duty to Accommodate. Legal lessons from precedent setting cases are reviewed and participants put these legal concepts into practical use preparing and participating in return to work meetings and scenarios.

Barriers to successful return to work are addressed with a focus on attitudinal barriers and their elimination using the social model of disability and therapeutic return to work principles. Older methods of disability management and the newer, progressive disability prevention model are compared and participants will be aware of the paradigm shift from management to prevention. There will be a discussion of the roles of the parties involved (employer, injured worker, representative, H&S representatives) including their rights and responsibilities in the process.

Return to work and the WSIB is presented with respect to the *Act* and Board policies. The hierarchy of RTW job opportunities, definitions used, roles of parties, dispute resolution and penalties are covered. The *Ontario Human Rights Code* (OHRC) and RTW are discussed.

LEVEL 5: Medical Orientation

Prerequisite: Levels 1 & 2
Duration: one week in-person

This advanced course is designed to assist participants in understanding medical terminology, anatomy, diagnostic testing and surgical procedures in order to interpret information contained in medical reports and in Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) files. Participants will be exposed to medical terminology and human anatomy with attention to the different skeletal and organ systems. Special focus will be placed on common occupational injuries and disorders such as chronic pain and fibromyalgia. Mental stress related injuries are examined and the WSIB policies relating to traumatic stress, chronic stress, psychotraumatic disability and behavioural disorders are discussed.

The legislative authority for health care and the relevant WSIB policies are presented. Evidence-based medicine, medical specialists and Ontario standards are discussed in conjunction with specific treatment modalities. Medical records, independent medical examinations and the use of OHCOW services are explored. Advantages and disadvantages of diagnostic tests used in determining workplace injuries are examined and common surgical procedures are explored. Learn how disability and permanent impairment are determined, how they are assessed and the different types of awards available for a permanent impairment. Participants will follow detailed calculations for these awards to understand how the degree of impairment translates into a monetary value and recognize when and how redeterminations occur.

LEVEL 6: Occupational Disease

Prerequisite: Levels 1 & 2
Duration: one week in-person

Graduates of this course will gain unique skills enabling them to recognize and advocate for workers with occupational disease and their survivors.

This advanced course begins by exploring the impact of occupational disease on society and workplaces, the lessons that have been learned and current developments in occupational disease claims. Participants will learn both the legal test and medical standards for causation, how legal principles apply in an appeal and the significance of apportionment. The field of epidemiology is examined including different types of studies, how data is analyzed and what to look for when assessing a study. The role of scientific evidence, exposure studies, expert opinions and witness testimony are explored including how information is gathered and what weight is put on them. The adjudication process is explained with emphasis on gathering, deciphering and presenting evidence to decision makers in the most favourable light.

To further understand this complex subject, a number of occupational diseases are studied with respect to their risk factors, diagnostic testing and how to recognize causal links using the WSIA, policies and WSIAT decisions.

Workers' Compensation 101

Duration: one day in-person

This course introduces participants to the compensation system in Ontario, the history of compensation legislation, its principles and third party rights of action. Key definitions within the system are described including: worker, employer, accident, disablement, recurrence, secondary injuries, aggravation, occupational disease, stress and chronic pain.

Participants learn about injury reporting and how claims are filed, as well as the responsibilities of the workplace parties and medical professionals. Benefits and services for injured workers are presented. Information on the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board, including time limits for dealing with issues, are discussed and the process flow for claims and appeals are presented so that participants are familiar with the claim process.

Return to Work 101

Duration: one day in-person;
one day online

The objective of this course is to provide participants with the tools to develop strategies to assist workers with disabilities, individually and collectively; and return them to long-term healthy and productive employment. The course also reviews noteworthy case law and Human Rights legislation.

Principles of Accommodation Law

Duration: one day in-person;
one day online

The workshop focuses on the most frequently cited ground of discrimination that is disability. It looks at how disability and the duty to accommodate plays out with emphasis on employment. The workshop will help participants recognize rights, obligations and principles of accommodation (respect for dignity, individualization, integration and full participation).

With a focus on the protected ground of disability and the social area of employment, participants will:

- Review the laws that protect persons with disabilities.
- Define disability and different forms of discrimination.
- Understand the principles of the duty to accommodate.
- Explore all parties' rights and responsibilities under the law.
- Outline the requirements for requesting and responding to accommodation needs.
- Examine what constitutes "undue hardship".

