Tools for Schools

Safety management and risk prevention for customers in education

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SECTION 1: ADMINISTRATION

Introduction

Employees have the right to a safe and healthy workplace. It's the responsibility of an organization to ensure compliance with applicable health, safety and environmental laws, regulations and requirements. It's imperative administrators ensure activities are conducted in a manner that protects students, faculty, staff, the public, property and the environment. Organizations should make a commitment to health, safety and environmental performance and strive to achieve:

- Zero injuries or illnesses
- Zero environmental incidents
- Zero property losses or damage

Achieving these goals is the responsibility of all members of the organization, though supervisors have particular responsibility for individuals reporting to them. Policies should actively support and implement all possible measures to minimize exposures to accidental injury or conditions that could adversely affect health and safety.

To protect personnel, safety should be the overriding priority in all efforts and not be compromised under any circumstances.

This publication is designed to serve as a safety and health resource to administrators and staff. It does not fully encompass all safety and health exposures anticipated in the education industry. Special hazards may exist within the education system that requires greater emphasis, e.g., school/campus activities, use of a ceramic kiln, chemicals, off-site trips, radiation.

Your United Heartland Loss Control representative can provide guidance to additional resources on more specific health and safety topics. Please contact your representative for more information.

The Importance of Risk Management

An Administrator's View

Today's business environment is constantly changing, creating a dynamic set of business and financial risks that can be difficult to identify or quantify. Organizations are often losing the internal resources required to manage them. As a result, administrators must increasingly seek innovative ways to manage the challenges posed by ever-changing risks. Their focus should be managing the entire spectrum of risk, including but not limited to:

- Emphasizing continuity of service within budgetary constraints
- Identifying risks that could harm an organization's personnel, property, environment or financial standing
- Reducing the total cost of risk by considering the cost benefit of implementing effective safety measures
- Ensuring unexpected events receiving public attention don't create unfavorable outcomes

The primary objective of an effective risk management program is to eliminate or adequately control risks and ultimately reduce accidents. It outlines techniques and procedures that are imperative for the protection of any organization's greatest asset — its people.

At the same time, there needs to be awareness of the direct costs of accidents — those reflected in insurance premiums. We must be fully aware of the adverse effect that indirect or hidden costs of accidents can have on risk management efforts. These costs can mean the difference between success and failure.

What is Risk?

Risk is a measure of the probability and severity of adverse effects. In other words, can it happen? How often can it happen? What are the consequences if it does happen?

Risk Assessment

A successful risk assessment includes short- and long-range plans to reduce or eliminate any risk it chooses to assume, thereby enabling them to better develop contingency plans and improve hazard control programs.

Benefits:

- Identifying risks and estimating the total risk to which an organization is exposed
- Evaluating risk control and risk financing strategies, and using cost-benefit analysis to help select the most effective strategies
- Protecting a district from losses that would have serious impact on its well-being
- Applying resources more effectively to various risk avoidance, transfer, control or financing options
- Evaluating residual risks to be retained, in terms of type and magnitude
- Improving communication within the district on vital risk and hazard control issues

Risk Management Methodology

- **Risk categorization** — develops a broad, organized review of potential risk categories
- **Risk identification** — defines specific risks and quantifies their probability and consequences
- **Risk analysis** — identifies risks whose consequences would be unacceptable and those requiring further study
- **Risk mitigation** — develops strategies for reducing risk
- **Risk resolution** — determines resources to reduce risks and appropriate risk transfer points

Workers' Compensation 101

For over 100 years, injured employees in the U.S. have been protected from severe financial loss by a system of workers' compensation. Workers' compensation was designed to be a 'no fault' system with some notable exceptions. An employee who is injured while doing their job is entitled to certain payments for medical assistance and even the loss of wages if the employee is not able to return to work.

Medical bills are paid in full if an employee is found to have suffered the injury while in the course and scope of employment. Indemnity payments are paid for lost time, after a certain number of days are lost, and/or significant injuries occur. Each state has different laws concerning when and how lost wages are paid.

Exposures and Hazards

Risk is sometimes referred to as exposure. Exposures increase the potential for harm or damage to people, property or the environment, based on the characteristics of objects and the actions or inactions of people. Sometimes exposure is estimated based on past accidents for a given situation, as well as how severe or serious the accidents were. Many people think of hazards as being unsafe conditions. However, unsafe actions, behavior, or performance by individuals also leads to accidents.

It is equally important to control unsafe acts and unsafe conditions alike.

Sometimes it's helpful to look at the types of accidents that have occurred and then tie those to the hazards. For example, the hazard presented by an employee standing on a chair to reach for a book on a shelf — if you were looking at this task, you might ask yourself, "Why isn't the employee using a ladder?" As you examine the situation, you might conclude that a ladder is not available.

It's important to prevent accidents from happening by implementing a proactive safety and health program. When accidents happen, remember to actively manage the claim to control medical costs and help the injured worker get back to work and back to life.

Reduce Workers' Compensation Costs

1. **Set the right culture**
   Employers should adopt and foster a culture of respect and care – one that ensures employees receive proper medical care when injured and helps them get back to work as quickly as possible.

2. **Hire smart**
   New employees represent a potential for liability. To minimize exposure, employers should use a thorough hiring process to ensure employees can physically perform job duties and filter out unqualified candidates.

3. **Commit to safety**
   Make safety a core value. Employers should create a comprehensive safety program built around employee involvement and hold people accountable for adhering to all company standards.

4. **Train and educate**
   Employers should train employees to perform tasks safely, while holding managers and supervisors accountable for enforcing all safety procedures.

5. **Use qualified workers' compensation medical specialists**
   Establishing policies and procedures so injured workers visit pre-qualified medical specialists.

6. **Handle claims quickly and properly**
   Employers should report all injuries within 24 hours and make sure medical providers and third-party administrators follow up in a timely manner.

7. **Implement a return-to-work program**
   The surest way to reduce long-term costs is to get people back on the job as quickly as possible. If necessary, use transitional work programs until the injured employee can return to their regular job.

8. **Review claims on a regular basis**
   Agents or third-party administrators should meet with employers regularly to review claims, analyze loss history and devise strategies for minimizing costs.

