Section 9: Safety Committees (Required)

WHY

An active, trained safety committee can be an important tool for implementing an effective AWAIR program.

WHO

* Minnesota Statutes §182.676\* requires all employers with more than 25 employees “establish and administer a joint labor-management safety committee.”
* A safety committee is required for some companies of more than 25 employees or other specific conditions. If there is a need for a safety committee, then specific requirements for composition and meeting schedules will exist.
* Employers with 25 or fewer employees that either have a lost-workday case incidence rate in the top 10% of all rates for employers in the same industry or have a workers’ compensation pure premium rate as reported by the Workers’ Compensation Rating Association in the top 25% of premium rates for all classes also must establish a committee.
* A safety committee can be implemented even though not required.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:**

Consult with an attorney who is an expert in labor law if you decide to establish a safety committee. If you are a union shop, you will want to contact the business agent in your union for their advice in setting up a safety committee.

HOW

* Hold regularly scheduled meetings unless otherwise provided in a collective bargaining agreement
* Employee-committee members must be elected by employees.
* Use the following samples to create your own documents, specific to your company.

MNOSHA Workplace Safety Consultation (WSC) offers assistance to employers and employees trying to establish joint labor-management safety committees.

**Contact WSC:**

Web: <http://www.doli.state.mn.us/Wsc.asp>

Phone: (651) 284-5060

Email: *osha.consultation@state.mn.us*

\*For the most current and complete language of the statutes, visit w*ww.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=182.653*

**Sample 1**

**Purpose**

The purpose of our safety committee is to create a forum for the detection and elimination of unsafe procedures and practices throughout the workplace. The committee will have authority to investigate procedures and determine if unsafe conditions exist and recommend correction.

**Committee Requirements**

* The Committee will have representatives from employees and management
* Employees will elect fellow workers to represent them on the committee
* A maximum of one year on the committee for employee-elected representative
* The chair of the committee will be elected by the committee
* The committee will have regularly scheduled meetings – at least quarterly
* The minutes of the committee meetings will be recorded with names in attendance
* The minutes will be available to all employees
* The committee will appoint members responsible for safety committee duties
  1. Conduct in-house safety inspections
  2. Assist in accident investigation
  3. Review accident reports and recommend corrective action
  4. Monitor safety reporting and recommend goals and objectives to meet

**Sample 2**

**Purpose**

To help in the detection and elimination of unsafe conditions and work procedures, a safety committee will be established with representation from employees and management.

**Committee Procedure**

The following guidelines will be followed:

* Employees shall elect fellow workers to represent them on the committee. The method of voting shall be optional.
* The terms of employee-elected members shall be a maximum of one year. Should a vacancy occur on the committee, a new member shall be elected.
* The chairperson shall be elected by the safety committee.
* The frequency of meetings shall be determined by the safety committee for regularly scheduled meetings unless otherwise provided by a collective bargaining agreement.
* The date, hour, and location of meetings shall be determined by the safety committee.
* The length of each meeting shall not exceed one hour except by majority vote of the safety committee.
* The attendance and subjects discussed shall be documented and maintained on file for a period of one year. Copies of the minutes must be provided to:
* top management
* the safety office, and
* employees by posting on the bulletin board and in break areas.

**Committee Requirements:**

* Conduct in-house safety inspections with appropriate supervisor.
* Assist in accident investigation to uncover trends.
* Perform job hazard analyses (JHAs)
* Review accident reports to determine means of elimination.
* Accept and evaluate employee suggestions.
* Review job procedures and recommend improvements. Provide input for the creation of workplace safety and health rules.
* Monitor the safety program effectiveness.
* Promote and publicize safety.
* Train new employees about safe working procedures
* Bring employee safety and health concerns and complaints to supervision and management for correction. Safety committee members should be able to perform their duties without fear of discrimination or retaliation by management.
* Present safety and health information at regularly scheduled staff meetings.