**Sample safety manual**

Emergency medical services

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**Introduction**

This manual contains safety policies designed to control risks associated with operations at **(Insert company name)** and provide the safest possible work environment for our employees. While this safety manual is intended to be comprehensive, it is impossible to cover every scenario, therefore if you have questions regarding a specific task contact your supervisor who can provide guidance.

The best ambassadors of our safety program are those performing the jobs daily. If you observe a safety issue or have a suggestion that could improve the safety measures outlined in this document, please speak with your supervisor. It takes the dedicated effort of the entire team to prevent workplace incidents.

Incidents are the result of unsafe conditions, acts or practices. Many incidents are caused using unsafe equipment, tools used in an unsafe manner or failure to follow safe work practices. Therefore, the implementation of a comprehensive safety program is critical to maintaining a safe work environment for all employees. To ensure a safe work environment, it is imperative that we strictly enforce our policy. Violations of safety policies and procedures could result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. If you have questions and/or need additional information regarding the contents of this manual, you should speak with your supervisor or their predetermined designee immediately.

**Safety policy statement**

Providing a safe work environment for **(Insert company name)** staff is of the utmost importance. The goal of our safety policy is to provide guidance on how to avoid risks associated with the jobs performed by our employees. It is impossible to provide guidelines for every situation; therefore, we depend on you, our staff, to make safe choices in your daily work. Our success depends on everyone performing their job in the safest possible manner.

**Safety is a team effort**

With any great team, each member must know their role and how to perform it well to achieve success. The same is true for safety teams.

**Management’s responsibilities:**

Providing a safe work environment and adequate supervision of operations, which includes as applicable:

* Providing a safe work environment and adequate supervision
* Provisioning of tools and equipment
* Providing proper safety equipment/clothing
* Training and on-site safety direction
* Inspecting work areas and operations periodically
* Ensuring prompt action is taken when unsafe conditions or actions are identified
* Ensuring all incidents are reported and properly investigated
* Reviewing incident reports to verify proper corrective action is taken

**Supervisor’s responsibilities:**

* Promoting safety awareness, and leading by example
* Ensuring employees are trained on safe work practices related to their assigned job tasks
* Ensuring safety equipment and protective devices are provided and properly used
* Conducting frequent safety inspections of all work areas and operations to improve and eliminate unsafe conditions
* Taking prompt, corrective action when unsafe conditions and/or unsafe actions are observed
* Investigating and reporting to management all incidents involving personnel and/or property
* Reviewing new equipment to identify potential risks
* Educating employees on the disciplinary policy as it relates to the safety policy; taking appropriate action when merited
* Arranging transportation and accompany the injured employee to the medical facility
* Facilitating paperwork and answering questions of both the treating physician and injured employee

**Employee’s responsibilities:**

* Following the safety policy and procedures
* Reporting unsafe conditions and practices to management immediately
* Keeping work areas clean and orderly at all times
* Operating equipment only if authorized and instructed on safe work procedures
* Reporting all incidents to management immediately and complete an incident report as soon as possible

**What to do if an incident occurs**

While every effort is made to avoid incidents, it is important to know what to do if one should occur. Acting quickly and getting the injured employee the treatment, they need as soon as possible can help to prevent further injury.

* Report all incidents, no matter how minor, immediately to management
* Prompt reporting ensures the employee receives proper treatment if it is required, and ensures appropriate corrective action is taken to avoid future injuries
* Perform first-aid and CPR, only if you are trained
* Follow established Bloodborne Pathogens procedures
* Arranging transportation and accompany the injured employee to the medical facility should be done by the supervisor
* Facilitating paperwork and answering questions of both the treating physician and injured employee should be done by the supervisor
* Incident Report forms must be completed by the supervisor and injured employee as soon as possible; route as directed on the form

**Emergency action plans**

Emergency situations such as fire, severe weather, bomb threat, etc., require swift and immediate action by our employees to ensure the safety of everyone. In the event of an emergency, our staff should be prepared for the following:

Supervisor/management or designee for their respective areas will:

* Direct actions of personnel
* Know the location of fire extinguishers
* Know who is first-aid and CPR trained
* Identify individuals who need special assistance during evacuations and make arrangements to ensure their safety
* Familiarize employees with evacuation route
* Ensure the building is clear and account for personnel after building evacuation

