Creating a Safe Workplace



- Match the applicant carefully to the job. Test their skills and physical abilities.
- Install alarm systems for theft, entry and fire purposes.
- Make sure that all threats of violence are reported and investigated immediately.
- Maintain a first aid cabinet, post first aid information, including fire, police, and ambulance numbers, and a poster on how to perform mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.
- Comply with all Federal and State OSHA IIPP requirements.
- Comply with all hazardous materials reporting requirements, including identification of hazardous substances.
- Clearly mark and keep clear all your exits, aisles, and passages. Provide stairs with slip resistant surfaces, handrails and proper lighting.
- Make sure your equipment contains safety guards, electrical grounding, readily available and easily identifiable power shut off switches and emergency stop buttons.
- When appropriate, provide your employees with, and require them to wear, protective clothing including: safety glasses, gloves, hard hats, steel toed boots, headphones, hearing protective equipment, wrist braces, back support belts, and the like.
- Do not allow productivity pressures to compromise safety.
- Use furniture and equipment that is ergonomically designed.
- Address indoor pollution problems through proper ventilation and inspection.
- Regularly inspect your equipment for functionality and safety purposes.
- Have a safety officer, a safety plan, and conduct safety meetings.
- Make sure to send ill employees home before allowing them to work around dangerous machinery.
- Make sure you communicate emergency response plans for fire, earthquakes, hurricanes, flooding, etc.
- Drug test if permitted by federal and your state laws new employees and after accidents where drugs were likely a cause.
- Do a criminal reference check for employees in positions of responsibility for elders, infants and others who are dependent on their care.
- Do pre-hire and annual Department of Motor Vehicle (DMV) checks for all employees who drive as part of their job.

THINGS TO DO FOR A SECURE WORKPLACE:

- Put things away! Use desk drawers, closets, and cabinets to reduce temptation and availability. Lock valuable items.
- Keep in mind that anything that can happen to you on the street can happen to you in the workplace!
- Make sure to maintain control over access to security passes, keys, security codes, etc.
- Consider using security cameras, shopping services, computer scanning devices, etc. Provide advance notice of any monitoring and make sure it is directly related to a legitimate business interest.
- Be very careful when using surveillance cameras in areas where employees or customers may have an expectation of privacy, such as changing rooms, restrooms, etc.
- When using written screening tests, make sure they are job related, check the providers credentials, make sure they can testify as to the validity of the test and make sure results are kept confidential.
- Since false imprisonment claims can result whenever persons are wrongfully held against their will, be very careful when using a “shopkeeper’s privilege” or when detaining an employee. An employee who wants to leave a meeting should be told that they may do so but that it may be considered an act of insubordination and may result in discipline.
- When investigating fraud or theft claims, be careful about using names and hearsay accusations.
- Do not threaten criminal prosecution so that an employee or a customer returns an item or provides a statement. This may be considered extortion or blackmail.
- Be conscious of a high number of refunds to customers and safeguard against phantom refunds by using checks or merchandise credit for those refunds.
- Statistics show a much lower rate of dishonesty when employees are paid a fair salary.
- Use inventory check out sheets for everything from stamps, pens, and folders to computer software, etc.
- Be conscious of the potential for collusion between employees and management or employees and third parties related to fraud and security issues.
- In all cases where there is sufficient evidence, have security violations and fraud prosecuted.
- Remember that very often an employee will admit to a smaller theft before they will admit to a larger one.
- Demand the return of any stolen property, as well as restitution for the items stolen where permitted by federal and state laws.
- Audit long distance telephone bill records, computer use, and mail use on a random basis.
- Put supply cabinets in easy view of supervision. Offer the supplies at your cost or give them away as a value-added bonus.
- Have the company’s logo or name etched into as many items as possible.
- An employee who never seems to take a leave and puts in more time than a job requires, could be involved in company theft. They will usually strongly object to procedural changes without apparent reason.
- Do not use pre-printed signatures on checks.
- Lock postage meters at night to prevent unauthorized use.
- Be conscious of exorbitant postage use during the holiday season.
- Carefully monitor expense accounts, especially for car rentals, airline

fares, transportation between the airports and meetings, and meal charges.

- Have your shipping records checked on a regular basis to guard against duplicate invoice numbers, un-invoiced shipments, inflated shipments, etc.
- Investigate customer complaints about non-receipt of goods promptly and thoroughly, as it may be an indication of fraud.
- Inform the employees that all company property, including lockers, is subject to random inspections.
- Set a firm policy against cashing checks or making small loans to employees out of petty cash.
- Be conscious of employees who appear to be living well beyond their means. If an employee's lifestyle cannot be supported by their salary then they could become a risk.
- Be conscious of the financially irresponsible employee who doesn't seem to be able to handle his or her own financial affairs properly. Do pre-hire investigations for those who handle accounts.
- Back up computer data on a regular basis.
- Provide a fireproof safe for backed up computer data and other valuable documents and items.
- Participate in a neighborhood watch program.
- Be conscious of fraud or theft issues when dealing with employees terminated on an individual basis or during downsizing and lay off operations.
- Be conscious of the employee who engages in compulsive gambling, persistent borrowing, and the constant requesting of advances.
- Conduct immediate investigations into safety and security claims and engage in appropriate discipline when necessary. Most fraud and safety violations are allowed to take place because of either poor internal controls or the management override of internal controls.