**Comprehensive Safety And Health Policies**

Safety and health policies form the foundation of your entire safety program. The sections below give you guidelines for developing safety and health policies and present a wide variety of model policies.

**Policies, Rules, Procedures, Programs, Handbooks**

Before we go on, we should define some terms that are often confused. Here's how we distinguish between policies, rules, procedures, programs, and handbooks:

* **Policies.** A*policy*is a general guide to an organization's philosophy on action and decision-making designed to assure consistency and fairness within the framework of an organization's objectives and philosophy. A policy may be very general—for example, a policy calling for "safety first" in all activities; or it may be more specific—for example, a policy on accident reporting, lockout-tagout, or first aid. More specific policies often contain procedures and rules.
* **Rules.** *Rules*are specific statements about what behavior is allowed (or not allowed) in a givenset of circumstances. A rule might state that safety goggles must be worn to operate a certain piece of equipment. Rules may be incorporated into policies, procedures, manuals, or handbooks.
* **Procedures.** A*procedure*is a sequence of steps or a method for accomplishing an end result. Aprocedure may consist of a series of steps or rules. For example, a procedure might detail the steps for moving a substance from one storage container into another.
* **Programs.** The term program is used to indicate the entire set of activities in the organizationthat involve safety. A program might include training, incentive programs, safety meetings, posters, and many other actions.
* **Manuals and handbooks.** A handbook is a written document that presents the most importantparts of all the items above. It usually contains the general safety information that most employees need to know rather than the specific rules that lathe operators, for example, would need to know.

**Safety Policies**

Some companies first present a general or introductory policy on safety and then have separate policy statements on safety rules, accident investigation and reporting procedures, protective equipment, and so forth. Others try to cover all the bases in a single, comprehensive policy statement. We will give examples of both approaches in the pages that follow. The policies are presented in several groups: first we will deal with broad policies on safety in general. Such policies present a carefully planned, well-organized approach to reducing accidents and improving safety awareness that involves individuals at all levels of the organizational hierarchy. Most corporate safety programs include efforts in the following areas:

* Studying safety records to uncover the causes of accidents and to eliminate the hazards that pose a threat to employee safety.
* Making periodic safety inspections to locate hazards or unsafe conditions, and then making sure that these hazards are eliminated.
* Providing safety training and motivation programs.
* Requiring that personal protective equipment be used when required on the job.
* Encouraging the prompt and accurate reporting of accidents so that the surrounding circumstances may be investigated and the appropriate corrective or disciplinary action taken.

A safety committee composed of both management and employee representatives is often appointed to help carry out these objectives.

There are two basic approaches to reducing accidents: controlling the work environment and controlling the attitudes and behavior of employees. A successful safety program necessarily combines both approaches to reducing accidents. The supervisor's role in such a program is a vital one, because it is he or she who is in the best position not only to keep environmental hazards to a minimum but also to observe and change employee attitudes toward safety.

**Points to Cover**

Assuming that you want to start out with a comprehensive policy statement summarizing the basic provisions of your company's safety program, here are some of the points you should cover:

* **The company's commitment to safety.** It's a good idea to start out with a sentence or twoaffirming the company's commitment to maintaining a safe and healthful place for employees to work.
* **Safety committee.** If your company has an established safety committee, explain what theirresponsibilities are, and what authority they have. Employee involvement is invited on the committees.
* **Supervisors' responsibilities.** Supervisors play a vital role in the implementation of safetypolicies. State as specifically as you can what supervisors are expected to do in carrying out these policies—for example, giving the personal leadership to safety in their department, conducting safety and housekeeping inspections, completing accident report forms, disciplining employees who disobey safety rules, orienting new workers about safety issues, ensuring that protective equipment is worn, etc.
* **Employees' responsibilities.** Even the most vigilant supervisor cannot compensate for aninattentive, careless, or deliberately rebellious employee. While employees may not actually read the policy manual, it is important to spell out their responsibilities so that supervisors can remind them from time to time of the role they must play in accident prevention. These responsibilities include working safely at all times, noting hazards and reporting them to their supervisors, offering suggestions for improving safety procedures, adhering to all company safety rules, etc.
* **Accident investigation and reporting procedures.** Supervisors in most firms are required toreport accidents promptly. An investigation may be carried out by the human resources department, the safety committee, or by the supervisor. In any case, be sure to specify what information is needed, what forms must be completed, and any tips that might be helpful either to the person conducting an investigation or the person(s) assisting him or her.
* **Procedures for correcting or eliminating hazards.** Under what circumstances should asupervisor (or an employee) take immediate action on his or her own to correct a safety hazard? If immediate action is not warranted, what are the appropriate channels through which corrective measures should be routed?
* **Safety training and education programs.** Many companies have periodic training sessionsfor both employees and supervisors to acquaint them with new safety hazards or to refresh their memories about long-standing hazards and what should be done to avoid them.
* **Safety inspections.** If inspections or safety audits are a routine part of your safety program,you may want to include either a brief mention of them in your policy or even a copy of the inspection checklist(s) you use.
* **Protective equipment.** If you don't have a separate policy statement covering personalprotective equipment (safety shoes, safety glasses, ear protection, hair nets, etc.), then be sure to include a statement here.
* **Disciplinary action.** Violations of safety rules should carry penalties similar to those for otherrule violations. You can either refer your readers to your policy on "Work Rules" or "Disciplinary Procedures," or recap the penalties for safety violations here. Start with the premise that employees will want to work safely and protect themselves from injury.
* **Physical exams.** If you don't have a policy on physical examinations for newly hiredemployees or those returning to work after a long absence, you may want to include this as part of your safety program. You can also simply refer your readers to the physical examination policy if it is located elsewhere in the manual.
* **Workers' compensation.** If you don't want to establish a special policy statement on workers'compensation, this might be a good place to mention what benefits an injured worker receives and what documentation is required.

**Things to Consider**

The first and most obvious consideration here will be the nature of your company's operations. A manufacturing firm is going to have to put a lot more thought and planning into its safety program policy than a small white-collar organization, for the simple reason that safety is a more pressing concern in a manufacturing environment. Here are some other issues to take up with your policy committee:

1. **State and federal law.** The provisions of both the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 andrelevant state laws should be reviewed thoroughly as they apply to your company's operations. OSHA regulations are continually being changed, and it may be that some of your safety rules are

already out-of-date. Your company's safety manager should sit in on your policy committee meetings and offer guidance on what your policy should cover.

1. **Your company's safety record.** Preparing new or updated safety policies is a good reason forreviewing your company's safety track record. If it's a good one, then perhaps your existing safety policy is doing its job. But if it leaves room for improvement, then perhaps it's time to come out with a stronger policy statement, backed up by more-specific rules and more-stringent disciplinary actions. It might even be time to establish a safety committee if you don't already have one.
2. **Supervisory commitment.** Supervisors are the key to the success of a company's safety program.Without their understanding of the issues, cooperation, and commitment, your safety program is doomed. Your policy committee may be able to give you a more accurate picture of the status of your current supervisors' commitment to safety on the job. If it is lacking, you may want to incorporate education and training efforts in your policy statement, or simply use stronger or more emphatic language to convey the value you place on the concerned supervisor's role.
3. **Attitudes among employees.** Employee attitudes are often a reflection of supervisory commitmentto safe work practices. A survey of these attitudes, therefore, may provide evidence of inadequate supervisory support for the company's safety program. This would be important to know when you tackle the policy-writing task.

**Samples—'Strict' and 'Standard'**

The two policies that follow are examples of policies covering several different aspects of the company's safety program. The primary difference between them is in who bears the responsibility for implementing the program. The "strict" policy puts most of the burden on the supervisor's shoulders. It covers the supervisor's role in observing and correcting safety hazards, training employees to use safe work procedures, reporting accidents, and so on. At the end is a list of points for the supervisor to cover in orienting a new employee to the company's safety rules and procedures, as well as an "Injury and Investigation Report" form. The "standard" policy spreads the responsibility out a little more, with the employee relations manager being responsible for the overall organization and administration of the companywide safety program, and line management being responsible for implementing this program on a daily basis. There is also a safety and housekeeping committee comprised of employe representatives whose function is to note the existence of hazards, review progress in eliminating them, and promote employee cooperation. The training and education effort is assigned to the human resources department.