**Fire evacuation:**

* Turn off nearby equipment and walk to the nearest exit, when the fire alarm sounds and if it is safe to do so
* Assemble away from the building at the designated assembly area
* Remain outside until the all-clear is given by responding fire personnel
* The supervisor or their designee will account for all individuals

**Severe weather:**

* Stay inside the building
* Proceed to the appropriate designated shelter when directed

**Bomb threat:**

* Bomb threats must always be taken seriously
* Document as much information as possible
* Report the incident immediately to the supervisor
* The supervisor or the authorities will determine if the situation warrants evacuation; if called for, follow the procedures used for a fire evacuation

**Recordkeeping**

Documentation is a critical component for maintaining a safe working environment. The following records are retained in personnel files:

* Employee training records
* Certifications
* Incident reports
* Hazard identification and corrective actions
* Signed acknowledgments
* Equipment inspection/certifications
* OSHA 300

**Violence in the workplace**

It is the policy of **(Insert company name)** that violence or the threat of violence, even in a joking manner, is not appropriate and subject to disciplinary procedures, up to and including termination.

Employees are to report any acts or threats of violence to their supervisor immediately. Report the behavior or threats made, give facts of where and when the event occurred, what was said and include any witnesses.

Anyone who observes a weapon on the premises is required to report it to the supervisor immediately.

**Biological exposure control plan**

Within the scope of your job, you may encounter blood or other bodily fluids that have the risk of transmitting blood and/or airborne diseases. Always wear personal protective equipment (PPE) if it is necessary for you to be in contact with blood or other body fluids. For more information on biological exposures, visit www.CompSourceMutual.com.

**Animal exposures**

Since their behavior can be unpredictable, be aware of how to protect yourself from animals (primarily dogs) at or near a patient’s home. To best protect yourself when animals are present or anticipated to be present, practice the following guidelines:

* Patients with known pets will be identified during the initial call if possible.
* Be attentive and watch for animals before entering the property.
* Once with the patient ask if there are animals on the property, verify how many and their location.
* Work to shut off any gates or doors closing off the animals in a separate area.
* If an animal is on the property, request that the client secure the animal before entering the property when possible.
* Be aware that an animal, no matter how gentle it may appear, can cause injury either directly by biting and scratching, or indirectly as a trip hazard.
* If an animal is present and unsecured in the yard, do not look directly at or move directly towards the animal, talk softly and slowly moving slowly around the animal.

If an aggressive animal is onsite and cannot be contained request additional assistance as guided by (***Insert company name***, such as animal control).

**Ergonomics**

**(Insert company name)** has an Ergonomics Program to educate and train employees on the basic principles of ergonomics and proper body mechanics. The program includes written guidelines to prevent musculoskeletal injuries caused by exertion, repetitive motion or sustained posture; these include back injuries, sprains, strains, carpal tunnel syndrome or other cumulative trauma disorders.

Depending on the physical demands of a particular job, changes in the layout of your workstation or procedures may need to be changed to minimize the risk of a cumulative trauma injury. It is important to request an ergonomic evaluation if you believe your workstation or procedures need to be changed. Once the ergonomic evaluation is complete, modifications identified should be implemented. It is important that employees follow the recommendations and modifications to help prevent a cumulative trauma injury.

# Hazard communication

All potentially harmful products used by the company are to be evaluated and the risks associated with these products communicated to the affected employees prior to use and/or exposure to these products. Annual training on this subject will be provided with additional training as new products are introduced in the work area. *See Hazard Communication Program*

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

# Eye Protection

Appropriate safety glasses, goggles, or face shields shall be worn when the work may result in a potential risk of injury to your face/eyes. Safety glasses and goggles are provided by the company and employees are responsible for keeping track of and maintaining this equipment in good condition. Damaged equipment must be replaced immediately.

Some work examples where proper eye protection must be worn include exposure to:

* Dust and small flying particles
* Splashing liquid (transfer of products, housekeeping activities, etc.).
* Injurious sprays and mist (body fluid exposures, use of chemical products, etc.).
* Injurious radiant energy

**Foot and hand protection:**

Footwear must be suitable for the type of work you perform and the environment in which you work. It is recommended that all employees follow the footwear guidelines listed under the slip trip and fall prevention section of this safety manual. However, for employees in certain work areas, these practices may be required.

