



Best Practices Guide To Developing Your Safety Policy Mission Statement



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Introduction

One of the key elements that many employers fail to include in their workplace safety program, when it is first being developed, is a safety policy mission statement. This critical document should set the tone for the whole safety program. It lets all employees know that management has set the safety and health of that organization's workers as one of its top priorities. The Mission Statement should also clearly state the entity's desire to protect property from loss and the general public from injury. The mission statement dedicates resources to achieving and maintaining an accident-free workplace. It also assigns responsibilities to all employees, supervisors, and managers to support and participate in the safety program.

Management commitment provides the motivating force and the resources for organizing and controlling all activities within an organization. In an effective safety program, management regards worker safety and health and protection of property and the public as a fundamental value of the organization, and applies its commitment to safety and health and property protection with as much vigor as to any other organizational purpose.

Scope

This information was prepared as an outline to assist you in developing your Safety Policy Mission Statement. As is the case with all parts of your safety program, to be effective the mission statement must relate to your management style and your specific operations. The sample mission statements and other information provided are just that, samples. They are intended as guides for your mission statement development. The steps listed in developing your mission statement represent the application of occupational safety and health as a key means for organizing, motivating, and controlling activities within your organization.

Requirements

At the present, there is no legal requirement for you to develop a mission statement. However, it is highly recommended and OSHA has developed guidelines for an effective safety policy. You may want to consult with them for additional assistance.

Steps to Develop Your Mission Statement

1. **State Clearly a Workplace Policy on Safe and Healthful Work and Working Conditions** ... The first step is to understand the importance of informing all of your personnel of the high priority of safety and health protection in relation to other organizational values. The mission statement is the foundation of safety and health management. It communicates the value in which safety and health protection is held in the organization. If it is internalized by all employees within the organization, it becomes the basic point of reference for all work decisions, which potentially may affect the safety and health of one or more workers or others.

2. **Set Goals** ... Establish and communicate clear goals for the safety and health program and objectives for meeting those goals. This will allow all members of the organization to understand the desired results and the planned measures for achieving them. Setting goals and implementing objectives make the safety and health mission statement more specific. Communicating these ensures that everyone in the organization understands the direction to be taken. An obvious goal would be an accident-free workplace. However, that may not be realistic in the initial years of the program. Setting a goal of reducing injuries by 25% within a given calendar year might be a good place to start.
3. **Top Management Involvement** ... As managers, you need to provide top management involvement in implementing and supporting the safety program so that all employees will understand that management's commitment to safety is serious. Actions speak louder than words. If top management gives high priority to safety and health protection in practice, supervisors, and employees will see and follow their lead. If not, a written or spoken policy of high priority for safety and health will have little credibility, and employees will also not follow it. As an example, managers who wear the required personal protective equipment when visiting worksites demonstrate such involvement.
4. **Assign and Communicate Responsibility** ... The mission statement should assign and communicate responsibility for all aspects of the safety program, so that managers, supervisors and employees in all parts of the organization know what specific performance is expected of them. It is important that everyone in an organization has some responsibility for safety and health. A clear statement of that responsibility as it relates both to organization goals and objectives and to the specific functions of individuals, is essential. If all persons in an organization do not know what is expected of them, then they are unlikely to perform as management desires. Having some safety responsibilities assigned to an individual or to the safety committee is fine as long as each worker understands that they must also be a part of the program.
5. **Provide Authority and Resources** ... Management must provide adequate authority and resources to responsible parties so that assigned workplace safety responsibilities can be met. It is unreasonable to assign responsibility without providing adequate authority and resources to get the job done. For example, if an employee is involved in the organization's safety committee and his supervisor does not allow that individual the time to attend the meetings and participate in follow-up activities, a negative safety message is sent. If safety hazards are identified but management does not provide the necessary resources to get them corrected, then employees will quickly begin to doubt management's commitment to safety.
6. **Review and Revise the Mission Statement Annually** ... Each year the safety program operations should be reviewed in order to evaluate the organization's success in meeting safety goals and objectives. This will allow both progress and deficiencies to be identified so that the mission statement and the overall safety program can be refined as necessary to allow the organization to continue to make progress toward an accident-free workplace. The mission statement should be reissued to all employees whenever changes are made. All new employees should receive a copy of the mission statement at the time of their hire, and should have it explained to them prior to them starting their duties.

Key Elements

To be effective, Your mission statement needs to clearly communicate the following:

- A Clear Workplace Policy on Safe and Healthful Working Conditions
- Clear and Attainable Goals (re-established annually)
- That Top Management will be Involved in Monitoring the Safety Program
- Responsibility of All Employees to Support the Safety Program
- Authorities Assigned and Resources That Will be Dedicated
- That the Mission Statement Will Be Reviewed Annually and Revised as Necessary

Sample Program

The attachments provided are intended to help you develop Your Mission Statement. Each of the key elements is included. Each organization will need to carefully analyze their own management style and available resources, so that the Mission Statement can be fine-tuned to fit your needs and goals.

Sources of Additional Help

MMA , Risk Management Services - Please call Loss Control Services at (800) 590-5583 or visit our website at www.memun.org/RMS/LC/default.htm.

Maine Department of Labor, Safety Works at (207) 624-6460 or http://www.safetyworksmaine.com/safe_workplace/safety_management/

This information is intended to assist you in your loss control efforts. "Best Practices" are developed from available current information but may not address every possible cause of loss. We do not assume responsibility for the elimination of all hazards that could possibly cause accidents or losses. Adherence to these recommendations does not guarantee the fulfillment of your obligation under local, state, or federal laws.