9. **Seek out experience and value in your provider**
   Reducing workers' compensation costs involves more than getting the lowest premium. Look to those who will work with you to set up and manage a complete workers' compensation solution.

10. **Remember, workers' compensation is a variable cost, not a fixed cost**
    Employers can have a huge impact on how much or how little they spend on workers' compensation, depending on how they manage the variables involved. Two primary factors driving workers' compensation costs are the number and frequency of claims and the cost of those claims when they occur. Focusing on these key leverage points will yield the greatest impact.

Accident Prevention Process

Overview

The key to preventing accidents and injuries is to establish an occupational safety and health safety process. Consider each of the five components below and rate your progress.

1. Ensure management commitment
2. Involve all members of the organization
3. Identify and prioritize potential hazards
4. Eliminate hazards
5. Train employees, contractors, students and management

The occupational health and safety process should be tailored to the needs of the organization. The program may be organization-wide or developed solely for a particular facility, depending on resources. Small organizations with limited resources have formed safety and health cooperatives with other organizations to help manage all or parts of their programs.

Ensure Management Commitment

Top administration must be involved
Top administrators should be leaders in implementing the process. They should stay informed and involved.

Develop a written safety and health policy
This policy may take the form of one or more policy statements or a policy manual that covers issues regarding safety procedures. It should be posted and/or issued to all faculty, staff and students, where applicable.

Ensure adequate personnel resources
Make sure individuals assigned as personnel resources are given adequate time to do the job. It's important to select people who are qualified, competent and motivated.

Ensure adequate financial resources
Ensure there's a plan for safety needs during the budget process.

Evaluate program performance regularly
The occupational safety and health process should be a part of all performance reviews, including those of top administration and teachers. Acknowledge those who have been involved in identifying and correcting hazards and working safely.

Involve All Members of the Organization

Establish a safety committee
For such a committee to succeed, it should be composed of representatives from management, faculty/staff and perhaps even students. Assign a health and safety coordinator to lead the committee and ensure carefully selected representatives have a clear understanding of its mission, power and functions.

Communicate regularly
Use newsletters, social media, communication boards or class time to convey new procedures and safety assignments and to introduce new committee members. Make safety and health a regular item on the agenda of staff, board, union and other meetings.

Develop a hazard-reporting procedure
Employees and students should be encouraged to identify and report potential hazards to the safety committee.

Identify and Prioritize Potential Hazards

The following functions should be performed on a regular basis by individuals or committee members assigned to the task. You may wish to keep records of these activities.

Complete safety inspection checklists
Inspection checklists can help identify hazards and determine whether the organization is in compliance with applicable safety and health regulations.

Conduct walk-through inspections
Using checklists provides an opportunity to interview employees and students about safety concerns. Let them know the outcome of previous concerns and share new hazard report forms.

Maintain and update a chemical inventory
As required by OSHA's hazard communication program, the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA) Title III, and state hazardous waste regulations, organizations must record the name and amount of all chemicals used, the means of disposal and the occurrence of any spills or releases on premises.

Maintain a process and equipment inventory
Record the location of hazardous processes or equipment and the dates when maintenance or monitoring must be performed. Keep an inventory of the safety equipment and those who use it.

Establish a purchasing procedure
Avoiding a hazard is easier than controlling it. Before the purchase of chemicals, equipment or services, develop a system that may be reviewed by a safety representative or committee member.

Investigate incidents, spills and releases.
Chemical release and other incident report forms should have a space to answer, "What were the causes of the incident or release?" and "What precautions or controls could have prevented the incident or release?" A safety representative or committee member should investigate every incident to determine how to prevent such a problem in the future. Employees should be encouraged to report close calls as well.

Order and review environmental, personal and biological monitoring data
A few processes in career-technical education programs may require air monitoring, environmental sampling or biological monitoring of an employee's blood or urine. Consult your United Heartland Loss Control representative if assistance is needed.

Arrange for medical screening
Career and technical education programs may require medical screening. In particular, all individuals who wear respirators should be evaluated by a physician to determine whether they are fit to wear one. Crucial to respirator wearing is proper fit-testing and training provided by the organization.

Those exposed to excess noise need periodic hearing tests, the results of which should be tracked over time.

Personal protective equipment (e.g., respirators, hearing protection) should be provided by the organization.

Eliminate Hazards

The following functions should be performed by individuals or committee members assigned to the task.

Develop written procedures and programs
Examples include emergency planning, respiratory protection, vehicle safety and hazard reporting.

Develop emergency response plans and procedures
For assistance preparing emergency plans, contact your United Heartland Loss Control representative.

Provide regular equipment maintenance, repair, replacement and record keeping
Examples include hazardous machinery, safety gear and the ventilation system.

Perform routine housekeeping
Examples include disposing of trash properly, ensuring chemicals are properly stored, keeping exits free from blockage and ensuring walkways are clean and free from uneven surfaces.

Install safety controls
The order in which safety controls are considered is as follows: (1) engineering controls, (2) administrative controls and (3) personal protective equipment (PPE).

1. Engineering controls include substitution, isolation, enclosure and ventilation.

2. Administrative controls include training in hazard recognition and schedule changes or reduced work times to decrease exposure.

3. PPE may include face masks, respirators, aprons, safety goggles, gloves and hearing protection.

Personal protective equipment (PPE) training
Using protective gear involves careful selection, maintenance and user training.

Install eye wash facilities and showers
Stations should be near maintenance operations, laboratories and areas where corrosive chemicals are used or emit irritant aerosols.

Work cooperatively with inspectors
Remember the purpose of regulations is to ensure that employers maintain a safe and healthy work environment. Inspectors can often identify ways to control hazards found during an inspection.

Seek expert advice
Difficult problems are often handled best by using a committee of all involved parties to brainstorm solutions; however, you may need outside advice. Your State Department of Education, county superintendent's office, EPA, OSHA, the local fire department or your local branch of the American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA) or National Safety Council (NSC) are sources of free advice and information.

Train Employees, Contractors, Management and Students

Train all new employees
New employee safety orientation and ongoing safety training should be conducted and documented for employees. Some of this training may also be useful to share with students too.

Provide mandated training programs to employees and students
Depending on the types of classes your organization provides, training may be required on emergency and fire prevention, blood borne pathogens, respiratory protection, occupational noise exposure, machinery, welding, chemical or hazardous waste handling. Direct supervisors should receive the same training as their students or subordinates.

