Compliance Made Simple

Volume 1

Montana Safety Committee Meetings
Who the rules apply to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If you have</th>
<th>Then:</th>
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<tr>
<td>5 or fewer employees</td>
<td>You may choose to have Safety Meetings instead of having a Safety Committee.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 or more employees on the same shift at the same location</td>
<td>You <strong>must</strong> have a Safety Committee. *</td>
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<td>*Exceptions</td>
<td>The safety committee requirement may be waived if:</td>
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<td>• The employer insured by an insurance carrier (Compensation Plan 2 or Plan 3) presents sufficient evidence of low injuries and evidence of other safety procedures.</td>
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<td>• A self-insured employer (Compensation Plan 1) has implemented an effective written safety plan.</td>
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**Safety Committee & Safety Meetings Defined:**

- A **safety committee** is an organizational structure where members represent a group. This gives everyone a voice but keeps the meeting size to an effective number of participants.

- A **safety meeting** includes all employees and a management person is there to ensure that issues are addressed. Typically, the safety committee is an effective safety management tool for a larger employer and safety meetings are more effective for a smaller employer.

**Purpose of the rule (ARM 24-30-2542):** The purpose of the Montana Safety Culture Act (MSCA) is to create a safety culture in Montana’s workplaces and reduce workplace injuries, illnesses and fatalities in the hope that by improving occupational safety and health, workers’ compensation insurance rates for all industries will be reduced. This rule requires that employers have a method of communicating and evaluating safety and health issues in the workplace brought up by both you, the employer, and your employees.

**State Codes to Reference:**

You Must:

- Have a comprehensive and effective safety program. [ARM 24-30-2541](#)
- Establish and conduct safety committee meetings. [ARM 24-30-2542](#)
Step 1: Forming Your Safety Committee
(For employers with more than 5 employees)

Note: There is no specific number of members required, however Montana Department of L&I recommends that your safety committee be of “sufficient size” to provide for effective representation of the workforce. If you have more than one location, you may elect to have multiple safety committees.

☐ Safety Committee must have at least one employer-selected member
(a.k.a. Management Representative)

1. ______________________ (required)
2. ______________________
3. ______________________
4. ______________________
5. ______________________

☐ Safety Committee must have at least one employee volunteer and/or employee-elected member

1. ______________________ (required)
2. ______________________
3. ______________________
4. ______________________
5. ______________________

Note: An owner/president/etc., may be a member of the committee but federal law requires that the committee not be made up solely of or dominated by management representatives.
Step 2: Running Your Safety Committee Meetings

☐ Establish: when, how often, and where your safety committee will meet.

The Safety Committee will meet **every 4 months** (required) on the ________________ (ex. 1st Wednesday) of ________________________, in/at the _________________.

☐ At minimum, safety activities **shall** be discussed at each meeting that assist the employer in fact finding:

☐ **WBMA recommends discussing the following topics at each meeting:**

  ☐ Review of safety and health inspection reports to help correct safety hazards.

  ☐ Evaluate the accident investigations conducted since the last meeting to determine if the cause(s) of the unsafe situation was identified and corrected.

  ☐ Evaluate your workplace accident and illness prevention program and discuss recommendations for improvement, if needed.

Other Suggested Topics:
- What to do in case of a specific emergency -- fire, earthquake, chemical spill
- A "close call" someone reported. For example: a near-miss by a forklift
- How someone in your company/another company got injured
- How to keep the walkways clear and reduce clutter
- How to safely operate a new piece of equipment the company just got
- New hazards now that the season is changing -- rain, cold, heat, darkness
- How to predict an accident
- Watching out for "road rage"
- Leaving work after dark
- Using a fire extinguisher
- Using a cell phone while driving
- Proper lifting techniques
- Using the emergency eyewash
- Our Lock-Out/Tag-Out program
- Choosing proper eye protection
- Forklift-pedestrian safety
- Problems in using ladders
- Stretching exercises to prevent injuries
- Sound/Noise Safety
Safety Meeting Agenda Template

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee Members Present</th>
<th>Members Absent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employee-Volunteer/Elected</td>
<td>Employer-Selected</td>
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Safety Topics Discussed:

☐ Review of safety and health inspection reports to help correct safety hazards.

☐ Evaluate the accident investigations conducted since the last meeting to determine if the cause(s) of the unsafe situation was identified and corrected.

☐ Evaluate your workplace accident and illness prevention program and discuss recommendations for improvement, if needed.

☐ Open forum on workplace safety & health topics

   • ________________________________
   • ________________________________
   • ________________________________
   • ________________________________
   • ________________________________

☐ Next meeting time, date, and agenda.

   • Time: __________________________ Date: __________________________

Note: While helpful, there are no formal documentation requirements for safety meetings in the State of Montana.
Step 3: Record Keeping Requirements

Montana L&I Recommends the Safety Committee:

☐ Keep records of the attendees of each meeting, and

☐ Keep records of all topics discussed (a.k.a. minutes), and

☐ Report to the employer regarding:
  ☐ assessing and controlling hazards;
  ☐ assessing safety training and awareness topics;
  ☐ communicating with employees regarding safety committee activities;
  ☐ developing safety rules, policies and procedures;
  ☐ educating employees on safety-related topics;
  ☐ evaluating the safety program on a regular basis;
  ☐ inspecting the workplace;
  ☐ keeping job specific training current;
  ☐ motivating employees to create a safety culture in the workplace; and
  ☐ reviewing incidents of workplace accidents, injuries and illnesses.