

Workplace Health & Safety Policy

(Also known as - A Workplace Accident & Injury Reduction Policy (AWAIR))

DIVISION: Office of Management & Budget
AUTHORITY: 2019-037

EFFECTIVE: 04-02-19
REVISED:

Purpose

Scott County strives to maintain a safe, healthy, injury, and illness free work environment. This policy sets expectations and standards for comprehensive workplace health and safety programs and establishes a structure by which this organization operates. The purpose of the policy is to assist the County in promoting workplace health and safety, reduce occupational injury and illness, prevent property loss, and comply with federal, state, and local health and safety regulations.

Scope

This policy applies to all County Elected/Appointed Officials, employees, and volunteers. Contractors working on behalf of the County are covered under this Workplace Health & Safety Policy in addition to any safety policy compliance within their own organization(s).

Definitions

Accident/Incident: An unplanned and unexpected event that happens without apparent or deliberate cause which may include injury, damage to property, illness, and/or a combination thereof.

Accident/Incident Report: A Scott County document required to be completed to report an accident, incident, or near miss.

First Report of Injury (FROI) Form: State mandated reporting document for all work-related injury (workers' compensation) claims.

Hazard: A danger or risk which has the potential to cause injury, illness, or property damage.

Near Miss: An unplanned event that did not result in injury, illness, or property damage, however, had the potential to occur.

Policy: A written rule that outlines a fundamental topic.

Procedure: A written document (at times may be verbally communicated) that provides instructions on how to accomplish a task.

Program: A written document that explains and details the management of a specific topic.

SCOOP: Scott County Our Online Pages.

Roles and Responsibilities

All County employees have a responsibility for creating and maintaining a safe and healthy work environment.

Elected/Appointed Officials

Elected/Appointed Officials approve and support resources necessary for a safe and healthy workplace which promotes quality public services. Support includes providing employees and supervisors with the authority to identify and correct hazards; budget to purchase or keep equipment in safe operating condition; training necessary to work safely; and policy, program, or procedures to ensure hazards are recognized and addressed.

Division Directors

Directors serve as the lead for health and safety issues within their respective division or department.

Specific responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

1. Become familiar with division applicable health and safety standards established in federal, state, and local regulations.
2. Review and comply with the *Workplace Health & Safety Policy*, supplemental programs and procedures as necessary.
3. Assist with the development of division specific procedures as necessary.
4. Ensure managers, supervisors, employees, and contractors are provided with the *Workplace Health & Safety Policy* and supplemental programs and procedures as necessary.
5. Review division specific Accident/Incident Reports with goals to prevent additional injuries, illness, or property damage. Assist and/or conduct accident investigations.
6. Perform periodic review of work environments and job duties to ensure and enforce safe conditions and practices.
7. Effectively budget to provide safe equipment, tools, training, and personal protective clothing.
8. Communicate the importance of workplace safety and health to managers, supervisors, and employees.
9. Ensure managers, supervisors, and employees complete assigned training.

Managers/Supervisors

Managers/supervisors directly support and supervise day-to-day employee operations.

Specific responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

1. Become familiar with division applicable health and safety standards established in federal, state, and local regulations.

2. Review and comply with the *Workplace Health & Safety Policy*, supplemental programs and procedures as necessary.
3. Assist with the development of department specific procedures as necessary.
4. Review department specific Accident/Incident Reports with goals to prevent additional injuries, illness, or property damage. Assist and/or conduct accident investigations.
5. Evaluate work conditions and environments to identify unsafe or unhealthy conditions.
6. Take prompt action to correct hazardous conditions or correct unsafe behaviors.
7. Provide safe equipment, tools, practices, and personal protective clothing to employees.
8. Provide safety orientation on department specific safety programs and procedures and conduct on-the-job training.
9. Ensure employees complete assigned training.

Employees

Employees are the first line of defense with identifying, mitigating or controlling hazards.

Specific responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

1. Become familiar with department applicable health and safety standards established in federal, state, and local regulations.
2. Review and comply with the *Workplace Health & Safety Policy*, supplemental programs and procedures as necessary.
3. Assist with the development of department specific procedures as necessary.
4. Perform jobs and tasks as directed.
5. Use equipment, tools, and personal protective clothing as required.
6. Take prompt action to avoid or correct hazardous conditions or unsafe environments.
7. Promptly report health or safety hazards, faulty equipment, tools, or defective or damaged personal protective equipment to their supervisor.
8. Complete assigned training.