Train safety representatives and safety committees
Training can enhance the ability for employees or students to carry out the functions listed above. In particular, they may wish to obtain training in automation of the program, investigation of injuries or other incidents, safety and environmental record-keeping, hazard identification and control, industrial hygiene fundamentals or environmental regulations. Outside training opportunities provide an essential means for safety, health and environmental personnel to network with and learn from programs in other schools.

Obtain training assistance
United Heartland, as well as regulatory agencies such as OSHA, can help provide additional training assistance.

United Heartland Training Resources

The following list is a sample of safety training resources available from your United Heartland Loss Control representative:

- Accident investigation
- Supervisor training
- Safety committees
- PPE
- Hazard communications
- Electrical safety
- Hearing conservation
- Ergonomics
- Slips, trips and falls
- Ladder safety
- Job hazard analysis
- Emergency alert systems
- Safety programs
- Severe weather

Elements of a Successful Safety Process

Management commitment and employee involvement

- Managers and owners must support safety
- Equal emphasis on safety, performance and quality
- Employees should participate in physical inspections and submit suggestions for improvement

Supervisor accountability

- Equal emphasis on safety, performance and quality
- Safety should be tied into financial incentives
- Ensure a return-to-work program is in place

Accident investigation and prompt accident reporting

- Employees should report all accidents and near misses so that every situation can be investigated
- Every accident should be investigated and results communicated to employees to increase safety awareness

Regular safety training

- New employees should receive safety orientation within three days of hire
- Maintain regular schedule of safety trainings and safety committee meetings

Understand the role of safety coordinator

- Everyone is responsible for safety — the coordinator is the coach
- Safety coordinator must be provided authority to make decisions

Document and enforce safety procedures and rules

- Employees must be held accountable for written rules and procedures
- Maintain a disciplinary system for safety violations

Best practices for hiring

- Perform pre-screening before the interview process
- Develop a physical and drug screen requirement for applicants

Identify hazards

- Conduct regular hazard inspections and encourage employees to assist in their respective areas
- Follow up on hazard identification and correction
- Partner with agent and insurance carrier for assistance with hazard analysis

Early return-to-work programs

- Agent and insurance company representatives have access to many resources
- Partnerships help resolve issues more quickly and can reduce costs

Safety Committees

A safety committee serves in many valuable capacities. Its main purpose is to create and maintain employees' active and positive interest in safety. It provides a forum to discuss relevant safety issues and is action-oriented.

The committee should be involved with reviewing accident investigation reports, conducting inspections and determining/facilitating safety training needs.

The committee is usually made up of representatives from the various areas and levels of the organization. The committee needs to have the authority to make decisions or have a direct line of communication with the decision makers.

To enable communication between the committee and employees, minutes should be logged and published.

A means of communicating concerns to the safety committee should also be established.

Forming a safety committee early in the development of a safety process can help speed the process since committee members can provide valuable input and do some of the work.

Specific safety committee duties might include:

- Review accident history and investigation reports to ensure adequate investigations are being conducted
- Review results of supervisor safety inspections to gauge the effectiveness of prevention efforts
- Members may conduct independent inspections of selected areas and offer recommendations
- Review employee safety suggestions and investigate reports for hazardous conditions
- Conditions identified as imminently hazardous should be investigated by the safety coordinator, independently of the safety committee
- Offer recommendations to management for correcting hazards and ensuring continued safety
- Develop safety programs as loss experience dictates
- Identify safety training needs and facilitate training

Suggested activities of a safety committee:

- Establish charter or mission statement that identifies the safety committee's goals and objectives and is supported by senior leadership
- Establish and monitor company safety policies
- Encourage and provide opportunities for employee input and feedback
- Provide positive reinforcement of safety policies and maintain a positive attitude toward safety
- Identify unsafe work practices and conditions and recommend corrective action
- Review accident/incident investigations and evaluate recommended corrective action
- Provide compliance assistance with state, federal and corporate safety regulations
- Develop and support safety and health training needs
- Assess safety equipment needs and evaluate training needs of new equipment
- Disseminate and promote safety information
- Establish a regular meeting schedule and document meeting minutes
- Conduct regular safety and housekeeping inspections

An effective safety committee depends on:

Sincerity and interest
Members must be sincere, cooperative and intent on the mission of maintaining safe workplace conditions and practices. Passive or inactive members can be a detriment to the committee — if they cannot be inspired, committee activities may be improved by their replacement. Typically, a rotation of members is suggested.

Scheduled meetings and inspections
If meetings are skipped, it may indicate that they are not perceived as important or that there is not sufficient business for a productive meeting or safety committee activity. If this is the case, the committee organization may require revision.

Recommendations and suggestions
Maintaining employee interest and support requires that immediate consideration and action is taken on suggestions. The safety committee should have the authority to make improvements. Committee activities and accomplishments should be communicated.

Documentation of injury rates and trends
A current record should be maintained of all injury trends and injury rates to facilitate discussion and/or actions necessary in addressing root causes. Resources should be prioritized based on areas needing the greatest attention.

Communication of safety successes
Safety committee members — as well as employees, should be advised of the status of the safety program success and recognized for their contributions toward safety goals and objectives.

Examples of barriers to safety committee success:

- Safety and health is not a top management priority
- Passive or inactive members
- Lack of expertise
- Lack of discretionary budget for committee activities
- Ineffective or lack of training for committee members
- Infrequent meetings, canceled meetings or meetings without a schedule or agenda
- Absence of formal and complete committee meeting minutes
- Not using committee meeting minutes to monitor progress

OSHA and Other Regulatory Requirements

The federal government passed the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) in 1970. Its intent was to require employers to provide a safe place of employment for all workers. Individual states had the option of having Federal OSHA oversee safety compliance, or to set up their own OSHA departments. Currently, many states administer their own OSHA compliance which are required to be at least as effective as Federal OSHA. States that operate solely under Federal OSHA are assigned compliance officers and other OSHA employees, who make inspections, provide safety consultations, investigate fatalities and otherwise help employers improve safety.

