

SAFETY COMMITTEES AND SAFETY MEETINGS

WAC 296-800-130 Safety committees/safety meetings--Summary.

Important:

This rule requires you to have a method of communicating and evaluating safety and health issues brought up by you or your employees in your workplace. Larger employers **must** establish a safety committee. Smaller employers have the choice of either establishing a safety committee or holding safety meetings with a management representative present.

There is a difference between a safety committee and a safety meeting.

- 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.

Your responsibility: To establish a safety committee or hold safety meetings to create and maintain a safe and healthy workplace for all employees.

You must:

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WAC 296-800-13020 Establish and conduct safety committees.

You must:

IF:	THEN:
You employ 11 or more employees on the same shift at the same location	You must establish a safety committee

- (1) Establish a safety committee.
- Make sure your committee:
 - Has employee-elected and employer-selected members.
 - The number of employee-elected members must equal or exceed the number of employer-selected members.

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

- The term of employee-elected members must be a maximum of one year. (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.
 - Has an elected chairperson.
 - Determines how often, when, and where, the safety committee will meet.

Note:

- Meetings should be one hour or less, unless extended by a majority vote of the committee.
- If the committee can't agree on the frequency of meetings, the department of labor and industries regional safety consultation representative should be consulted for recommendations. (See the resources section of this book for contacts.)

WAC 296-800-13020 (Cont.)

You must:

- (2) Cover these topics.
 - Review 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.
 - Document attendance.
 - Write down subjects discussed.
- (3) Record meetings.
 - Prepare minutes for each safety committee and:
 - Preserve them for one year.
 - Make them available for review by safety and health consultation personnel of the department of labor and industries.

WAC 296-800-13025 Follow these rules to conduct safety meetings.

You must:

IF:	THEN:
You have 10 or fewer employees OR If you have 11 or more employees that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on different shifts with 10 or fewer employees on each shift OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work in widely separate locations with 10 or fewer employees at each location 	You may choose to hold a safety meeting instead of a safety committee

- (1) Do the following for safety meetings.
 - Make sure your safety meetings:
 - Are held monthly. You may meet more often to discuss safety issues as they come up.
 - Have at least one management representative.
- (2) Cover these topics.
 - Review 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.
 - Document attendance.
 - Write down subjects discussed.

Note: There are no formal documentation requirements for safety meetings except for writing down who attended and the topics discussed.