

OHS Program:

5. What are safe work practices and procedures?

When hazards have been found that cannot be removed from the workplace, safe work practices and procedures can help reduce risk to workers. Safe work practices provide workers with general directions on how to safely do a job not always completed the same way and procedures give workers detailed instructions on how to safely do their jobs from start to finish.

Safe work practices and procedures are the foundation for skill training and competent workers. They may also be used in coaching, mentoring, and observation programs to make sure workers know how to safely do their jobs.

Requirements

An OHS program needs procedures to make sure jobs are evaluated and workers receive instructions and general direction on safety, quality and efficiency. To ensure practices and procedures are implemented an employer should develop a process to:

- Inventory occupations or positions, jobs within each occupation and tasks related to each job
- Complete critical task inventory by prioritizing high risk job tasks
- Record the steps for each critical task and identify the potential human, equipment, material or environmental loss
- Communicate the importance of safe work practices and procedures, the potential risk and consequences of not following them
- Review them to make sure they are working and update them when needed (i.e. after a high-potential for serious injury or fatality, or serious loss or after significant changes are made)

Tips for effective management:

Effective OHS programs have processes to make sure workers receive instructions and understand how to safely perform their work. Workers must be trained in practices and procedures before the work begins and when workers have not done the work for a long period of time.



Effective safe work practices and procedures consider the:

- Target audience, their information needs, the literacy levels
- Review of practices and procedures to make sure they do not have too much or too little detail
- Process to consult with workers when developing
- Process to make sure practices and procedures mirror how work is carried out
- Develop practices and procedures for all critical work tasks
- Need for workers to be trained before work is conducted
- Use of practices and procedures in skill training, competency assessment, coaching, mentoring and observation programs
- Review of accuracy and effectiveness of work instructions
- Process for scheduled reviews

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