

Safety in the Workplace Policy

PURPOSE

This policy establishes the safety requirements for Grand Traverse County personnel in order to prevent accidents or injuries. While the County will provide reasonable accommodation absent undue hardship for those employees with impairments, it is also committed to maintaining the safety and health of its employees. It is the responsibility of each employee that all tasks be conducted in a safe and efficient manner complying with all local, state and federal safety and health regulations, programmatic standards, and special safety concerns identified by the County for use in a particular area.

Although most safety regulations are consistent throughout each department and program, it is the responsibility of employees to identify and familiarize themselves with the emergency plan for their working areas.

POLICY & PROCEDURE

Health and Safety

While the County will provide reasonable accommodation absent undue hardship for those employees with impairments, it is also committed to maintaining the safety and health of its employees. It is therefore a requirement for employment by the County that an employee not pose a direct threat to the health or safety of other individuals in the workplace. By "direct threat" it is meant that the employee poses a significant risk to the health or safety of others that cannot be eliminated by reasonable accommodation. For a person with a currently contagious disease or infection this would mean that the person must pose a significant risk of transmitting the infection to others in the workplace that cannot be eliminated by reasonable accommodation. Determinations as to whether an individual poses such a threat will be done on a case-by-case basis and will not be based on generalizations, misperceptions, ignorance, irrational fears, etc. To the contrary, such a determination will, instead, be based on objective factual evidence and will include a review of such factors as:

- a) Duration of the risk;
- b) Nature and severity of the potential harm;
- c) Likelihood that the potential harm will occur;
- d) The imminence of the potential harm.

Where the employee is determined to pose a significant risk, the County will consider what reasonable accommodation could be afforded to the employee to allow him/her to continue working without causing the County undue hardship.

Smoking and Vaping

In the interest of providing a safe and healthy environment for employees and the public, and in accordance with the Michigan Clean Indoor Air Act and the Smoke Free Areas Ordinance, smoking cigarettes, cigars, vaping or use of any tobacco products, or the use of any marijuana, is prohibited inside all County facilities.

Additionally, smoking, vaping or use of any tobacco or marijuana product is prohibited within any County-owned vehicle. Outside smoking, vaping, or use of other tobacco or marijuana products will only be permitted in areas that comply with the law for facilities located within the City limits or designated facilities.

Employees must utilize the designated smoking area during lunch and break periods only.

The designated smoking area must be maintained litter-free. It is the responsibility of smokers to police the designated area. If any abuse of this policy is discovered, the policy will be discontinued immediately and will result in discontinuance of any smoking and vaping on County premises.

Company work rules state: "Smoking other than in specifically designed areas and during specified periods of the day" will result in appropriate disciplinary action up to and including termination. Employees who wish to take the opportunity to quit smoking should contact the Human Resources department, or their own physician, for a listing of Smoking Cessation Programs.

Definitions:

Smoking refers to the use through inhalation of heated marijuana and traditional tobacco products such as cigarettes, cigars and pipe tobacco. Vaping refers to the use of electronic marijuana or nicotine delivery systems or electronic smoking devices. These are commonly called e-cigarettes, e-pipes, e-hookahs and e-cigars.

Background: To date, e-cigarettes and similar devices are not regulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and are not approved as cessation aids. The FDA has, however, concluded that e-cigarettes pose health risks and contain detectable levels of carcinogens and toxic chemicals. At this time, e-cigarettes are not considered a safe alternative to smoking, and no scientific evidence has shown that they help smokers quit.

Weapons

Employees who do not have prior express authorization from the County Administrator (or his or her department head if that department head is an elected law enforcement official) may not, at any time while in the course of that employee's employment and on any property owned, leased or controlled by Grand Traverse County, including anywhere that County business is conducted, such as County event venues, and so forth, possess or use any weapon.

Weapons include, but are not limited to: guns, knives or swords with blades over four inches in length, explosives, and any chemical whose purpose is to cause harm to another person. Regardless of whether an employee possesses a concealed weapons permit (CPL) or is allowed by law to possess a weapon, weapons are prohibited on any County property without the above-defined express prior approval. They are also banned in any location in which the employee represents the County for business purposes, including those listed above, without the above-defined express prior approval.

When County Administrator express approval is required, possession of a weapon can be authorized to allow security personnel or a trained employee to have a weapon on County property when this possession is determined necessary to secure the safety and security of County employees. When County Administrator express approval is required, only the County Administrator or his or her designee may authorize the carrying of or use of a weapon.

Employees who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary actions, up to and including employment termination.

Drug-Free Work Place

Grand Traverse County is committed to providing a safe and productive working environment for employees and prohibiting influences in the work place that may have a detrimental effect on job performance and productivity. The presence of illegal substances, marijuana, and alcohol adversely affects these goals. Therefore, Grand Traverse County has established this policy which bans alcohol, marijuana, and illegal substances in the work place.