**Subject: Safety — General**

**Organization: Anonymous**

**Example of: Strict Policy**

**A. Supervisor's Responsibility**

1. Employee safety on the job is the primary responsibility of every foreman and supervisor. The Safety Department acts only as a coordinator. Employee safety cannot succeed without the Supervisor's utmost sincerity and effort. The Company has gone to great expense to provide safe working conditions throughout the plant. It is the supervisor's duty to see that there is complete safety in his area at all times.
2. The contributing factor in over 60% of all accidents involves both the employee and his/her environment. The supervisor must, therefore, be constantly on the alert for incidents of human error and mechanical failure. He must take the initiative to make corrections where he has such authority. And, lacking direct authority, he must report any condition or employee practice that is likely to cause an accident.
3. The supervisor must be convinced that accidents are caused; they don't just happen. An act of negligence, disregard for established rules or procedures, being in a hurry, improperly guarded machinery, lack of or improper maintenance, all can cause an accident.
4. The supervisor must also be convinced that an accident does not affect the employee alone. Accidents cost money and have a direct impact on Company profitability. Accidents affect

production and directly reflect on the efficiency of the department.

**B.** **Supervisor's Action**

To make the program effective, every member of management shall ensure that:

1. Work is not assigned which is hazardous or located in a hazardous area until all steps have been taken to provide for the safety of the employee.
2. All employees have received proper job instruction and are familiar with pertinent safety and health rules and regulations. Exhibit A is a guideline which should be used for this purpose.
3. Work areas are frequently examined to ascertain that the work environment is safe and that employees are working in a safe manner.
   1. All safety and health deficiencies are corrected immediately and not repeated.
   2. Accidents are investigated and corrective action is initiated where necessary. Exhibit B should be used for this purpose. Like the supervisor, every employee has a specific role in our loss-

prevention efforts. Each employee is expected to participate actively in the Safety Program and observe all established precautionary measures.

**C. Reporting Injuries**

Injuries, no matter how minor, are to be reported to the Medical Department immediately. If circumstances permit, the employee should be given a First Aid pass. In no case shall the injured be moved before examination by Medical or Safety Department if the injury is serious. It is equally important that all spectators be kept away from the scene of an accident. A supervisor should not permit his employees to leave their work areas to go to the scene of an accident. Doctor's note, etc.

brought in by the employee should be forwarded directly to the Safety Department.

Failure to report injuries or illnesses may result in a delay or denial of workers' compensation benefits.

**D. Correcting Deficiencies**

The department supervisor or foreman is responsible for correcting, or causing to be corrected, any hazard which is found as a result of his department inspections or investigation of an accident, or is brought to his attention by an employee. All corrective action must be followed up to ensure completion.

Where necessary, assistance should be requested from the Safety Department.

**E.** **Accident Investigation**

Upon receipt of an investigation form, it shall be completed as soon as possible and returned to the Safety Department. Instructions on the form should be followed explicitly.

**F.** **Workers' Compensation**

Employees who sustain an occupational injury or illness will be compensated in accordance with the State Workers' Compensation Act. In order to receive such benefits, the appropriate notification and medical reports must be provided by the employee.

Any employee who loses time as a result of work-related injury shall not be processed for a medical leave of absence.

1. **Physical Examination**

Physical examinations are required of all employees:

1. Upon employment or reemployment.
2. Upon return to work after a leave of absence for an illness of one month in duration or longer.
3. Upon return to work after an absence from the plant of six months' duration or longer.
4. As required by OSHA: blood work, air sample tests, dental checks, urine samples, hearing tests, physicals, etc.
5. At any other time deemed necessary for the best interests of the employee or the protection of the Company.

Such physical examinations will be given in strict compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Family and Medical Leave Act. Medical records shall be maintained in confidence as required by applicable law.

1. **Personal Protective Equipment**

Where necessary, by reason of hazard, the Company will provide the necessary personal protective

equipment to ensure the well-being of the employee. These items include:

1. Safety glasses
2. Gloves
3. Aprons
4. Safety shoes
5. Respiratory equipment.

Supervision must review operation and provide or request to be provided (by Safety Department) the necessary protection. Items such as clothing, gloves, aprons, protective creams, etc., must be supplied and issued by the department head. Employees are expected to wear such personal protective equipment. Failure to do so may lead to discipline up to and including termination.