Employee Relations

Employee Relations is responsible for providing support and leadership to County employees.

Specific responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

1. Provide oversight and guidance in the administration of the Workplace Health & Safety (AWAIR) Policy and Programs.
2. Maintain and provide health & safety information on SCOOP.
3. Complete First Report of Injury (FROI) forms.
4. Retain records of employee Accident/Incident Reports, FROIs, confidential records, and other sensitive information.

Safety Program Specialist

The Safety Program Specialist is the primary contact within the County for all applicable topics related to workplace health and safety.

Specific responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

1. Knowledgeable with safety & health standards established in federal, state, and local regulations.
2. Maintain, update, and annually review the *Workplace Health & Safety Policy*, supplemental programs and procedures as necessary.
3. Assist with the development of division and department specific procedures as necessary.
4. Ensure elected/appointed officials, division directors, managers, supervisors, and employees are provided with the *Workplace Health & Safety Policy* and supplemental programs and procedures as necessary.
5. Review all Accident/Incident Reports with goals to prevent additional injuries, illness, or property damage. Assist and/or conduct accident investigations.
6. Perform periodic inspections of work environments, tasks, etc. to ensure and enforce safe conditions and practices.
7. Provide staff with information regarding safe equipment, tools, practices, and personal protective clothing.
8. Communicate workplace safety information to appropriate staff.
9. Maintain and provide safety information on SCOOP.
10. Ensure employees are provided with proper training.
11. Co-chair Scott County Safety & Wellness Team.

Occupational Health Nurse

The Occupational Health Nurse promotes and supports a culture of health and wellness for all staff.

Specific responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

1. Knowledgeable with health & safety standards established in federal, state, and local regulations.
2. Assist with the annual review of the *Workplace Health & Safety Policy*, supplemental programs and procedures as necessary.
3. Assist with the development of division and department specific procedures as necessary.
4. Ensure workers' compensation claims are filed on behalf of employees as required. Manage return-to-work program.
5. Perform periodic inspections of work environments, tasks, etc. to ensure and enforce safe conditions and practices.
6. Provide staff with information regarding safe equipment, tools, practices and personal protective clothing.
7. Communicate workplace health information to appropriate staff.
8. Maintain and provide health information on SCOOP.
9. Ensure employees are provided with proper training.
10. Co-chair Scott County Safety & Wellness Team.

Safety & Wellness Team

Scott County has established an organizational Safety & Wellness Team pursuant to Minnesota statutes that meets on a quarterly basis to support a safe and healthy work environment. All divisions within the County's operation shall have representation on the Safety & Wellness Team. The team is a collaboration of staff from management and non-management positions. Safety & Wellness Team members are valued for the work they do and shall not be subjected to discrimination or retaliation for addressing workplace health and safety concerns.

Examples of common functions of the Safety & Wellness Team include, but are not limited to:

1. Establish goals for the organization with respect to workplace health and safety.
2. Review accidents/incidents and workers' compensation trends to develop strategies to prevent additional injuries, illness, or property damage.
3. Assist with division inspections to identify health and safety hazards.

4. Address safety and health concerns brought to the attention of team members.
5. Perform reviews of programs or procedures as appropriate and make recommendations to the Safety Program Specialist and Occupational Health Nurse.

Goals and Objectives

Creating a safer, healthier work environment is a fundamental goal of the County. Analyzing the work environment for hazards, making changes to mitigate or control the hazards, determining if the change was successful, and implementing sustainable adjustments are important factors for continually improving the work environment and culture.

The Safety Program Specialist, Occupational Health Nurse, and Safety & Wellness Team perform important roles with establishing objectives and goals to improve workplace health and safety.

Accident/Incident Reporting

All County employees are required to report any accident, injury, work-related illness, or near-miss, regardless of severity, or damage to property relating to County operations or occurring on County property within 48 hours by completing the [Accident/Incident Report](#). The report shall be signed by the manager or supervisor and division director.

Employee Relations is responsible for using the completed Accident/Incident Report to file and submit a FROI.

