

STEP II - RECRUIT SAFETY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Planning Guide

Start Date: (___ / ___ / ___)

Projected Completion Date: (___ / ___ / ___)

Tasks

1. Determine the number of employer and employee representatives.
2. Ensure that all major work activities are represented.
3. Identify and talk to potential employer and employee representatives regarding safety committee participation.

Topics or items to consider:

- ◆ Dedication to preventing injury/illness accidents.
- ◆ Interest in serving.
- ◆ Good people skills.
- ◆ Good communication skills.
- ◆ Ability to see other viewpoints.
- ◆ Credibility with others.
- ◆ Ability to get things done.

4. Appoint and notify employer representatives; stagger terms.

Suggested Methods: written and verbal communications.

5. Have employees elect their employee representatives or solicit volunteers; consider provisions of collective bargaining agreements (if applicable).

Suggested Methods: education and promotion via newsletters, posters, memos, group meetings, personal encouragement and other activities.

6. Notify volunteer or elected employee representatives of their acceptance as a committee member.

7. Inform all employees, including management, of the names of committee members.

8. Send rules and support information to safety committee members. Have them become familiar with the content.

STEP II - RECRUIT SAFETY COMMITTEE MEMBERS, cont.

- _____ 9. Notify employee representatives and their management/supervisors. Ensure that they are aware of time needs and compensation requirements, etc.
- _____ 10. Notify personnel and payroll regarding employee representatives status as safety committee members and also compensation requirements, etc.
- _____ 11. Conduct introductory safety committee training for members and provide support materials. Training topics should include organization, operation, meeting methods, and other such topics to improve the committee's efficiency and effectiveness.

NOTES:

STEP III - FORM A SAFETY COMMITTEE

Planning Guide

Start Date: (___ / ___ / ___)

Projected Completion Date: (___ / ___ / ___)

Tasks

1. Become familiar with the elements of a successful committee. (See items below and pages four and five of this manual.)

A good committee:

- ◆ Is well-organized and follows established procedures.
- ◆ Has clearly defined purposes, goals and realistic and measurable objectives and completion dates.
- ◆ Knows the extent of its authority.
- ◆ Is supported by employer, CEO and management in terms of time, effort and money.
- ◆ Clearly defines members' roles, responsibilities, functions and duties.
- ◆ Provides an environment for employee input.
- ◆ Keeps well documented written minutes/notes.

2. Determine what is needed to develop and set up a safety committee, then develop a basic action plan and put it to work.

Consider:

- ◆ Safety committee goals, purposes and objectives.
- ◆ Projected completion dates for each task.
- ◆ Management's commitment support and involvement.
- ◆ Communication channels, reporting systems.
- ◆ Position within the organizational structure.
- ◆ Initial and on-going training needs and schedules.
- ◆ A tracking system to determine progress.
- ◆ Basic safety committee organization.
- ◆ Need for several meetings when initially organizing the safety committee.
- ◆ Safety committee record keeping system.
- ◆ Follow-up activities.

3. Set up a safety committee meeting.

Consider:

- ◆ Monthly meetings are required to obtain Department certification.
- ◆ Day of week: Recommend Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday.

STEP III - FORM A SAFETY COMMITTEE, cont.

- ◆ Time of day: Recommend mid-morning or mid-afternoon.
- ◆ Meeting location: Quiet atmosphere, i.e. conference room or private office.
- ◆ Purpose.
- ◆ Choosing a secretary/recorder.
- ◆ Discussing roles, responsibilities, duties and functions.
- ◆ Writing a safety committee policy statement or charter.
- ◆ Other ideas.

Note: This may require more than one meeting.

- _____ 4. Develop a written agenda and send to committee members about three to five days prior to the meeting so they may prepare.
- _____ 5. Have representatives review rules and this information prior to attending meeting.
- _____ 6. If possible, train members on Act 44 Article X "Health and Safety" requirements before they attend their first meeting.
- _____ 7. Send a copy of the agenda to employee representatives and management/supervisors. Post agenda where employees will see it.
- _____ 8. Place a copy of the agenda in the safety committee file.