Hearings in Writing

Duration: one day in-person;
one day online

The goal of this course is to teach participants how to write a submission, what needs to be included and provide a template for advocates to follow when using a written submission. Participants discuss hearing options for appeals and the specific criteria considered when determining whether or not a written submission is appropriate. Important points of a written submission are reviewed as they relate to the WSIAT Practice Direction for written submissions. Myths associated with oral hearings and how they can be used to improve writing skills begin an exploration of the differences between the two types of appeals. The traditional structure of the submission is explored with specific details for each section discussed. In addition to submissions, this course also addresses writing to doctors and the effect the letter has both on the medical professional's reply and on the decision maker on the file.

Psychological Health & Safety and Return to Work

Duration: one week in-person

Mental illness is a leading cause of disability in Canada and workplaces that have a strong commitment to psychological health and safety, demonstrated by the behaviours of the workplace, have more success in Return to Work (RTW).

This training provides participants with the resources and tools to develop strategies to assist workers with disabilities, individually and collectively, and support return to healthy and productive employment.

With a focus on the protected ground of disability and the social area of employment, participants will:

- Discuss the importance of supportive return to work for vulnerable workers.
- Examine psychological health and safety at work, including psychosocial risk factors and hazards.
- Review legal responsibilities in the area of Duty to Accommodate and return to work.
- Review each of the workplace parties' role in supporting and contributing to a successful return to work.
- Consider common return to work barriers and potential solutions.
- Understand the guiding principles and elements of return to work policies and programs.

Mental Health 101

Duration: half day in-person;
half day online

This course is for participants who want a better understanding of mental health and illness in the workplace. Mental health is considered the number one cause of workplace disability in Canada. Yet, stigma around the topic is a key reason why many Ontarians don't talk about mental illness in their workplaces. This half-day workshop is your chance to become more informed and talk more openly about mental health in the workplace. Join us in promoting a greater understanding of occupational mental health and illness.

Workplace Mental Health Injuries

Duration: one day in-person

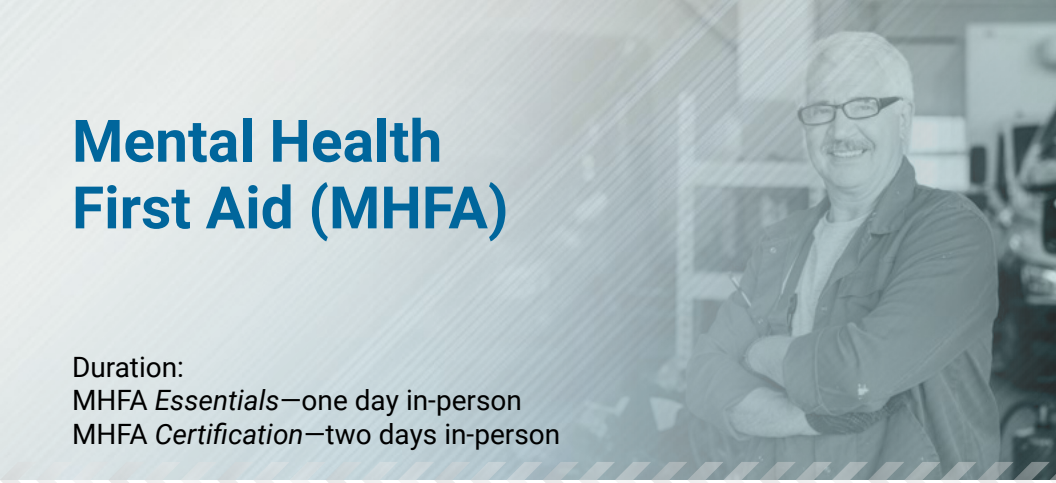
This workshop is ideal for workers' compensation representatives who have some case work experience and are looking to gain more knowledge on mental health injury claims.

It will provide participants with a better understanding of mental health and illness, stigma and discrimination, how conditions are diagnosed, and common treatment options.

It explores:

- Which mental health injuries may be covered by WSIB;
- How such claims are adjudicated (policy and law); and
- Legal principles, case law examples, and relevant resources.

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)



Duration:
MHFA *Essentials*—one day in-person
MHFA *Certification*—two days in-person

Prevention Link is pleased to offer MHFA courses developed by the Mental Health Commission of Canada.

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training provides the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to support a person who may be experiencing a decline in their mental well-being, a mental health or substance use crisis until professional help is available.