As a supervisor, be aware that your employees are entitled to safety training, which must be provided by the employer. This training is sometimes done by a safety director or coordinator, human resources department or supervisor. Some of the training is required only one time, before an employee first encounters the situations where it is needed. Other training may need to be repeated every year, or at some other frequency based on certain events.

School Campus Facilities: Pertinent OSHA CFR 1910 standards that apply to schools are as follows. This list is not all inclusive.

- 1910.22 Walking Working Surfaces
- 1910.23 Ladders
- 1910.35 Compliance with NFPA 101-2000, Life Safety Code
- 1910.36 Design and Construction Requirements for Exit Routes
- 1910.37 Maintenance, Safeguards and Operational Features for Exit Routes
- 1910.38 Emergency Action Plans (Emergency evacuations)
- 1910.39 Fire Prevention Plans
- 1910.66 Power Platforms (scissors and aerial lifts)
- 1910.94 Ventilation
- 1910.106 Flammable and Combustible Liquids
- 1910.133 Eye and Face Protection
- 1910.134 Respiratory Protection
- 1910.138 Hand Protection
- 1910.147 Control of Hazardous Energy (Lockout/Tagout)
- 1910.151 Medical Services and First Aid
- 1910.157 Portable Fire Extinguishers
- 1910.164 Fire Detection Systems
- 1910.212 General Requirements for All Machines
- 1910.242 Hand and Portable Powered Tools and Equipment, General
- 1910.1030 Occupational Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens
- 1910.1200 Hazard Communication
- 1926.503 Fall Protection

Accident Reporting and Investigation

Accidents are events which interrupt the smooth flow of profitable production or service. Accidents and injuries are not the same in that not all accidents result in injuries. Timely reporting of accidents and injuries enables responsive medical care to the injured and begins the process of discovering what happened and how to prevent similar accidents from occurring in the future.

A productive accident investigation prevents future operational breakdowns, identifies better methods, pinpoints training needs, shows concern to all employees and adds knowledge to the organization.

Accidents/incidents should be investigated to improve employee safety and health by minimizing or eliminating recurrence, discovering causes of work stoppage and eliminating or controlling identified causes.

While all accidents should be investigated, the depth of the investigation may be determined by the severity of the accident or the number of personnel exposed.

It is best to begin the investigation immediately, during the same shift. Investigations should include a visit to the accident scene. The individual investigating the scene depends on the culture of the organization. Suggested personnel include: maintenance, nursing, supervisors and safety committee members.

Total accident costs are a summation of direct costs, such as medical bills and damage to equipment, and indirect costs, sometimes referred to as hidden costs. Indirect costs have been estimated to be as much as four times the direct cost.

Direct Costs

Direct costs of a workers' compensation claim consist of two primary elements:

- Medical expenses
- Lost wages

Indirect Costs

Indirect costs are non-productive (uninsured). Examples include:

- Lost work time by injured party
- Lost earning power by injured party
- Economic loss to injured party's family
- Lost work time by fellow workers
- Cost of training a replacement worker

Total Accident Cost = Direct Cost + Indirect Cost

Reporting Work-Related Injuries Procedure Sample

General

- All injuries occurring on workplace property will be immediately reported to employee's supervisor
- Injuries not reported immediately will be considered non-work-related
- The accident investigation will be conducted as stated in the Accident Investigation Procedure
- Contact information for a designated occupational health provider, hospital and/or 911 should be identified and posted for all employees to access

Non-Emergency Treatment

- Employees who report a work-related injury, regardless of severity will report to supervisor/principal
- The injured employee will receive first-aid treatment, if necessary
- All injuries will be logged and the accident investigation will be initiated
- In the event an injury requires emergency treatment, the accident investigation procedure may be delayed
- Supervisor(s) must be notified prior to employee leaving the job site
- The injured employee can be transported by personal vehicle to an occupational health clinic or hospital, if the injury is non-life threatening — in no instance should employee drive themselves

Emergency Treatment

- If the injury is life threatening or serious, emergency services must be notified
- Emergency professionals are responsible for employee stabilization prior to transport

Supervisor Directive

- Accident investigation procedure should be initiated per written policy

Accident Investigation Procedure Sample

Introduction

This procedure is established to provide consistent response, investigation and follow-up of accidents that occur during operations. All personnel are to comply with this procedure when an accident occurs. The objective of accident investigation is to identify root causes and corrective action to minimize recurrence.

Procedure

Treatment of injuries

- If the injury is severe or life-threatening, 911 shall be contacted immediately for emergency medical services
- If the injury is less severe, the current designated medical center shall be used for treatment
- The human resources (HR) department shall be contacted to arrange an appointment at the medical center
- If no one in HR can be contacted, the supervisor/principal/president shall contact the center for an appointment

Pre-investigation reporting

- The injured employee shall submit an injury report to his/her supervisor within 24 hours of occurrence
- The supervisor of the injured employee shall sign the injury report and submit it to HR within 24 hours of receiving it from the employee
- Incomplete or improperly completed reports will be returned by HR to the supervisor
- Other steps include administering or obtaining first-aid care, performing necessary immediate hazard prevention measures, as well as securing the area, if appropriate, to preserve the scene

Supervisor or safety committee investigation

- When first notified of an accident, the supervisor will begin gathering the facts of the incident: date, time, place, activity, other persons in vicinity and related circumstances
- Interview the injured worker, record all details and related circumstances of the incident and obtain signature of interviewed worker
- Interview witnesses of the accident and record all details
- Prepare visual records, photographs, sketches, diagrams, if applicable

Safety committee investigation

- Recordable injuries
- Injuries that involve time lost from work or restricted duty
- Non-recordable or no-lost-time injuries if the potential exists to cause a more serious similar incident

Corrective action

- Based on data obtained from the investigation, make recommendations for any corrective actions needed
- Involve all aspects necessary to coordinate the recommendation and to ensure cost-effectiveness, timeliness, appropriateness, and efficiency for the department involved

Follow-up procedures

- Prepare an accident investigation follow-up document to ensure all corrective action identified is assigned to someone and is completed in a timely manner

Return-to-Work (Transitional Duty) Sample

Implementing a return-to-work program is perhaps the single most effective claims-management strategy available. Sometimes organizations choose to handle return-to-work on an informal, case-by-case basis and have no formal agreement with applicable union(s) or contract language. However, many educational institutions work closely with their union(s) on all return-to-work cases.