NOTES:

STEP IV - CONDUCT SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Planning Guide

Start Date: (___ / ___ / ___)

Projected Completion Date: (___ / ___ / ___)

Tasks

1. Conduct safety committee meeting.

Be sure to:

- ◆ Start on time.
- ◆ Select a recorder/secretary.
- ◆ Follow the agenda.
- ◆ Take written minutes.
- ◆ Set meeting ground rules.
- ◆ Determine authority.
- ◆ Discuss functions/duties (as assigned by management).
- ◆ Determine logistics: meeting dates, times, location, scheduled inspections, inspection team members, reporting procedures.
- ◆ Discuss committee's record keeping system.
- ◆ Resolve issues and make recommendations.
- ◆ Make individual or team assignments and assign due dates.
- ◆ Determine and set up next committee meeting and topics.

2. Develop a safety committee policy statement or charter if not already established. Be sure to communicate the policy statement to all levels in the company.

Note: This task may take several meetings to accomplish. It is important that the statement be signed by top management, since it sends a message of support to the employees. Be sure the safety committee policy statement is communicated to all employees at all company levels.

3. Discuss:

- ◆ Safety committee purpose and operation.
- ◆ Requirements for state certification.
- ◆ Methods of conducting meetings.

4. Train safety committee members on how to perform their specific functions and duties.

5. Train safety committee members on:

- ◆ Specific workplace hazard identification associated with your business.
- ◆ Accident and incident investigation procedures.

6. Record and file documentation on training given to safety committee members.

STEP V - PERFORM FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

Planning Guide

Start Date: (___ / ___ / ___)

Projected Completion Date: (___ / ___ / ___)

Tasks

1.
 - a. Send a copy of the written minutes to committee members.
 - b. Post a copy for employees to see.
2. Evaluate the success of the committee meeting in terms of meeting skills and accomplishments.

Examples:

- ◆ Were there any problems with the date, time and the location?
- ◆ Did everyone receive the agenda on time?
- ◆ Were employee representatives and managers/supervisors informed in a timely manner?
- ◆ Were there problems releasing the employee representatives from their duties?
- ◆ Was payroll informed if there was overtime and/or travel expenses for employee representatives?
- ◆ Did all representatives come to the meeting prepared?
- ◆ Did the meeting start on time?
- ◆ Was the agenda followed?
- ◆ Was training/orientation given and was it successful?
- ◆ Does everyone know what is expected of them?
- ◆ Is the support system in place to help representatives in carrying out duties and responsibilities?
- ◆ Did management respond in writing to committee recommendations, and in a timely manner?
- ◆ Were corrective actions taken in a timely manner?

3. Evaluate the safety committee process and make corrections and/or improvements as necessary for making the process more efficient and effective.
4. Determine and carry out the next tasks, meetings, training or inspections from the action plan developed earlier and the recommendations made by the committee.
5. Plan, prepare and conduct the next safety committee meeting using the information and experience learned. It will probably take several meetings to implement rule requirements.

Section III.

**APPLYING FOR DEPARTMENT CERTIFICATION OF YOUR
WORKPLACE SAFETY COMMITTEE**

III. APPLYING FOR DEPARTMENT CERTIFICATION OF YOUR WORKPLACE SAFETY COMMITTEE

A. Overview

Effective workplace safety committees are a proven tool in reducing workplace injuries and illnesses, producing significant savings to employers. Certification of your committee can also entitle you to a workers' compensation premium discount. Under the 1993 and 1996 amendments to Pennsylvania's Workers' Compensation law (Acts 44 and 57), employers can receive a 5% discount in their workers' compensation premiums for up to a total of five years. To obtain the 5% discount you must apply for and be granted Department certification of your committee.

To become certified, your safety committee must meet the criteria established by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry. You must complete and submit an application for initial certification. When approved you will receive written notification that must be provided to your insurer.

