

OCWR Fast Facts

Hosting a Safety Meeting



The OCWR has occupational safety and health specialists who can provide training on OSHA standards.

Hosting a safety meeting should be simple. Employing offices can follow these basic steps when planning the meeting:

1. Select a topic

If an office has primarily professional or administrative staff, safety meetings can focus on generalized topics such as common office safety hazards, emergency preparedness, pest prevention, or workplace violence prevention. However, if you have staff in specialized fields that are exposed to specific dangers (e.g. heat stress, hazardous chemicals, permit-required confined spaces), safety meetings should address specific hazards and the corresponding Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards that are designed to ensure worker safety. Safety meetings can also be used to discuss new standards or safety protocols.

2. Have a qualified presenter

Some employing offices have a safety coordinator who is responsible for ensuring compliance with safety and health regulations in the workplace. This individual can present to staff on various safety-related topics. If there is no safety coordinator, employers can designate a knowledgeable staff member to coordinate a presentation, either by finding relevant materials or by bringing in technical experts to speak. The OCWR has occupational safety and health specialists who can provide training on OSHA standards.

3. Schedule the meeting

Consider holding a safety meeting at the beginning of a shift while staff are most alert. Safety meetings should be informative, yet concise, and occur regularly. The frequency of safety meetings can vary depending on the kinds of hazards present in the workplace. For administrative offices, quarterly or biannual meetings may be sufficient. If employees work in more hazardous conditions, a daily safety briefing at the start of the day, or a weekly “toolbox talk,” may be required.

4. Conduct the meeting

Build in time to ensure that all key information is covered. Allow time for questions. Consider providing handouts to reinforce the main points of the presentation, and including a brief, informal survey or quiz at the end to ensure that employees understand the information taught.

5. Follow up

Plan to follow up with employees after the safety meeting. Include time to discuss whether information from previous meetings was helpful.

Safe + Sound Week is an outreach campaign from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) that recognizes the value of safety and health programs and engages employees in improving workplace safety and health. The OCWR encourages employing offices in the legislative branch to participate in this annual event. One way to participate is hosting a safety meeting. For more ideas on how to get involved, visit <https://www.osha.gov/safeandsoundweek>.

Worker Participation

All employees should be involved in ensuring the safety and health of the workplace. Holding regular safety meetings is one way to engage employees. Some additional opportunities include:

- **Establishing a safety committee.** A safety committee is a team of employees representing a range of positions focused on advancing safety and health in the workplace. This team can coordinate topics, agendas, and speakers for safety meetings, among other projects.
- **Setting goals together.** Employees should be involved in developing annual safety and health goals for the office.
- **Including safety expertise on teams.** Employees who have safety expertise can offer valuable input to decision-making groups such as procurement, human resources, and management.



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