Hand protection should be selected based on the risk associated with the tasks assigned. However, in operations where hand protection may cause or contribute to an injury, other methods of hand protection should be used. Consult your supervisor regarding the proper hand protection and use. **(Insert company name)** will provide proper hand protection in areas where it is necessary.

**Outerwear protection:**

The clothing worn to work should not only be appropriate for the type of work you perform but safe for the environment in which you work. Shorts and tank top shirts should not be worn. Clothing should be cotton or other natural fiber, and if clothing or gear becomes contaminated, it should be replaced immediately.

**COMPRESSES GAS CYLINDERS**

Gas cylinders must be kept in racks or stands or set in an upright position and properly secured to prevent their being knocked over. They should be transported & stored in an upright position with regulators removed and cylinder caps in place.

Do not handle oxygen regulators, oxygen cylinders, valves, or any other equipment with oily or greasy hands or gloves. Oxygen will react with oil and grease in such a manner that may result in a fire or explosion.

**General policies for all operations**

* Employees should perform their job tasks in a safe manner, speak with your supervisor if you have any questions regarding safe work practices
* Illness and/or extreme fatigue may impact your ability to perform your job safely; it is the employee’s responsibility to monitor their well-being and ensure they are physically able to perform their job tasks safely
* Horseplay of any kind is strictly forbidden, and employees who willfully engage in horseplay are subject to disciplinary procedures, up to and including termination
* Clean and orderly work areas prevent injuries; take time each day to keep your work area clear of unnecessary materials, tools and/or equipment
* All exits and stairways should be clear and free of obstructions
* Use only approved, grounded electrical extension cords
* Extension cords are to be unplugged, coiled and stored in their designated locations when not in use
* Dispose of extension cords that show wear and tear immediately
* Follow proper lifting techniques and seek assistance when necessary
* Ensure all equipment (dolly, etc.) is in good condition before use
* Visually check equipment and machinery before use and ensure work area is clear
* Never leave machines or equipment running while unattended
* Loose clothing, long hair and/or jewelry should not be worn by employees working around or near moving machinery or equipment
* Use of a personal music device in the work area, including vehicles, is at the discretion of the immediate supervisor
* Smoking is strictly prohibited

**Medi-Flight Precautions**

Always approach the helicopter from either the front or from the side as directed by the pilot. Take into consideration the level of terrain the helicopter is stationed. The helicopter blades may bend to as low as 4 feet from the ground.

**Cot Operation and Safety**

Only trained personnel are permitted to operate cots owned by (*Insert Company Name*). Persons who have not been trained to operate an ambulance cot can cause injury or be injured. Use the cot only for the purpose intended by the manufacturer***.***

Use additional help as deemed by protocol to safely lift the weight of patient, cot and any equipment.

**General Cot Operating Guidelines**

Operators stand at opposite ends of the cot, using an underhand grip (palms up) to grasp the main frame with both hands.

Changing cot positions requires two operators. The only exception would occur when the cot is empty.

Lift the weight of the cot off its wheels before squeezing a control handle.

Be prepared to control, the normal downward movement of the cot that occurs when a control handle is squeezed.

Make sure the undercarriage is locked into the new position before you release your grasp on the frame.

**Patient care and transfer**

Employees shall evaluate the person or object to be lifted prior to attempting the transfer. Appropriate body mechanics will be used during every resident transfer.

Lifting aids such as standard mechanical lifts and hoists or other aids will be used to lift, and transfer residents/patients whenever required.

Gait belts will be used when assisting residents in walking to ensure the prevention of a fall; or the proper controlled movement in the event of a resident fall.

The use of wheelchairs to transport residents is a primary mode of transport in healthcare or nursing home facilities. Ensure proper condition of these devices to include wheel locks, foot rests and general condition to insure safety of care giver & resident.