In the event the operator of a County vehicle or a personal vehicle on County business is involved in an accident/incident, regardless of the severity, the local law enforcement agency shall be contacted and the operator should proceed as directed. The operator of the vehicle involved in the accident shall provide all the necessary identification and insurance information to the other party involved and also obtain this information from the operator of the other vehicle. Those accidents involving a single County vehicle where there is vehicle or property damage without personal injury shall be reported by the operator to the Supervisor as soon as possible. For further information regarding vehicle accidents, review the [Safe Driving Program](#).

Accident/Incident Investigation

The Safety Program Specialist is responsible for organizing an Accident Review Team (ART) to conduct accident/incident investigations. The Accident/Incident Report is used to document the investigation.

The goal is to review the accident/incident details and employ appropriate corrective actions to prevent a similar injury, illness, or near-miss; or incur additional damage to property.

All accidents/incidents, regardless of severity, will be investigated. This also includes injury or potential injury to a person not employed by the County but which occurred on County property.

Hazard Identification, Analysis and Control

A variety of methods are used to identify, analyze, and control new or existing job hazards. Examples include division or department inspections, mock OSHA assessments, loss-control and property audits, federal/state/local agency inspections, accident/incident investigations, employee reports, checklists, etc.

Once hazards are identified, an analysis is performed to determine the proper control. The order of precedence and effectiveness of hazard control includes engineering controls, administrative controls, and personal protective equipment.

Engineering controls include designing the work area, equipment, or task to remove or lessen the risk of injury, illness or property damage, enclosing or isolating the hazard, or removal or redirection of a hazard thru industrial ventilation. Administrative controls include developing programs and procedures, work permits, signs, monitoring of hazardous materials or processes, and training. Personal protective equipment is an acceptable method of control when other controls do not completely eliminate the hazard.

A specific example of a method that may be used to analyze a task or position is called a Job Hazard Assessment (JHA). The assessment focuses on the task or position as a way of identifying hazards within a process or for a particular group of employees. Essential steps or functions are evaluated to determine the safe interaction between the worker, assigned tasks, tools, procedures, and the environment.

The objective of performing a JHA is that employees and management work together to identify workplace hazards associated with their essential job functions and establish controls to minimize the potential for injury/illness.

The result is to eliminate, mitigate, and control hazards identified during the analysis. Furthermore, the assessment provides managers and supervisors with a list of known hazards for their assigned employee groups which can be used to determine appropriate training, hiring requirements, and return-to-work assignments.

Programs

Through the identification of workplace hazards, the following written programs are established to manage such risks:

Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Control: Bloodborne pathogens are pathogenic microorganisms that may be found in human blood that can infect and cause disease in others. Such pathogens include but are not limited to Hepatitis B Virus (HBV), Hepatitis C Virus (HCV), and Human Immune Deficiency Virus (HIV). (Bloodborne Pathogens)

Confined Space: Employees or contractors entering a confined space are exposed to serious injury or death if hazards are not properly controlled. (Confined Space)

Emergency Action: Crisis planning is vital for the protection of our employees, visitors, and property. Careful planning, practice, and effective response, saves lives, prevents injuries, and minimizes property damage. Part of the County's emergency readiness is to provide medical equipment for emergencies, including automated external defibrillators (AEDs). The goal of the Emergency Action Program is to provide practical guidance on how to respond in an emergency. (Emergency Action)

Employee Right-to-Know: Hazardous substances or chemicals, harmful physical agents, and infectious agents can cause injury or illness to exposed employees. Chemical inventories, Safety Data Sheets (SDS), work practice controls, labeling and training are key components of a compliant Employee Right-to-Know Program. (Employee Right-to-Know)

Ergonomics: Fitting and adapting the work environment to the employees' tasks encourage efficiency and may reduce the risk of musculoskeletal injuries. (Ergonomics)

Hearing Conservation: Work-related noise induced hearing loss is a hazard within some of our departments due to operating loud equipment or exposure to unsafe noise levels. (Hearing Conservation)

Indoor Air Quality (IAQ): Indoor air pollutants can cause discomfort and affect employee attendance and productivity. Poor IAQ can cause or contribute to short- and long-term health problems, including asthma, respiratory tract infection and disease, allergic reactions, headaches, nasal congestion, eye and skin irritations, coughing, sneezing, fatigue, dizziness and nausea. (Indoor Air Quality)