The following activities are prohibited and employees who engage in them will be subject to discipline up to and including discharge:

1. Use, manufacture, distribution, dispensation or sale of illegal drugs, marijuana, or alcohol when: on County premises, in County-supplied vehicles, during working hours, or when representing the County. This includes recreational and medicinal Marijuana, regardless of whether a doctor has in any manner suggested or counseled the use of marijuana.
2. Being under the influence of an illegal drug, marijuana, or alcohol on County premises, in County-supplied vehicles or during working hours.
3. Refusing consent to, or refusing to submit to: a blood, urine, breath or other sample when requested by management upon reasonable suspicion of the bodily presence of an illegal substance, alcohol, or marijuana during that employee's working hours.
4. Refusing to submit to an inspection of county property when requested by management upon reasonable suspicion of possession of illegal drugs, marijuana, or alcohol.
5. Failing to adhere to the requirements of any drug or alcohol treatment or counseling program in which the employee is ordered to be enrolled.
6. Conviction under any criminal drug statute for behavior that occurred while the employee was working, on County premises, in a County vehicle, or otherwise representing the County.
7. Failure to inform the County within five calendar days after a conviction of a criminal drug or alcohol statute.

Any employee reporting for work under the influence of alcohol, marijuana, or any illegal drug will be relieved from duty immediately. (Under no circumstances should such an employee be sent home or to Munson Occupational Health and Medicine without providing assistance to be sure the employee arrives safely.)

The use of prescribed drugs or over-the-counter medications which may adversely affect performance or behavior must be reported by the employee to the immediate supervisor upon reporting for duty.

The County may employ drug and/or alcohol screening programs as follows:

1. During the pre-employment process.
2. Where there is reasonable suspicion to believe that an employee is in possession of, using, distributing, functioning under the influence of, or has the bodily presence of: illegal drugs, marijuana, or alcohol on the job.

Under certain circumstances Grand Traverse County may consider continuing the employment of an employee who has violated a substance abuse rule on a one-time-only basis, or of an employee who has: volunteered that he/she has a substance abuse problem, if that employee has already entered into an approved treatment or counseling program at the time of the volunteering. The determination of continued employment will be based upon consideration of the rule violated, the specific circumstances involved, as well as the employee's overall work record. A second rule violation will result in automatic employment termination.

Employees who enter into a drug or alcohol treatment or counseling program, at the County's discretion, will be required to comply with more stringent testing or other requirements than found in this policy. Employees required to have a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) shall be subject to random drug and alcohol testing as described in the Drug and Alcohol Policy.

Confined Space

All confined spaces will be designated as such with appropriate signage. Only those employees who have had the required training may enter those areas.

References

- a. MIOSHA Standards as Amended.
- b. Resolution 155-95 dated May 31, 1995. (Establishing Safety Team)

Responsibilities

The Board of Commissioners has the overall responsibility for safety at Grand Traverse County.

Department Heads shall ensure the following:

1. Safety orientation is provided to each new department employee.
2. Implementation and enforcement of safe practices within the department.
3. Department employees participate in appropriate safety training.
4. Compliance to the procedure.

The Human Resources Department or designee shall be responsible for:

1. Record keeping of the county safety and health program.
2. Ensure that all new hires obtain the required safety training during orientation and that employees receive ongoing training as necessary.
3. Maintain the documentation of the training.
4. Coordinate the County's compliance with provisions of the Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Act, including the interpretation of standards, rules and requirements.
5. Notification when required training is due.
6. With the department head or supervisor, and others as appropriate, investigate all occupational illnesses and injuries, and all near misses.
7. Maintaining the MIOSHA 300 log as required by law.
8. Coordinate and manage all the Supervisor's Incident reports resulting in work-related injuries.

Safety Team is responsible for:

1. Reviewing the Safety Policy and making recommendations to the Human Resources Director.
2. Reviewing accident reports.

Supervisors are responsible for:

1. Enforcing all safety rules/practices and shall ensure that proper protective equipment is used by personnel.
2. Conducting adequate job briefings and inspections of tools, equipment and the work area to ensure employee safety.
3. Observing work in progress to identify hazards or potentially hazardous operations and shall stop an unsafe procedure or correct a hazardous situation.
4. Obtaining complete and detailed facts about all accidents which occur under his/her supervision as soon as possible after it occurs and shall prepare required reports.
5. In conjunction with Human Resources, ensure that medical attention is provided to the injured person as soon as possible.

INDIVIDUAL EMPLOYEES are the key factor to the safety policy.

As such, each employee is responsible for:

1. Conducting his/her activities in a manner commensurate with published documents and good, safe working practices.
2. Using only appropriate and approved protective equipment and devices and shall report any condition that is considered hazardous or might injure personnel or damage equipment.
3. Promptly reporting any injury suffered to your immediate supervisor.
4. Attending all safety, training and education meetings.