Transitional duty may be in the form of a reduced work schedule, altered duties within the scope of the current position, or other available duties for which the injured worker may be qualified.

Benefits

- Injured employees remain an active and vital part of the organization, which encourages a more rapid return to full duty and may expedite medical rehabilitation
- Employees are likely to feel more valuable when they are productively contributing which can help reduce the risk of disability syndrome
- The injured employee has the opportunity to earn wages at their normal rate of pay, retain benefits, earn service credits and continue as an active member of the union
- Organizations can take advantage of the injured employee's experience, using injured employees as trainers for substitute or replacement workers, saving workers' compensation costs

Examples of Restricted-Duty Tasks

One-handed

- Receptionist
- Monitoring points of entry
- Training participation
- Walk-through safety checks
- Light housekeeping duties

Seated

- Administrative duties
- Computer work/data entry
- Updating manuals
- Training participation
- Updating SDS inventory

Low-weight

- All one-handed and seated duties
- Updating bulletin boards
- Stocking supplies
- Safety monitoring
- Conducting safety inspections

Return-to-Work Program Sample

Statement of Policy

The objective of this program is to document alternative work duties for _____ (employee), in such event they are unable to fulfill their regular duties due to unforeseen work-related injury or illness. It will be management's goal to provide a modified work environment according to documented medical approval. This program is primarily designed to provide temporary assignments while an employee continues to recover.

Program Focus

_____ (company) has put this program in place to provide our workforce, on a continuous basis, an environment free of recognized hazards. All full-time and/or part-time employees, whether for work-related injury or illness, or non-work related injury or illness, might be asked to comply with this program. Therefore, any employee unable to fulfill their regular duties will be reviewed to be placed in a modified work environment until such time as their disability recovery period allows them to return to unrestricted work.

Rate of Pay

Payroll will be reviewed by company management and adjusted accordingly to the modified position. This is subject to review upon each individual assessment.

Medical Treatment

All work-related injuries or illnesses will be reported by the employee immediately to management. Medical treatment will be sought at a hospital in the event of a life-threatening emergency.

Medical Release and Restrictions

The capacity of the employee's return to work is determined by the treating physician. It will be documented by the attending physician that the employee is released "free from restrictions" or "with documented restrictions" within the job description the employee holds. It will be given to and reviewed by appropriate company management personnel before employment can resume.

Type of Work

The type of work conducted by the employee will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. We have set forth the following modified positions based on the employees history of work-related injuries and illnesses.

Light duty positions include, but not limited to: _____
_____
_____

The positions will be communicated to the attending physician if restricted work is required. Transitional positions and duties will be explained to the injured employee and supervised to ensure restrictions are being followed and necessary accommodations are made in a timely fashion.

Communication Plan with Medical Facility

Company management personnel will keep in touch with the treating physician or facility, verbally or in writing, to stay updated on any changes in diagnosis, treatment or restrictions.

Communication Plan with Employees

This program has been explained to our entire workforce and will be adhered to for the immediate future.

Discipline for Non-Compliance

Disciplinary actions may be taken against any employee who fails to observe this program.

SECTION 2: JOB SPECIFIC SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

Job: Food Service

Food service is a complex operation. Generally safety considerations can divided into four key areas:

- Arrangement/layout
- Receiving and storage
- Food preparation and cooking
- Cleanup

Arrangement/layout
Kitchen design and arrangement should eliminate unnecessary movement, save time and effort, and simplify housekeeping concerns.

- Designated areas for dishwashing/ice machines can help reduce slips on common walking paths
- Sharp tools should have a designated storage place
- Non-slip flooring and/or mats with beveled edges should be utilized

Receiving and storage
When receiving supplies, hand carts and other small load lifters should be used. Proper preventive maintenance for lifting equipment is essential and proper lifting techniques should always be followed.

Cooking and preparation
Safety awareness goes a long way toward preventing accidents during food preparation. Cleaning up spills immediately, avoiding hot surfaces, using personal protective equipment and washing hands are all important considerations.

Oven mitts should be readily accessible for use with steamer equipment and not stored on top. Cutting gloves should be used when appropriate and only trained and authorized employees should clean slicers.

Cleanup
Continuous housekeeping procedures should be implemented, such as box/trash removal to keep floors free from clutter, moisture and food debris, cooking surfaces should be kept clean and free from grease build up, etc. Remember to ensure staff uses necessary personal protective equipment when using cleaning agents and other chemicals.

Food Service Hazard Prevention

Cut and lacerations

Knives

- Store knives in a separate location
- Keep knives sharp — dull knives slip easier
- Use the proper knife for the job
- Use a cutting board to keep blades sharp
- Use cut-resistant gloves
- Keep fingers on top of items being cut
- Wipe knives by moving cloth from the dull edge to the sharp edge
- Cut away from body, do not use a hacking motion
- Never attempt to catch a falling knife
- Knives should be hand washed and not placed in the dishwasher

Slicers, choppers and grinders

- Only trained and authorized personnel should use and clean slicers
- Unplug equipment before cleaning
- Use cut-resistant gloves
- Blades should be hand-washed
- Use a wooden tamper when operating food choppers or grinders
- Safety guards should be in place on grinders
- Tie loose hair and avoid wearing jewelry

Glassware

- Do not stack glasses or cups
- Glassware should not be placed in the sink used to wash cookware such as pots and pans
- If breakage occurs:
  - Use broom/dustpan or a damp cloth to clean up
  - If broken in sink, drain water before removing glass pieces
  - Do not dispose of glass in trash bags, instead place in box or can before placing in dumpster

Other

- Remove lids from cans completely and discard
- Use trash pusher to push trash down in the cans or bags

Burns

Ovens

- When lighting a gas oven, make sure pilot is lit
- Stand to one side when lighting oven
- Remove hot pans using oven mitts

Ranges

- Assume all things on the range, including the range itself, are hot
- Use mitts or potholders
- Keep utensil handles away from burners
- Don't allow pan/pot handles to stick out into aisles
- Ask for help when handling large pots of hot food
- Direct steam away from body when removing lids

Steam tables

- Tilt food containers away from body
- Avoid reaching across steam tables
- Turn off valves when the tables aren't in use
- Let equipment cool before cleaning

