



Safety Program Basics:

Helpful Tips for Building a Program in Your Organization

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Starting at the Top

A safe workplace starts with management, who must support a culture of safety and provide the resources necessary for injury prevention. The responsibilities filter down through all levels of an organization and every employee has to take ownership in their workplace. Safety cannot stand alone or remain separate from the main objectives of the organization — it must become an integral part of day-to-day operations. When injury prevention is taken into consideration as part of the “bottom line,” everyone wins.

There are some essential elements of a good safety and health program that employers should have in place. Depending on the size and complexity of your organization, the following actions should be considered:

- Manager leadership and commitment
- Employee participation
- Hazard identification and control
- Information and training
- Program evaluation

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Components of a Sound Safety Program

There are many pieces that make up a quality workplace safety program. From leadership to each and every employee, everyone plays a key role. At the same time, policies and procedures are critical to support and guide workers as they undertake their work each day.

Leadership Responsibilities

- Establish responsibilities for managers, supervisors and employees.
- Designate a person to respond to safety issues.
- Delegate authority.
- Provide information and training.
- Provide resources, such as time and money.
- Support injury and illness prevention efforts.
- Conduct safety audits and correct deficiencies.
- Investigate accidents.
- Enforce safety rules and procedures.
- Maintain compliance with Cal/OSHA and OSHA requirements.
- Review safety and health information regularly.
- Solicit fellow employees involvement in safety programs.

Employee Responsibilities

- Report work-related injuries or illnesses.
- Establish ways to report accidents and hazards.
- Report unsafe conditions or work practices.
- Wear required personal protective equipment.
- Do not operate machinery unless trained.
- Use safe lifting techniques.
- Maintain good housekeeping.

Hazard Assessment & Facility Inspections

- Use a variety of job-hazard analysis methods.
- Conduct safety inspections of workstations.
- Evaluate equipment, materials and processes.
- Observe employees as they do their jobs.
- Inspect regularly for unsafe working conditions.
- Document the correction of unsafe conditions.
- Involve employees with developing forms and conducting inspections.

Job Safety and Safe Work Practices

- Involve employees.
- Break down each job into component tasks.
- Develop safe work practices for each job function.
- Identify potential hazards of each task.
- Determine hazard control measures.
- List steps to do the job safely.
- Inspect equipment and work areas.
- List required personal protective equipment.
- Reference other safety procedures.
- Establish a safety committee that consists of management and hourly employees.
- Review safety programs and procedures.
- Review accident investigations.
- Discuss safety suggestions.
- Report observations of unsafe conditions.

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Accident Investigation

- Include all injuries, illnesses, first-aid incidents and near-misses.
- Investigate immediately.
 - Interview injured employee and witness(es).
 - Ask open ended questions.
 - Do not assign blame.
 - Take photos and video.
- Include management and employees.
 - File a workers' compensation claim.
- Develop and implement corrective actions.

Policy Enforcement

Consistently enforce safety rules and regulations. Use company disciplinary policy to address violators. Example:

- 1st offense — verbal or written warning
- 2nd offense — written warning or suspension
- 3rd offense — suspension or termination

Safety Incentives

- Reward safety suggestions.
- Encourage reporting of near-miss incidents.
- Reward involvement in the safety and health program.

Training

- Include in safety orientation for new employees.
- Conduct when new processes or procedures are introduced.
- Conduct as required by Cal/OSHA and OSHA regulations.
- Reiterate when safety performance has been declining
- Conduct to keep employee safety awareness at the forefront.

Record Keeping

Create written documentation to confirm:

- Safety training
- Safety communication - meetings, postings, safety newsletter
- Facility inspections
- Accident investigations

Program Evaluation

- Review the effectiveness of the program.
- Update components annually.
- Update if significant changes are made to facility, operation, phone numbers or contacts.
- Involve employees.

Safety Committee

- Meet no less than quarterly.
- Keep and post minutes.
- Review safety programs and procedures.
- Review accident investigations.
- Discuss safety suggestions.
- Report observations of unsafe conditions.