DISCIPLINE FOR BEHAVIOR CONTRARY TO THIS SAFETY POLICY may result in discipline up to and including discharge, depending upon the circumstances.

Requirements

Safety Team

The Safety Team shall be composed of representatives from each building and shall be subject to approval of the Department Head or Supervisor. A representative from the Human Resources Department shall be on the Team. The Team shall meet quarterly and establish a written record of the meetings. A copy of the minutes shall be posted on the intranet.

Safety Training

All County personnel shall attend safety training as required by their job assignment. Trainings will be offered at least annually. Some departments may attend more frequent trainings at the discretion of their supervisor. Employees unable to attend safety trainings due to vacations, illness or other absences should be briefed by their supervisor upon return to work. Safety training should consist of training for the prevention of accidents and injuries and may include instruction in the safe use of new tools and equipment, the use of personal protective equipment, off-the-job safety and general safety procedures. Safety trainings shall also be used for the purpose of employees bringing to the attention of administration any safety concerns they have with facilities and equipment.

Orientation

All new County employees and employees transferring to a new department shall receive a safety orientation within the first six (6) months of employment. This orientation shall include a brief explanation of the steps that should be taken by the employee and the supervisor when an incident occurs, whether it is an injury or illness. Detailed information is provided in the policies provided on the County's website. All new employees will be required to receive safety training. Required training will vary by job classification. Each department supervisor shall present any new employee or transferred employee with a department safety orientation. Each department shall identify safety issues and write procedures to deal with same. New employee orientation shall be documented.

Pre-Job Briefings

The purpose of the pre-job briefing is to familiarize employees and contractors working on county property with the plans and objectives of projects including:

- Identifying any safety problems.
- Avoiding a certain type of accident.
- How to use a particular machine safely.

- Listing the safety equipment necessary for the job.
- Use of specific pieces of safety equipment.
- Location of first aid equipment.
- Who to contact in case of emergency

1. **Formal Pre-Job Briefings:** In order to satisfy MIOSHA requirements, a written pre-job briefing may be necessary. The length of the session should last from 10 to 20 minutes depending on the topics and number of employees. The number and degree of organization or formality of the sessions depends on the types of safety problems and what the supervisor thinks is the most effective way of educating the employees. Supervisors are urged to complete a safety training form that details the topics covered, comments from employees and the signature of those attending the training.
2. **Informal Pre-Job Briefings:** To plan an informal “pre-job briefing,” simply pick a good time and place to talk where employees won't be distracted. The discussion is an informal chat between the crew leader and the work crew. Sessions usually last from 5 to 15 minutes, depending on the interest and discussion by the employees. Topics should be simple and refer to subjects that the crew is involved in every day or a new or special job that the crew has been assigned.

Pre-Job Briefings: Should be held near the job site and just prior to the start of the job. Questions from employees are encouraged. Discussions should include old and new safety hazards and safer approaches or techniques to deal with the problems of the day or week. Emphasis should be placed on a clear understanding of potential problems and the safety procedures discussed. Pre-Job Briefings should be on a regular basis. Briefings should be completed at the beginning of a shift, but are suitable anytime a supervisor sees an unsafe procedure. Formal or Informal Pre-Job Briefings do not replace formal safety meetings.

Specialized Training

Specialized training shall be provided to all employees so that they may acquire the knowledge and skill necessary for safe job performance. Training sessions required by each department will be reviewed and updated regularly by the department supervisor.

Training shall establish employee proficiency in routine duties as well as new and revised procedures necessary to meet all existing and any future MIOSHA standards. Under no circumstance shall an employee operate or move any equipment unless proper training has been given by the supervisor or training specialist.

If certifications are required, the employer shall verify that the required training has been accomplished. Certification of such programs shall require the employee's signature, signatures of the trainers and the date(s) the training took place. New training and updated training records and certifications shall be kept on file in each department, with a copy sent to Human Resources. Training records and certifications shall be available for inspection by supervisors and by all applicable licensing and inspecting agencies.

Incident Reporting

All occupational injuries and illnesses of Grand Traverse County employees shall be reported within 24 hours. A “Supervisor’s Report of Incident” must be completed by the Supervisor or Department Head and sent to the Human Resources office. If the injury or illness requires treatment, Munson Occupational Health and Medicine must be used, unless it is of an emergent nature.

Note: This policy may differ for those employees who are members of recognized unions, organizations, or associations. Any questions related to the content of this policy, or its interpretation, should be directed to Human Resources.

Approved Policy 2/98 Amended 6/99, 4/00, 2/01, 10/01,9/02; 12/02, 12/04, 1/05, 8/07, 7/11, 7/2019