The insurer and the Pennsylvania Compensation Rating Bureau will then calculate and apply the discount. Certification can be renewed by providing the Department with annual verification via affidavit that committees continue to operate according to the established criteria. A "Certification Renewal Affidavit" will be mailed to the employer 60-90 days before their workers' compensation insurance premium renewal date. The employer must verify or correct the information on the renewal affidavit and return it to the Department with a notarized signature. When the affidavit is approved, the employer will be notified of eligibility for a 5% discount, effective the next renewal date of the workers' compensation policy.

NOTE: Workplace Safety Committees must operate effectively for at least six months prior to seeking certification.

B. Eligible Employers

The 5% discount is available to all employers who insure their workers' compensation liability. Many employers who participate in a group self-insurance fund under Article VIII of the Act may also be eligible. Participants in a group self-insurance fund should contact their Fund to find out if it makes the 5% discount available to its members.

NOTE: The 5% discount is NOT available for large employers who are exempt from obtaining insurance under Section 305 of the Act as individual self-insurers.

C. Requirements for a Workplace Safety Committee

A workplace safety committee must meet certain criteria in three basic categories to be eligible for certification-committee structure, membership and responsibilities.

Committee Structure

The workplace safety committee must:

- ◆ Be composed of an equal number of employer and employee representatives;
- ◆ Make all decisions by majority vote;
- ◆ Meet at least once a month;
- ◆ Develop a written agenda for each meeting; and
- ◆ Take and maintain minutes of each meeting.

Membership

Employee representatives of the committee should:

- ◆ Be able to take reasonable time from work to perform committee duties, without loss of pay or benefits;
- ◆ Serve a continuous term of at least one year; and
- ◆ Be reasonably representative of the major work activities of the employer.

Additionally, the employer should provide, at least annually, training for all committee members. Training must be conducted by a qualified "accident and illness prevention person." The training should include general information on accident and illness prevention and specific health and safety information related to the employer's business.

Committee Responsibilities

At a minimum, the committee should do the following:

- ◆ Evaluate existing employer accident and illness prevention programs;
- ◆ Establish procedures for conducting and documenting the findings of periodic workplace inspections;
- ◆ Make recommendations to correct hazards;
- ◆ Review, in a timely manner, incidents resulting in work-related deaths, injuries, illnesses and complaints; and
- ◆ Conduct follow-up evaluations on the effectiveness of new safety equipment or health and safety procedures.

D. Application for Certification of Workplace Safety Committee

Included in this manual is a copy of the Department's "Application for Certification of Workplace Safety Committee." Any employer who wants to obtain the 5% discount must submit a completed application form along with all the required documentation to the Department of Labor and Industry. Examples of supporting documentation include: meeting agendas and minutes, bylaws, membership lists, inspection reports and other items as specified on the application.

Employers will also be required to provide evidence that their safety committee has operated effectively for at least six months prior to seeking certification. Documentation supporting the committee's operation must be submitted with the application.

It is important that all requested information be provided on the application, including completion of the "Acknowledgments and Agreements" form. Failure to provide all the requested information can result in disapproval or rejection of your application.

A list of the most common errors made by employers when completing the application is included in the Reference Materials section of this manual.

Section IV.

REFERENCE MATERIALS

HOW TO CONDUCT A WORKPLACE SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING

CHECKLIST

Before the Meeting:

- _____ Plan carefully, who should attend, what topics, when, where and how.
- _____ Coordinate the agenda with the safety director or management representatives.
- _____ Send agenda to safety committee members and interested parties at least five days prior to meeting.
- _____ Establish meeting management ground rules.
- _____ Review minutes from the last meeting and check on the status of any pending actions.
- _____ Come early and set up the meeting room.

