Compliance Made Simple

Volume 1

Washington State Safety Committee Meetings
Who the rules apply to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If you have:</th>
<th>Then:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 or fewer employees</td>
<td>You may choose to have Safety Meetings instead of having a Safety Committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 or more employees on the same shift at the same location</td>
<td>You <strong>must</strong> have a Safety Committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 or more employees, but they work on different shifts and there are 10 or fewer on each shift, or 11 or more employees, but they work in widely separate locations and there are 10 or fewer at each location.</td>
<td>You may choose to have Safety Meetings instead of having a Safety Committee.</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** (WAC 296-800-130): 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:

Establish and conduct safety committees. [WAC 296-800-13020](#)

Follow these rules to conduct safety meetings. [WAC 296-800-13025](#)
Step 1: Forming Your Safety Committee
(For employers with 11 or more employees)

Note: There is no specific number of members required, however L&I recommends a safety committee of 6 members with representation across all departments.

☐ 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-elected member

☐ Employee-elected members must equal or exceed the number of employer-selected members

☐ Employee-elected member terms shall not be longer than 1 year (However, there is no limit to the number of terms a representative can serve.)

☐ If there is an employee-elected member vacancy, a new member must be elected prior to the next scheduled meeting

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

Note: Employees selected by the employees bargaining representative or union qualify as employee-elected.

☐ Safety Committee Must Elect a Chairperson

1. ____________________________ (required)

Note: An owner/president/etc., may be a member of the committee but should not be the elected Committee Chairperson
Step 2: Running Your Safety Committee Meetings

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

The Safety Committee will meet **monthly** *(required)* on the _____________________
(ex. 1st Wednesday) of each month, in/at the _________________________________.

☐ The meeting **must not last more than one hour** (unless extended by a majority vote of the committee).

☐ At minimum, the following **must be discussed 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

☐ The Following **must be recorded at each meeting (minutes):**

☐ Document attendance.
☐ Written documentation of subjects discussed.
Safety Meeting Agenda Template

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Chairperson</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee Members Present</th>
<th>Members Absent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employee-Elected</td>
<td>Employer-Selected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 except for writing down who attended and the topics discussed.

A sample L&I Safety Meeting Agenda can be found [here](#).
Step 3: Record Keeping Requirements

You Must:

☐ Keep records of the **attendees** of each meeting, and

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

☐ A period of, at least, **one year**

☐ You must make your meeting records available for review by safety and health consultation personnel of the department of labor and industries.

  - Note: Your records must be kept electronically, as long as there are readily accessible upon LNI request.