Fryers

- Clean regularly
- Do not overfill
- Use rubber gloves and apron when filtering or handling vats of hot grease
- When changing oil, allow it to cool before draining
- Drain oil into metal containers, never plastic

Dishwashers

- Avoid handling very hot dishes with bare hands
- Turn machine off and allow to cool before cleaning it
- Dishwasher should automatically shut off when opening the door

Muscle and back strains

Lifting and carrying

- Use a cart or dolly when moving boxes/barrels, etc.
- Store heavy, bulky materials on mid-level shelves — to eliminate the need to lift heavy objects over head or from floor level
- When lifting:
  - Stand close to objects with feet spread for balance
  - Maintain natural spine curve
  - Grasp object gently, holding it close to waist
  - Use power of legs and abdomen and keep shoulders back

Slips and trips

- Clean all spills immediately
- Do not leave a spill or slippery condition unattended
- Use "Wet Floor" signage
- Use floor fan for drying
- Mop a small area and follow with a dry mop to remove moisture
- Floor mats should be smooth and free from folds.
- Wear slip-resistant shoes
- Frequently clean freezer and cooler floors
- Report loose flooring for repair
- Keep travel areas free from obstacles

- Avoid running, even if during a rush period
- Use flow-through mats near sinks and ice machines

Falls

Ladders and stepladders

- Read and follow the manufacturer's instructions
- Remove ladders with loose rungs, cracked or split side rails, missing rubber foot pads or are otherwise visibly damaged from use
- Keep ladder rungs clean and free of grease, mud, etc.
- Do not lean backward or sideways from the ladder
- Allow only one person on the ladder at a time
- Do not stand on the top two rungs of any ladder
- Do not try to "walk" a ladder by rocking it
- Climb down the ladder and move it
- Do not use a ladder as a horizontal platform

Job: Transportation/Driver

Although buses are considered a safe form of ground transportation, there are still significant opportunities for accidents to occur. Driver training, defensive driving, weather conditions, discipline and other factors should be considered.

Transportation drivers

The majority of bus-related accidents are due to driver error. The driver selection process and minimum hiring criteria must be designed to identify candidates who can and will safely perform the task of driving.

The driver is defined as a person who is in physical control of a vehicle. In addition to controlling the vehicle, the driver is also responsible for maintaining control of passengers inside.

Employment

The quality of your drivers begins with your minimum hiring criteria and selection process.

- Applicants must meet all state and federal

requirements

- Follow a list of minimum hiring criteria when assessing candidates
- Driver selection criteria may include:
  - Structured interview with reliable reference
  - Physical exam, drug and alcohol screening
  - Exams on bus/fleet operations, safety, local regulations and special traffic laws
  - State and federal criminal background checks and fingerprinting
  - Motor vehicle records check and commercial drivers license verification

Safety meetings
Safety meetings are an opportunity to present safety and risk management principles and to discuss specific behaviors, activities, conditions, processes and situations which are directly linked to accidents and injuries.

- Provide an opportunity for dialogue and discussion
- Encourage experienced drivers to contribute
- Present real or simulated case studies
- Establish a schedule of topics and keep it relevant
- Recognize safe driving performance

Safety training
Once selected, drivers should undergo a new employee orientation and education program. Thereafter, they should be provided with continuous driver training.

- Drivers need to have sufficient mastery over their vehicle in all types of conditions and they must be skillful in dealing with all types of passengers
- Drivers should have a solid understanding of their bus and its limitations

An effective driver development program includes comprehensive hands-on training.

Pre-trip inspections
Before a transportation vehicle can be operated, the driver should conduct a pre-trip inspection of the mechanical and safety equipment. This pre-trip inspection should be recorded.

Mirrors
Drivers should be able to see in each mirror. Mirrors should be checked and appropriately adjusted each day during the pre-trip inspection. In addition, regular preventive maintenance should be implemented.

Driving routes
Routes should be reviewed annually to ensure they are safely planned. Both regular and substitute drivers should be completely familiar with the routes and should not deviate from them.

- If any driver believes a route is dangerous, he or she should notify the proper officials
- Develop and implement a program for identifying every hazard along a route and communicate to all drivers and substitute drivers

Fleet security
Keys should be stored in a secure location whenever they aren't in service.

At the end of each run, drivers should check every aisle of the bus to ensure that there are no remaining passengers on board. Tip: Place a reminder card on the inside of the back door at the beginning of the run and then retrieve it at the end of the run.

Buses should be parked inside whenever possible. If are stored outside, buses should be in a fenced area with a locked gate and adequate lighting to discourage vandalism.

Job: Maintenance, Custodial & Groundskeeping

Hazard Elimination

Promptly eliminate hazards

- Report, mark and remove hazards immediately
- Proactively address potential issues
- Be prepared to fill out an accident investigation form, first report of injury and claim form
- Ensure all incidents occurring on property are reported to supervisors

Ladder and stepladder

- Follow manufacturer's instructions
- Remove ladders with loose rungs, cracked or split side rails, missing rubber foot pads or are otherwise visibly damaged
- Keep ladder rungs clean and free of grease, mud, etc.
- Do not lean backward or sideways from the ladder
- Allow one person on the ladder at a time
- Do not stand on the top two rungs of any ladder
- Climb down the ladder to move it
- Do not use a ladder as a horizontal platform

Chemicals

- Review chemical labels and safety data sheets
- Follow manufacturer's instructions for use and storage guidelines
- Wear eye protection, gloves and other required PPE
- Enlist supervisor support when necessary

Outdoor

Gasoline-powered tools

- Wear hearing/eye protection and all required PPE
- Do not operate equipment without training
- Discard tools with visibly damaged parts
- Never alter or bypass safety mechanisms
- Do not pour fuel into the tank of a running engine
- Do not smoke while servicing, using or fueling engine
- Keep body parts and clothing away from the running engine and cutting blade
- Do not run a gasoline engine inside enclosed space
- Turn off engine when not in use
- Stop engine and disconnect spark plug before cleaning, inspecting, adjusting or repairing