The practical skills of MHFA help you develop the confidence and peace of mind knowing you can support those around you, and your ability to self-care and prioritize your well-being while supporting others.

This course, upon completion and assessment, provides participants with:

- Increased Mental Health Awareness
- Understanding stigma, diagnostic labelling, and barriers to helping
- Hands-on experience applying ALGES to support people showing early signs of mental health decline
- Effective communication techniques
- Reflective Self-Awareness tools
- A nationally recognized MHFA Certification that is valid for 3 years (with MHFA *Certification* stream)

Electronic Evidence

Duration: one day in-person

In today's world, evidence comes in many forms. Many of us are familiar with the traditional types of evidence we see when representing WSIB cases. The WSIB files, medical reports, documents and live witnesses' testimonies have all been a feature of the appeals system for many years. A new type of evidence has emerged in recent years that has become increasingly important. This evidence is generated or transmitted electronically. As computers have drastically changed the way we store and transmit information, it is not surprising that they are used to generate, transmit and store evidence. This new digital evidence has some unique challenges which will be explored in this workshop. Through a series of exercises, participants will learn how to argue the admissability of electronic evidence as well as how much weight a decision-maker should assign to that type of evidence.

Occupational Hearing Loss

Duration: half day in-person

Participants will gain an understanding of occupational hearing loss through knowledge of: the anatomy of the ear, how sound is transmitted, how hearing is tested and how the WSIB adjudicates hearing loss claims. Different scenarios for hearing loss are presented including asymmetrical hearing loss, presbycusis, Ménière's disease and Otosclerosis. The adjudication process and apportionment for compensable and non-compensable hearing loss is also covered.

Do you know what your rights are?

English نک تسرد ور ام Ojibwa Português عربی ελληνική Polski
اردو 한국어 Español தமிழ் Українська Français ਪੰਜਾਬੀ
中国人 Tagalog বাংলা Shqipe ᐃᓄᒃᑎᑐᑦ Soomaali Русский

This pillar of Prevention Link is intended to serve two categories of vulnerable workers: (a) those returning to work after an injury; and (b) those who may not have been injured, but have limited knowledge of occupational health and safety, compensation and employment standard laws and available resources. The Lighthouse Initiative will work directly with injured workers, migrant and young workers including new-hires and workers employed in the construction, manufacturing, transportation, health care, agriculture and public service sectors.

Prevention Link's Lighthouse Initiative is an outreach and awareness program designed to inform workers and workplace parties about their rights and obligations in Ontario.

Download our free information guides on workers' compensation, occupational health and safety, employment standards, and human rights in 21 languages.

Think you know everything you need to know about Ontario workers' rights and obligations? Challenge yourself! Take Prevention Link's quizzes at preventionlink.ca

Every workplace should have an effective and sustainable RTW program

Prevention Link can work with workplace parties to develop a program that includes return to work best practices.

The Return to Work (RTW) consulting branch of Prevention Link facilitates a strategic fit with workplace return to work best practices and all applicable rights, health and safety, accessibility and workers' compensation legislation.

Healthy and safe workplaces are better for everyone. Prevention Link offers the structured collaborative path, focused on the secondary prevention, addressing issues early after an injury, improving labour relations by restoring trust, and retaining talent, skills, and experience.

Adopting prevention strategies will not only ensure all the workplace parties meet their legal obligations; workplaces can achieve reductions in claim costs and thereby preserve the integrity of current benefits and services that impact the entire workforce.

Prevention Link can help Ontario workplaces of any size and in any sector to build a truly integrated culture of safety and accommodation, moving past just compliance to genuine care.

Start building the culture of effective, efficient, and sustainable RTW outcomes today: send us a Return to Work information request via preventionlink.ca or email at info@preventionlink.ca.

Ensuring that injured, ill, and disabled workers are protected in the workplace is everyone's responsibility.

We envision a province where occupational illnesses and injuries are eliminated to enable healthy, safe and accommodating workplaces for all workers, in every workplace, and in every community across Ontario.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION ON PREVENTION LINK TRAINING AND SERVICES, PLEASE CONTACT:

TOLL-FREE: 1-800-668-9138
EMAIL: info@preventionlink.ca
WEBSITE: www.preventionlink.ca

895 Don Mills Road, Tower Two
Suite 600
Toronto, ON M3C 1W3

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