

Injury and Illness Prevention Program Meeting Kit

What's At Stake

An injury and illness prevention program is a proactive process to help employers find and fix workplace hazards before workers are hurt. We know these programs can be effective at reducing injuries, illnesses, and fatalities. Many workplaces have already adopted such approaches, for example as part of OSHA's cooperative programs. Not only do these employers experience dramatic decreases in workplace injuries, but they often report a transformed workplace culture that can lead to higher productivity and quality, reduced turnover, reduced costs, and greater employee satisfaction.

What's the Danger

WHAT INJURY AND ILLNESS PREVENTION PROGRAMS DO

Injury and illness prevention programs provide the foundation for breakthrough changes in the way employers identify and control hazards, leading to a significantly improved workplace health and safety environment. Adoption of an injury and illness prevention program will result in workers suffering fewer injuries, illnesses, and fatalities.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

WHO NEEDS AN IIPP? EVERYBODY

You would much rather have employees avoid injury and illness in the first place. Your IIPP can help your employees stay safe on the job and remain productive, and help you avoid expensive costs—both direct and indirect—that come with a workplace injury.

HOW AN INJURY AND ILLNESS PREVENTION PROGRAM WORK?

Most successful injury and illness prevention programs include a similar set of common-sense elements that focus on finding all hazards in the workplace and developing a plan for preventing and controlling those hazards. Management leadership and active worker participation are essential to ensuring that all hazards are identified and addressed. Finally, workers need to be trained about how the program works and the program needs to be periodically evaluated to determine whether improvements need to be made.

These basic elements – management leadership, worker participation, hazard identification and assessment, hazard prevention and control, education and training, and program evaluation and improvement – are common to almost all existing health and safety management programs.

HOW TO CREATE YOUR IIPP

Start by first identifying the hazards and how you can eliminate or reduce them. Next, put together your written IIPP document.

Your IIPP will include these eight sections:

1. Responsibility – Who manages your IIPP?
2. Compliance – How do employees follow the rules?
3. Communication – How to inform employees about your IIPP.
4. Hazard assessment – What hazards exist at your workplace?
5. Accident/exposure investigation – What caused an accident/near miss?
6. Hazard correction – Making changes to improve safety.
7. Training and instruction – Performing job duties safely.
8. Recordkeeping – Document corrections, changes, and successes with your IIPP

1. Involve employees. They know the job better than anyone else and can provide valuable information to you. Form a safety committee with your employees and show them how to review the IIPP. Regular committee meetings also allow them to discuss concerns and potential hazards on a regular basis.

When your workers are involved in setting up your IIPP, they take

ownership of the plan. They also feel more valued and appreciated, which leads to better morale. Some may even want to lead safety meetings or coach coworkers on how to stay safe on the job.

2. Upper management leads by example. The last thing you want is for your employees to see you violating the safety processes you and they worked so hard to put in place. First, that can damage morale. Second, you'd be sending a message that rules aren't important. This could lead to more injuries, illnesses, claims, and costs for your business. So, if you need to enter an area where hard hats are required, make sure to wear the hard hat even if you'll be there for only a few minutes.

3. Clearly define responsibilities and accountability for supervisors. If supervisors don't monitor for compliance with safe work practices and correct unsafe behavior when they observe it, employees will start to ignore the safety rules put in place for their protection. If supervisors don't encourage two-way communication during safety meetings, employees won't feel their input is appreciated or valued and they will stop caring about the success of the program. If supervisors prioritize production goals and meeting deadlines over doing the job safely, then employees can get hurt.

4. Investigate all accidents and near-miss incidents. One of the best predictors of a future workplace injury is one that has already happened or one that almost happened (near miss). Thoroughly investigate all workplace accidents and near misses and involve your employees too. They can provide a unique perspective as to why something happened. Being on the front line, employees can witness accidents.

5. Recordkeeping. Documentation is a critical part of your safety plan. Any time there is an accident or near miss, you need to establish records of what happened. This includes:

- What the investigation revealed
- Corrective actions
- Disciplinary actions
- Training recommendations or changes

- Other prevention steps

You can use the records of any accident or identification of a new hazard to update your policies and procedures as well as your IIPP.

6. Review and update. This process allows you to double and triple check to ensure employees are still following your procedures. And, you can verify that corrective actions put in place after previous investigations are still there. Check to see if there are any new processes, jobsites, or company functions that are not yet reflected in the current program.

FINAL WORD

When it comes to injury and illness prevention programs, every business is different, and one size certainly does not fit all. Employers who implement injury and illness prevention programs scale and adapt these elements to meet the needs of their organizations, depending on size, industry sector or complexity of operations.