Lawn mowers/tractors

- Inspect work area prior to start
- Remove or work around hazards, such as tree stumps, holes, ditches, rocks, branches, sprinklers, etc.
- Never attempt to get on or off a moving machine
- Start engine only from the operator's seat, with

transmission in neutral or park
- Slow speed before sharp turns
- Do not drive near the edge of steep embankment
- Mow up and down slope, not across
- Keep the mower in gear when going down slopes
- Before dismounting, lock brakes, lower implements to the ground and turn off engine

Line trimmer and brushcutters
- Wear hearing/eye protection and all required PPE
- Do not start equipment if anyone is within 30 feet
- Place trimmer on firm ground before starting
- Do not wrap starter rope around hand
- Hold trimmer with two hands
- Wear a harness if available
- Before refueling, remove trimmer from harness, place on ground and allow engine to cool
- Stop trimmer before setting it down
- Do not cut above waist level

Aerial lifts
- Training and operator permit required prior to use
- Follow manufacturer's instructions
- Inspect work area prior to start
- Examine the travel path for holes, soft ground, etc.
- Inspect the following:
  - Tire inflation
  - Tightness of bolts on chassis and platform railings
  - Operating controls
  - Hydraulic oil and engine oil levels
  - Ground surface and firmness
  - Powerline clearance — must be more than 10 feet from energized power lines (up to 50kV)
  - Platform gates and chains
  - Weather conditions, wind not exceeding 25 mph
  - Necessary PPE
  - Battery charge
- Never operate charging battery
- Evenly distribute load on lift platform
- Place loose tools/parts in secure containers
- Never overload lift's rated capacity
- Never sit, climb or lean on the platform railings
- Do not use planks, ladders, etc. to extend lift reach
- Never bypass safety mechanisms

Hand tools
- Keep cutting blades sharp
- Carry sharp tools in sheath or holster
- Mark damaged or defective tools as 'out of service' and promptly remove from use
- Do not use tools with splintered or cracked handles
- Ensure the head on impact tools, such as hammers, chisels or steel stakes are in tact and not overly worn
- When climbing, keep tools in toolbelt or hoist them in a secured box to working surface using hand line

Parking lot and sidewalks
- Ensure landscaping drains away from sidewalks and parking areas
- Clearly mark sprinklers that could be trip hazards
- Do not stretch hoses across pedestrian walkways
- Mark and repair potholes promptly
- Clearly mark obstructions and changes in elevation such as ramps/steps — use reflective paint if needed
- Ensure ice/snow removal program is in place with a plan for snow pile storage

Equipment cleanup and storage
- Store diesel-powered equipment in heated facility
- Wash equipment following use, unless equipment is expected to be used again within a few hours
- Assign equipment cleanup to grounds crew based on workload
- See 'Winter Weather' section for information on snow/salt equipment use, cleanup and storage

Indoor

Floors
- Ensure walkways and stairs are properly lit and free of debris, electrical cords, clutter and moisture
- Clearly mark all entrances/exists
- Place mats in areas of high traffic and where wet floors could occur
- Ensure floor mats lay flat
- Repair or replace torn or frayed carpets
- Promptly mark wet floors with signage
- Select slip-resistant floor maintenance products
- Avoid polishes or waxes that result in slick coating
- Perform deep cleaning at low-traffic times
- Ensure wet floor signs are readily available
- Place barriers around spills
- Ensure step height/width conforms to safety codes
- Select non-skid surfaces and rubber treads are installed on steps where appropriate
- Mark leading edge of stair if difficult to see
- Ensure ramp and stair handrails are installed and maintained including in pool and recreational areas
- Post 'no running' signage in pool/shower areas
- Periodically check restrooms to ensure floors are dry

Winter Weather

Weather conditions are often a significant factor in slip and fall injuries. United Heartland's annual winter weather WalkSafe campaign provides valuable information on a range of topics, such as winter weather preparation, safe vehicle operation, salting and surface treatments, winter footwear and more. Visit UnitedHeartland.com/WalkSafe for videos and printable resources.

Seasonal weather safety plan
Standardizing and documenting the routine actions taken to control and remove precipitation accumulation must be the top priority for snow removal crew.

A sound plan identifies staff resources, equipment, roles and responsibilities and strategies for addressing seasonal conditions. The plan should be routinely reviewed to improve the effectiveness of efforts.

Snow and ice removal service hours
The snow removal crew should be comprised of maintenance, groundskeeping and an on-call contract company. With these resources, the focus should be to concentrate control and removal efforts between 3 a.m. and 5 p.m. on weekdays during the academic term.

While precipitation is falling, motorized snow removal efforts should focus on providing accessible paths to, from and between parking lots and buildings. Clearing building entrances, stairs and ramps should be ongoing as long as the crew is present.

The full maximum motorized cleanup effort, however, will generally not begin until the storm's precipitation is complete. For snow storms, the use of rock salt will generally be used for most parking lots and sidewalks, while calcium chloride pellets will be used at entryways of buildings. A sand/salt mix is beneficial for occasions when there are extremely low temperatures or ice.

Motorized equipment
The equipment used during storms will be dependent upon the snow accumulation and will generally be as follows:

- Accumulations less than 1 inch — motorized brooms for walkways and salt spreader
- Accumulations greater than 1 inch — plow trucks, tractors and loaders as well as a salting truck

The equipment used after each storm will be dependent upon the snow accumulation and will generally be as follows:

- Accumulations less than 1 inch — major cleanup will

be the same as is used during storms, as listed above
- Accumulation greater than 1 inch — the entire grounds crew plus auxiliary drivers will be called in at 3 a.m.
- All motorized equipment should have assigned routes — a route map should be kept in each vehicle
- A master route map should be made available in the maintenance and groundskeeping office as well

Hand shoveling
- Shovel, clear, sweep and/or salt building entrances, stairs and handicapped ramps out to the motorized equipment route point
- Grounds/custodial supervisors are responsible for coordinating this process in their respective buildings
- After the primary storm cleanup is complete, facility services staff will continue to monitor and maintain the exterior stairs, curbs, etc.

Secondary cleanup
- Empty salt spreaders prior to storage, regardless of the next anticipated use
- Snow and ice removal efforts will generally continue throughout the workday
- During ice storms, the grounds crew will be called in at 4 a.m., and salting will begin
- Routes should be regularly inspected to ensure satisfactory completion of snow and ice removal

For WalkSafe posters, videos and campaign materials, visit the Resource Library at UnitedHeartland.com.