Lockout-Tagout: Employees or contractors servicing or maintaining machines or equipment are exposed to serious injury or death if hazardous energy such as electricity, gas, steam, hydraulic pressure, or pneumatics are not properly controlled. (Lockout-Tagout)

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): When engineering, work practice, and administrative controls are not feasible or do not provide sufficient protection, employers must provide personal protective equipment (PPE) to their employees and ensure its use. PPE is equipment worn to minimize exposure to a variety of hazards. (Personal Protective Equipment)

Respiratory Protection: Respiratory protection may at times be required to protect employees from atmospheric chemicals or hazards such as dusts, mists, fumes, aerosols, particulates, fibers, and oxygen deficiency. (Respiratory Protection)

Safe Driving: Vehicle accidents are costly and may result in unnecessary injury. It is the driver's responsibility to operate the vehicle in a safe manner and to drive defensively to prevent injuries and property loss. (Safe Driving)

Tuberculosis Exposure Control: Not all infectious disease is transmitted through blood or blood contaminated materials. Tuberculosis (TB) is an example of an infectious disease spread thru respiratory discharge such as coughs or sneezes. (Tuberculosis)

Communication

SCOOP is the primary way the County communicates safety programs, provides access to forms (including the [Accident/Incident Report](#)), checklists, meeting minutes, online training, etc.

Employee Relations is responsible for maintaining and sharing safety information on SCOOP. Safety Data Sheets (SDS) are stored with an outside vendor. A desktop link to the vendor is provided to all employees.

Recordkeeping

Records of safety efforts and activities shall be retained and maintained according to the MN Government Data Practices Act and the County's retention schedule. Questions about recordkeeping may be directed to the Safety Program Specialist, Occupational Health Nurse, Employee Relations, or the County Attorney's Office.

The following records shall be kept:

1. Employee and visitor accident and injury records, accident and injury frequency rates and related information.
2. Inspection records, investigation reports, meeting minutes, and safety training records.
3. Medical documentation including pre-employment medical information, medical history, medical tests, and similar information.*
4. Environmental exposures including Safety Data Sheets (SDS), employee exposures, job descriptions, work and substance locations, and other important information where applicable.

**shall be kept only in the employee medical file in Employee Relations.*

Training

Creating a culture of workplace health and safety begins with a well-trained workforce. Health and safety training will be provided to all employees in positions with known or identified hazards. Scott County provides training during work hours and at no cost to the employee. Material appropriate in content and vocabulary to education level, literacy, and language of employees shall be used.

Initial Training

Upon hire employees are required to review and sign-off on the following health and safety policies and programs:

- Workplace Health & Safety Policy
- Emergency Action Program
- Safe Driving Program

Training on department specific health and safety programs and procedures occurs at the departmental orientation of new employees and continues throughout employment.

In particular, managers and supervisors are responsible to:

1. Schedule a specific time with the new employee(s) to discuss and thoroughly review departmental health and safety programs, procedures, and rules including the *Workplace Health & Safety Policy*.
2. Answer any questions the employee(s) may have regarding the health and safety information.
3. Demonstrate to the employee(s) that health and safety is a vital part of their job and emphasize the need for their active participation and cooperation.

Ongoing Training

Refresher training is necessary when required under specific program regulations or statutes, new procedures or processes are introduced, or when work practices indicate the need for retraining.

Enforcement

Workplace health and safety rules are subject to enforcement and discipline in the same manner as other work rules and activities as described in conditions of employment and bargaining agreements.

Review

The *Workplace Health & Safety Policy* will be reviewed at least annually. Other County health and safety programs or procedures shall be updated as prescribed in those documents or as mandated by regulation or statute.

REVIEW

The *Workplace Health & Safety Policy* shall be reviewed and updated at least annually.

Date of Review (Month / Year)	Description of Change
December 2017	FIELD ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTING, Scott County Safety Manager, ER Director, Safety Program Specialist rewrote the Workplace Health & Safety Policy.
September 2018	Policy was reviewed and finalized by Safety Manager and ER Director.
December 2018	Policy was reviewed and finalized by Safety Manager, Safety Program Specialist, and Occupational Health Nurse.
January 2019	Presented to the Senior Leadership Team for review and input. Updates reviewed and finalized by Safety Manager, Safety Program Specialist, and Occupational Health Nurse.
March 2019	Policy reviewed with the County Commissioners and County Administration at a County Board Workshop.