At the Start of the Meeting:

- _____ Start on time.
- _____ State meeting ground rules:
 - _____ Establish common focus on content.
 - _____ Establish common focus on process.
 - _____ Maintain open and balanced discussion.
 - _____ Define and agree upon roles and responsibilities.
 - _____ Keep focus on safety and health issues (do not allow personal attacks).
- _____ Seek approval of agenda from participants (review and revise) if required.
- _____ Introduce new members and guests.
- _____ Set clear time limits.
- _____ Review action items from the previous meeting.

During the Meeting:

- _____ Focus on each problem in the same way at the same time.
- _____ Focus on the resolution of problems.

At the End of the Meeting:

- _____ Establish action items and responsibilities: Who, what and when?
- _____ Set the date and place of the next meeting, and develop a preliminary agenda.
- _____ Evaluate the meeting (i.e., Were expectations met? Was agenda followed? Were problems resolved?
 - _____ Can future meetings be improved?)
- _____ Close the meeting efficiently and positively.
- _____ Clean up and rearrange the room.
- _____ Prepare committee minutes.
- _____ Distribute/post minutes.
- _____ Follow-up on action items.
- _____ Begin planning the next meeting.

SAMPLE COMPANY POLICY STATEMENT

A policy statement is general in nature, it is not specific like objectives. A written policy statement should demonstrate the support of top management and the corporate commitment to safety. The National Safety Council recommends that the policy statement reflect:

1. The importance that management places on the safety, health and well-being of employees.
2. Management's commitment to occupational safety and health.
3. The emphasis the company places on efficient operations, with a minimum of accidents and losses.
4. The intention of integrating hazard control into all operations, including compliance with applicable standards.
5. The necessity for active leadership, direct participation, and enthusiastic support of the entire organization.

The following statement is not intended to be all-inclusive, nor is it intended to fit every employer's requirements.

COMPANY NAME

Safety Policy Statement

It is the policy of (company name) to protect the safety and health of our employees. Injury and illness losses from accidents are needless, costly and completely preventable. Our company has established a Workplace Safety Program that will help us prevent injury and illness due to hazards. Employee involvement at all levels of the company is critical for us to be successful in this effort. To accomplish this task, a joint worker/management safety committee will be established. Its purpose will be to bring workers and management together in a non-adversarial, cooperative effort to promote safety and health in the workplace. This safety committee will assist (company name) in making recommendations for change.

Management

Management's responsibility is the prevention of injury and illness accidents, because management is held accountable for all issues under their span of control. Management provides direction and full support to supervision and employees regarding all safety and health procedures, job training and hazard elimination practices. We must keep fully informed on safety and health issues throughout the company in order to constantly review the effectiveness of our safety and health program.

SAMPLE COMPANY POLICY STATEMENT, cont.

Supervision

Supervisors are directly responsible for supervising and training their workers. This includes proper procedures, work practices and safe methods to do the job. Supervisors must enforce company rules and take immediate corrective action to eliminate hazardous conditions and practices. They will not permit safety to be sacrificed for any reason. In addition, they will be held accountable for all safety and health issues.

Employees

Each employee, regardless of their position within the company, is expected to cooperate in all aspects of the company's safety and health program. Some major points of our company safety and health require that:

1. Accidents **must** be reported immediately to your supervisor.
2. Required personal protective equipment must be worn by all employees. **There are no exceptions.**
3. Hazardous conditions or other safety and health concerns **must** be reported to your supervisor immediately.
4. Employees participate in safety committee activities and support safety committee membership.
5. If everyone does their part by doing what is necessary to ensure workplace safety and health, we will all benefit.
6. No job is so important that we cannot take time to do it safely.

Safety Committee

The safety committee consists of management and employee representatives who have an interest in the general promotion of safety and health for (company name). The committee is responsible for making recommendations on how to improve safety and health in the workplace. They have been charged with the responsibility to define problems and remove obstacles to accident prevention; to identify hazards and recommend corrective actions; to help identify employee safety training needs and establish accident investigation procedures for our company.

Sincerely,

Signed _____ Date _____

Owner or CEO