Job: Educator

Behavior management program
Employees often have responsibility for the care and welfare of students who may exhibit aggressive or violent behaviors. Such behaviors can place both parties at risk of injury. How staff recognizes and interacts with a student entering the "crisis cycle" will ultimately define the outcome of the interaction.

A comprehensive, structured and interactive behavior management program is an effective tool in controlling situations where behavioral problems may arise. The following goals and objectives should be the foundation of such a program:

1. Focus on the needs and care of individuals during interactions, rather than focusing on physical restraints
2. Facilitate a positive and proactive relationship, treating all with dignity and respect
3. Create an atmosphere that builds trust and self-esteem
4. Present an objective, understandable and consistent means of assessing the individual's needs
5. Emphasize the importance of staff training and use of the behavior support plan as a guide for interactions and care for all
6. Focus on proactive interventions with individuals who may be showing early signs of escalation
7. Create program mission, vision and most importantly, a set of core values

An organization's values should be reflected in its policies, work practices, decision making and staff.

Safe student handling and mobility
Students with special needs may need assistance with mobility. Safe student handling and mobility is defined as the manual movement, repositioning or transferring of a student. This type of care can be a major contributor of musculoskeletal disorders.

Components of a safe handling and mobility program includes the following:

1. Development and implementation of a written plan

2. Objective criteria to be determined for the transferring of special needs students
3. Quality assurance through regular observations and injury review
4. Education and training
5. Maintenance and inspection
6. Accountability

For more information on developing an effective safe handling and mobility program, contact your United Heartland Loss Control representative.

Slips, trips and falls

Footwear

- Follow footwear policies
- A closed heel, snug-fit, and a flat, soft-sole shoe provides maximum traction on most indoor surfaces and are recommended
- Shoes with leather or hard, smooth-surfaced soles provide minimal traction and are not generally recommended
- During inclement weather, boots or other appropriate footwear should be worn outdoors and changed when entering indoor spaces

Walkways

- Keep walkways clear
- Be observant of slip, trip and fall hazards
- If a hazard is noticed, immediately mark or remove it
- Never ignore or leave a hazard unattended

Ladders

- Never stand on desktops or other furniture
- Consult with building maintenance staff for assistance using ladders or storing items on high shelves
- Do not use ladders with visible damaged
- Keep ladder rungs clean and free of grease, mud, etc.
- Do not lean backward or sideways from the ladder
- Allow only one person on the ladder at a time
- Do not stand on the top two rungs of any ladder
- Do not try to “walk” a ladder by rocking it, instead climb down the ladder and move it

Equipment and supplies

Manual material handling

- Ask for help with carrying large or bulky items
- Use a dolly or hand truck for assistance

Knives, paper/box cutters and sharp tools

- Always cut away from body
- Close/lock paper cutter handle when not in use
- Do not use paper cutter if finger guard is missing
- Position hands and fingers onto the handle of the paper cutter before pressing down on the blade

Electrical considerations

- Turn off and unplug office machines before adjusting, lubricating or cleaning them
- Do not use fans that have excessive vibration, frayed cords or missing guards
- Turn equipment power switch ‘off’ when not in use
- Don’t overload powerstrips

File cabinets

- Open one file cabinet drawer at a time
- Close drawers and doors immediately after use
- Use handle when closing doors, drawers and files
- Place heavy items in bottom drawers

SECTION 3: SAFETY AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Manage and Assess with eSMART

The United Heartland eSMART program helps organizations identify and assess exposures unique to the education sector by assisting in the evaluation of several key areas.

- Safety management and culture
- Post injury management
- Training
- Job-specific risk exposures
- Regulatory programs — such as OSHA compliance

The objective of eSMART is to help correct unsafe conditions and work practices before an accident occurs through effective evaluation of safety process components, training, safety compliance and supervisor accountability.

Assessments may not reveal every hazard, exposure or violation of safety practices, but the process is effective in helping to prevent accidents.

Safety findings should be documented using the eSMART assessment checklists and receive proper follow-up. eSMART Safety Talks supplemented with United Heartland loss control resources will help guide discussions between safety leaders and employees.

When introducing any new program, no matter how useful, employees and staff members may feel additional burdens. Demonstrating the benefits may help encourage the use of a safety program.

eSMART

Step 1:
Assessment

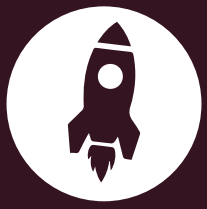
UH Loss Control consultants and your safety leadership team collaborate to perform a thorough assessment of your safety and injury management systems and common risk exposures for job-specific duties.

Step 2:
Loss Analysis

Together, we'll analyze prior loss trends, identify loss leaders and other sources of potential risk exposures.

Step 3:
Findings Report

The findings of the assessment help to identify the strengths of the current safety systems, potential safety gaps and areas of opportunity.



Step 4:
Action Plan

A collaborative action plan is developed to address results of the assessment. Follow-up actions may include program development, supervisory training, facility audits and post-injury management controls.

- Use a phased-in approach to keep employees from feeling overwhelmed
- Emphasize that no one will be penalized for finding problems — this is a proactive way to maintain safety throughout the organization
- Stress that assessments are an easy way to determine compliance without having to locate and plow through regulations
- Utilize eSMART Safety Talks and United Heartland loss control materials to make conversations, easier

A well-run assessment program can help launch an organizations occupational safety and health process or strengthen an existing one.

United Heartland Loss Control is available to assist from beginning to end.

United Heartland Safety and Training Resources

To access training courses as well as the eSMART Assessment Guides and eSMART Safety Talks, contact your dedicated United Heartland loss control consultant. The United Heartland Loss Control team has developed a library of materials for you to view, download, print and share, at any time by visiting **UnitedHeartland.com/resource-library**.

Resource Library topics include:

- Emergency Preparedness
- Slips, Trips and Fall Prevention
- Workplace Violence
- Bloodborne Pathogens
- Driving Safety
- Ergonomics
- Drugs/Alcohol
- Outdoor Worker Safety
- Weather Considerations
- Return to Work - Post-Injury Accident Investigation
- Safety Committees
- Personal Protective Equipment
- Hearing Conservation
- And more!

Thank you for your partnership.

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