**Exhibit A**

**Employee Safety Indoctrination**

1. **General**
   * Safety is a responsibility of each employee
   * Report unsafe conditions or equipment
   * Follow established procedures
   * Report all injuries/illnesses no matter how slight
   * Don't perform unsafe acts
2. **Machine Safety**
   * Use of guards/bypassing guards
   * Service/cleaning
   * Loose clothing, jewelry
3. **Hand Tools**
   * Use the right tool
   * Keep them in good condition
4. **Protective Equipment**
   * Use glasses, gloves, shoes, aprons, etc., where required
   * Ask supervision to supply or replace them
5. **Housekeeping**
   * Keep your work area clean
   * Do not store material in aisles or passageways
   * Be on the lookout for others
6. **Material Handling**
   * Stack material safely
   * Use wagon, lift trucks, etc., safely
   * Lift properly
7. **Electrical Safety**
   * Do not tamper with or try to service equipment yourself
   * Report exposed electrical wires
8. **Fire Safety**
   * Observe "no smoking" signs
   * Handle and store flammable liquids properly
   * Know the location and use of fire extinguishers
9. **Personal Conduct**
   * Horseplay is not allowed
   * No running in the plant
   * Observe warning and caution signs

I have reviewed with this employee the specific safety precautions of the job and the precautions outlined in the Company Safety Handbook.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

(supervisor) (date)

I have received detailed instruction on my specific job and the general precautions outlined in the Company Safety Handbook.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

(employee) (date)

**Exhibit B**

**Injury and Investigation Report**

**Injured or Ill Employee**

(Filled out by nurse or first-aid person)

(1)-Employer:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Mail Address:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. Facility:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
3. Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
4. Social Security No.:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
5. Home Address:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

No.Street

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Town State Zip Code

1. Age: \_\_\_\_\_\_ (8)Sex: Male \_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_
2. Shift: \_\_\_\_\_\_ (10) Clock/Emp. No.: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

(11) Dept.: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Foreman: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Injury or Illness**

(Filled out by nurse or first-aid person)

1. Date of Report:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. Is injury or illness related to employment?
3. Date of injury or initial diagnosis:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
4. Time of injury:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
5. Describe the illness or injury in detail and indicate the part of body affected, e.g., amputation of right index finger at second joint; fracture of ribs; lead poisoning; dermatitis of left hand; etc.
6. Did employee die? Yes \_\_ No \_\_
7. Did employee return to work? Yes \_\_ No \_\_
8. If employee did not return to work, indicate last day worked:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Name and address of physician:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. If hospitalized, name and address of hospital:
3. Names of witnesses:
4. Signature of employee:
5. Signature of nurse or first-aid person:

**Accident or Illness Prevention**

(Filled out by foreman)

1. How did the accident occur? Describe fully the events which resulted in the injury or occupational illness. Tell what happened and how it happened. Name all objects or substances involved and tell how they were involved. Give full details of all factors which led to or contributed to the accident.

Use the reverse side if necessary.

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1. How can future mishaps be prevented? Describe changes or improvements in equipment, procedures, buildings, etc. Consider training & personal protective equipment as preventive measures.

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(28) Date and type of corrective action initiated:

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1. Date corrective action expected to be completed:

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1. Is assistance from Safety Dept. needed? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. Signature of Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
3. Signature of Safety Dept.:

Comments:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**Subject: Safety Program**

**Organization: Anonymous**

**Example of: Standard Policy**

**Responsibility**

The Employee Relations Manager shall coordinate Division safety activities, establishing procedures for promoting safe working conditions, conducting safety meetings, reviewing accidents, and recommending measures to reduce accidents and health hazards; he shall work with the Workmen's Compensation carrier, and with local, state and federal agencies to assure that safety and health standards fully meet applicable requirements.

Line management, including the Plant Manager, Manufacturing Manager, and all foremen and supervisors shall be responsible for incorporating safety and good housekeeping into the day-to-day activities of their departments, including the taking of corrective and preventive action on problems within their departments.

The Safety & Housekeeping Committee shall meet on a monthly basis. Consisting of hourly and salaried employees representing all departments and shifts, the Committee shall bring to management's attention for corrective action any safety and housekeeping problems noted during the preceding month. The Committee shall review progress on solving problems previously brought up, recommending solutions wherever possible. Promotion of interest and cooperation on safety and housekeeping matters shall be a prime concern of the Committee.