**Slip, trip and fall prevention**

* Footwear should be flat, slip-resistant with a closed toe and heel
* Floors should be kept clean and dry; use designated wet floor signage whenever necessary
* Mops, brooms, boxes and other articles should be properly stored and cleared from passageways
* Use a step stool or ladder when reaching overhead
* Do not stand on boxes, chairs, desks, tables or other elevated surfaces

**Kitchen/cooking operations:**

* Employees must be trained on the safe operation of all machinery they use
* All safety guards must be in place before operating the equipment
* Electrical equipment must be unplugged and in the off position when not in use
* Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) outlets should always be used
* Thermostats on deep fryers should not be set above 375 degrees Fahrenheit; to avoid boil over
* Follow the manufacturer’s guidelines when cleaning equipment
* Cooking tools/utensils:
  + used only for the purpose for which they are designed
  + inspected before use and replaced as required
  + not left in work areas
  + not left where they may be a trip hazard or interfere with other work in progress
  + never carried in apron pockets or belts unless the point or edge is protected

**Avoiding burns:**

* Use caution when removing lids from pots. Slightly raise the edge of the lid furthest away from the body first to allow steam to escape before removing the lid
* Have a place ready to move hot cooking pans before removing them from the stove
* Place hot cooking pans on dry potholders
* Boiling liquids should not be poured into glass jars
* Pot handles should not extend into passage area around stoves or work tables

**Avoiding cuts:**

* Sharp knives or glass objects should not be placed in sinks
* When using a knife:
  + use sharp knives carefully
  + store them in the space provided when not in use
  + keep sharp to reduce force when cutting
  + cut away from the body
* Handle opened cans with care; never open cans with a knife
* Cracked dishes should be discarded
* Broken glass should be disposed of in trash cans
* Proper PPE must be used when cleaning or dismantling a slicer
* Food slicers should never be used with the blade guards off or disengaged
* Never place hands or any utensil in a food mixer while it is operating

**Maintenance operations:**

**Portable power tools:**

* Do not operate power tools without proper instruction and authorization
* Safeguards should be inspected before use (e.g., grinder guards, string trimmer guards)
* Power tools should be inspected and tested by qualified personnel
* Always report defects or minor shocks from any piece of equipment
* Do not use electrical equipment or cords without an intact ground prong
* Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCIs) must be used in all wet locations
* Electrical cords should:
  + - be protected from damage by oil or wear
    - not be left where they may be a trip hazard or run over by trucks or other equipment
    - never be run through a doorway

**Hand tools:**

Hand tools are to be used only for the purpose for which they are designed. They will be inspected before use and replaced as required.

Defective tools will not be used, but instead will be turned in to the department supervisor for repair or replacement.

Do not leave tools on overhead work areas or other areas where they may fall and strike someone working below.

Never leave tools lying around where they may be tripped over or interfere with other work in progress.

**Ladders**

* Inspect ladders before every use
* Chairs, boxes or other elevated surfaces should not be used as ladders
* Maintain 3-point contact (two hands, one foot or both feet, one hand) when ascending or descending ladders; always face the ladder
* When using a step ladder, do not climb higher than the second step from the top
* When using an extension ladder, do not climb higher than the third rung from the top

**Material handling and storage**

Employees shall evaluate the object(s) to be lifted prior to attempting the lift. Get help or divide the load and always utilize proper body mechanics when lifting.

In storage shelves, the heaviest items will be stored at or near waist level with the lightest items stored above.

Work gloves should be worn when handling heavy or rough objects. Foot protection is also required when there is a potential risk of foot injury.

When moving materials on hand trucks or dollies, push rather than pull whenever possible.

Stack materials/containers securely, using cross tier or pyramid methods.

Damaged containers/materials should be isolated for evaluation prior to storage or use.

Adequate lighting shall be provided for all work areas. If in doubt about the light level, notify your supervisor for evaluation.

**Scene Safety**

Always be aware of your surroundings and your location on the scene. Look around the area and evaluate the risks. Then, be sure that it is safe to approach and continue.

Always maintain contact with your partner. You need to look out for yourself and your partner’s safety equally.

Always identify the best egress routes to safety should you need to extricate yourself and others from the scene quickly.

Be sure to maintain contact with Dispatch as to your location and activities in the event that you need assistance from other public safety entities.