ATTACHMENT A

SAMPLE #1 SAFETY POLICY MISSION STATEMENT

The Entity / City / Town of _____ is extremely conscious of the safety of our employees and the citizens of our community and of the importance of our physical assets. As an employer, we recognize the obligation to ensure the safest possible work place for our employees. As a governmental entity, we recognize our responsibility to protect the **(Entity's / City's / Town's)** physical assets from damage or loss and to provide a safe environment for the public we serve. Our ultimate goal is to achieve an accident free, loss free environment for our employees and public.

To help meet these goals, the **(Entity's / City's / Town's)** has allocated resources to administer an aggressive loss control program. Some of the program components include a safety committee, written safety policies and procedures, employee training, safety inspections and additional administrative controls.

The overall program is the responsibility of the **(City Manager, Board of Selectmen, etc.)**. Administrative responsibility is assigned to the **(Safety Coordinator, Risk Manager, Name/Title of individual)**. The Safety Coordinator, however, is not responsible for departmental safety, which is the responsibility of department heads and supervisors. It is expected that department heads will complement the efforts of the Safety Coordinator to reduce losses and provide for the safety of employees and the public. These loss control responsibilities are continuous and equal in importance with all other operational considerations.

It is the responsibility of each employee to follow all safety work rules and procedures and to cooperate with and support loss control program activities and objectives. Each employee is expected to report any unsafe conditions and to ask for instruction from a supervisor if they are unsure how to conduct a specific task safely. It is the responsibility of each supervisor to monitor and assist employees in the safe performance of their duties. Safe work behaviors and attitudes are an expected part of every employee's job performance.

Loss control is every employee's responsibility. This mission statement will be reviewed annually to allow the **(Entity / City / Town)** of _____ to meet the mutually beneficial goal of maintaining a safe, loss free environment for both our employees and the citizens we serve.

(Signature(s) Manager / Mayor / Selectperson)

DATED ISSUED: _____

REVISED DATE: _____

ATTACHMENT B

SAMPLE #2 SAFETY POLICY MISSION STATEMENT

The **(Entity / City / Town)** of _____ recognizes that an organized and systematic loss control program is important to our operational and administrative systems. The safety and health of employees and of the public and the protection from loss of the (Town's/City's etc) _____physical facilities is both a moral and legal obligation.

It is intended that the **(Entity / City / Town)** of _____ will undertaking initiatives to maintain safe and healthful working conditions and facilities, develop safe operating procedures, and utilize its financial and personnel resources to achieve a loss free environment for our employees and for the public.

The responsibility for this undertaking is shared by the Manager, Supervisors, and employees. Oversight of the loss control / safety program will be done by **(Manager, Selectperson(s), Name)** . However, all employees must work cooperatively to ensure that workplace safety is a matter of continual concern, equal in importance to all other operational considerations.

The **(Entity's / City's / Town's)** loss control program and this mission statement will be reviewed, updated, and issued as deemed necessary.

(Signature(s) Manager / Mayor / Selectperson)

DATE ISSUED: _____
DATE REVISED: _____

ATTACHMENT C

SAMPLE #3 SAFETY AND HEALTH POLICY STATEMENT

We are dedicated to providing a safe and healthful environment for employees and public, protecting the public, and preserving **Town / City / Entity of _____**'s assets and property.

At **Town / City / Entity of _____**, our most valuable resource are the people who work for us and the public we serve. Injuries can be prevented. To achieve this objective, we will make all reasonable efforts to comply with all government regulations pertaining to safety and health issues. An effective Safety and Health Program will be carried out throughout our organization.

The Safety and Health Program will assist management and non-supervisory employees in controlling hazards and risks which will minimize employee and public injuries, damage to their property and damage or destruction of **Town / City / Entity of _____** property.

All employees will follow this program. This program is designed to encourage all employees to promote the safety of their fellow employees and the public they serve. To accomplish our safety and health goals, all members of management are responsible and accountable for implementing this policy, and insuring it is followed.

Town / City / Entity of _____ is sincerely interested in our employees' safety. The policy of **Town / City / Entity of _____** is to provide safe equipment, adequate tools and training and the necessary protective equipment.

It is the employees' responsibility to follow the rules of safety as established for their protection and the protection of others, and to use the protective devices, which **Town / City / Entity of _____** provides.

Signature(s): _____

Date Issued: _____

Date Revised: _____

ATTACHMENT D

SAMPLE RESPONSIBILITIES

The “responsibilities” are examples of more specific loss control measures that may be incorporated into any of the sample safety policies. They may be expanded and/or made more goal specific.

Responsibilities:

The **Town / City / Entity** pledges to do the following:

- Strive to achieve the goal of zero accidents and injuries.
- Provide mechanical and physical safeguards wherever they are necessary.
- Conduct routine safety-and-health inspections to find and eliminate unsafe working conditions, control health hazards, and comply with all applicable Safety-and-Health requirements.
- Train all employees in safe work practices and procedures.
- Provide employees with necessary personal protective equipment and train them to use and care for it properly.
- Enforce company safety-and-health rules and require employees to follow the rules as a condition of employment.
- Investigate accidents to determine the cause and prevent similar accidents.