**Safety Rules**

Employees and supervisors have cooperated in the establishment of Division safety rules. Each foreman and supervisor is responsible for seeing that the rules are observed within his/her own

department, and for taking corrective or disciplinary action as required to assure work is carried out within these rules.

**Employment**

The personnel department shall screen applicants for employment so as to ensure placement on jobs to which the applicants' physical capacities are suited. Questionable cases shall be referred to outside medical authorities for evaluation. All screening and evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and all other applicable laws.

**Orientation**

Foremen and supervisors shall double-check the hiring/placement decision, noting any physical problems with applicants and new employees, recommending corrective action as required. They shall also be responsible for ensuring that the new employee knows all safety, health, and housekeeping rules to which his job is subject.

**Training and Education**

The personnel department shall coordinate the use of meetings, contests, films, discussion groups, communications, and other activities to train selected groups and educate all employees for awareness of safety and housekeeping problems. Line management shall recommend specific areas where such training and education may be required.

**Accidents**

The foreman or supervisor shall report each industrial accident or health problem requiring outside treatment to the personnel department on the Supervisor's Accident Investigation Report. The foremen and the personnel department, together with members of management as required, shall investigate reported accidents, taking corrective action as necessary to prevent recurrence.

**Inspections**

Together with representatives of the Workmen's Compensation carrier, with personnel of local, state and federal agencies, or with other Division personnel, the Employee Relations Manager, Plant Manager, Manufacturing Manager, and foremen shall inspect the facility regularly for safety and housekeeping problems. Such problems as may be found shall be evaluated and corrective action taken as required.

**Engineering**

Plant, manufacturing, industrial, and product engineering activities shall be carried out so as to eliminate hazards involving defective equipment and inadequate facilities on both a preventive and remedial basis.

**Facilities**

The Company shall maintain facilities for first aid, fire extinguishers, emergency exits, walkways,

parking lots, control panels, air temperature and cleanliness, lavatories, lighting, and other environmental factors, fully meeting requirements applicable to the Division.

Facilities shall be inspected regularly to ensure compliance with safety standards. **Deficiencies**

Such deficiencies as may be found in Division safety and housekeeping procedures by insurance personnel or representatives of local, state and federal agencies shall be evaluated and corrected as required.

Violation of safety rules may result in discipline up to and including discharge. **Safety Rules for all Departments**

These safety rules have been established by the Division Safety & Housekeeping Committee and approved by Division Management for the protection of each employee. All employees are requested to cooperate in observing these rules, and to help in making the Division a safe and orderly place to work.

1. Never operate any machine or equipment unless you are specifically authorized to do so by your foreman.
2. Do not operate defective equipment. Do not use broken hand tools. Report defective or hazardous equipment to your foreman.
3. Obtain full instructions from your foreman before operating a machine with which you are not familiar.
4. Never start on any hazardous job without being completely familiar with the safety techniques which apply to it. Check with your foreman if in doubt.
5. Make sure all safety attachments are in place and properly adjusted before operating any machine.
6. Do not operate any machine or equipment at unsafe speeds. Shut off equipment which is not in use.
7. Wear all protective garments and equipment necessary to be safe on the job. Wear proper shoes; sandals or other open-toed or thin-soled shoes should not be worn.
8. Do not wear loose, flowing clothing or long hair while operating moving machinery.
9. Never repair or adjust any machine or equipment unless you are specifically authorized to do so by your foreman.
10. Never oil, clean, repair, or adjust any machine while it is in motion.
11. Never repair or adjust any electrically driven machine without opening and properly tagging the main switch.
12. Put tools and equipment away when they are not in use.
13. Do not lift items which are too bulky or too heavy to be handled by one person. Ask for assistance.
14. Keep all aisles, stairways, and exits clear of skids, boxes, air hoses, equipment, and spillage.
15. Do not place equipment and materials so as to block emergency exit routes, fire boxes, sprinkler shutoffs, machine or electrical control panels, or fire extinguishers.
16. Stack all materials neatly and make sure piles are stable.
17. Keep your work area, machinery and all company facilities which you use clean and neat.
18. Do not participate in horseplay, or tease or otherwise distract fellow workers. Do not run on company premises - always walk.
19. Power-truck operators must safeguard other workers at all times; workers must show courtesy to power-truck operators.
20. Never take chances. If you're unsure, ask your foreman. Let good common sense be your guide.