If there is a law enforcement presence with you have them search the patient and be active participants in helping to be sure that the scene remains safe and secure while you treat your patient.

In the course of your assessment, and physical exam, be alert for the presence and potential for concealed weapons and/or sharp objects located on or about the patient.

Only enter a crime scene when secured by law enforcement. Bystanders may appear to be harmless; however, they could be involved in the circumstances at the scene or a retaliatory act may occur, placing you and your partner in jeopardy.

**Motor vehicle operation:**

The following requirements are in place because of the high risks associated with motor vehicle operation:

* Employees who operate vehicles on behalf of the company must have a valid driver’s license, operator, commercial or chauffeur’s license, as required for the equipment being operated
* Only company employees are permitted to operate company-owned equipment/vehicles

Obeying traffic laws and regulations:

* + Employees are required to obey all traffic regulations
  + Cost for traffic violations/citations is the employee’s responsibility
  + Employees convicted of two or more moving violations within a 12-month period cannot operate company vehicles
  + All vehicle incidents must be reported, as required by city and state F reporting procedures
  + Employees involved in vehicle collisions must report the incident to their supervisor or designee immediately after contacting the local law enforcement agency

**General Vehicle Operation**

A “Ground Guide” will be used any time a vehicle is backing if possible. The guide may be your partner, law enforcement personnel, fire personnel, or others the driver can trust to guide the ambulance safely. If there is not a patient on board, the employee not driving is to exit the vehicle, walk to the back of the vehicle and guide the driver any time driving in reverse.

The improper, careless, negligent, destructive, or unsafe use or operation of equipment or vehicles, as well as excessive or avoidable traffic and parking violations, will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Employees are responsible for housekeeping, care and safe operation of the vehicle they are assigned.

Employees are required to wear safety seat belts in both front and back of the vehicle when applicable.

Employees shall not operate any emergency vehicle while that vehicle is in an unsafe condition. Any unsafe condition shall be reported to a member of management immediately. Any unsafe vehicle shall be tagged, “Out of Service” until such unsafe conditions are repaired.

**Driving Speed**

When driving in the emergency mode, the vehicle is not to be driven more than (*Insert number*) MPH over the posted speed limit.

When driving in a School Zone, the posted speed limit will be strictly adhered to, regardless if the vehicle is in emergency or non-emergency mode.

Any employee reported or observed driving faster than the (*Insert Company Name*) Speed Policy limits, will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

**Emergency Driving Mode**

All employees driving in emergency mode will adhere to the Emergency Vehicle Operation Curriculum developed by the Department of Transportation. Before driving an (*Insert Company Name*) vehicle, in emergency mode, the driver will have attended and passed an EVOC class.

At no time, while in emergency mode, shall the driver pass another vehicle on the right, unless instructed to do so by police or fire personnel.

When approaching an intersection in emergency mode, the vehicle shall come to a rolling stop, making sure, other motorists recognize the ambulances presents, before proceeding though the intersection. If the ambulance is following another vehicle driving in emergency mode, the ambulance will come to a complete stop at intersections, making sure other motorists realize there is another emergency vehicle attempting to enter the intersection.

When approaching an intersection, at which traffic is backed up, and there is no route of egress thought the intersection, the ambulance driver may enter the oncoming traffic lane. However, this should be done with extreme caution and should only be done as a last resort and when the oncoming traffic is stopped.

**Safety Policy/Procedure acknowledgment**

By my signature below, I acknowledge I have received and read the Company's Safety Policy/Procedures, and I have been given an adequate opportunity to ask questions and receive clarification of any area of the policy/procedures. I agree to abide by the provisions outlined in the **(Company’s name)** Safety Policy/Procedure and understand that failure to do so may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of my employment.

I have received training by the company for the duties associated with my job, and I understand the potential hazards and physical requirements of these duties as well as the necessary precautions to control these hazards.

I have been informed and understand I am to report to my supervisor any incident and injury occurring while performing the duties of my job, or if in their absence, the next available senior company representative. An Incident Investigation Report must be completed and signed immediately, as is reasonable under the injury circumstances, by me after my injury.

I have been informed and understand I am to immediately report any unsafe acts and/or conditions discovered during the performance of my job duties.

Employee's signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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