

## i FACT SHEET

# Safety committees and safety meetings for agricultural employers

OAR 37-004-0251 • Division 4/C



Oregon OSHA requires agricultural employers to have an effective safety committee or hold effective safety meetings (see OAR 437-004-0251).

## Who has to comply?

The rule applies to all agricultural employers with any nonseasonal workers. Count both full and part-time workers who you employ for more than 10 months during a calendar year. (Requirements for seasonal workers are covered in 437-004-0240, Safety Orientation for Seasonal Workers.)

**Note:** When counting nonseasonal workers, you don't need to count members of your immediate family, including grandparents, parents, children, stepchildren, foster children, or any blood relative living as a dependent of the family.

**Note:** You must communicate safety awareness information in a language that workers can understand.

## Can I have a safety committee or hold safety meetings?

All agricultural employers can have safety **committees**.

Agricultural employers can have safety **meetings**, except for those with 11 or more employees at a single location.

Labor contractors must have a safety committee or meetings based on the number of workers who you direct and control.

## Safety committees – requirements

### How many members does the committee need?

- 20+ workers = 4 members
- Less than 20 workers = 2 members

### Who can be a member?

Your safety committee must have an equal number of management-selected and worker-elected (or volunteer) members. If everyone on the committee agrees, there can be more worker-elected members. Members should represent key business activities.

### What does the committee have to do?

- Meet at least monthly, except when quarterly inspections occur. Pay employees at their regular rate for attending required safety committee meetings, trainings, or inspections.
- Agree on a chairperson.
- Establish procedures and conduct quarterly inspections. Train those doing inspections in hazard identification.
- Review quarterly inspection reports; make recommendations to eliminate identified hazards.
- Work with management to create investigation procedures for workplace incidents, accidents, illnesses, and fatalities. Train investigators in accident investigation and examine all lost-time injuries.

- Evaluate investigation reports and recommend ways to prevent incidents from happening again.
- Train members on the purpose and operation of the committee, in hazard identification, and the principles of accident investigation.
- Evaluate your workplace's safety and health programs.
- Serve at least one year, when possible.

### What records do I need to keep?

Keep a record of each meeting. Include:

- Date
- Attendees
- All reports, inspections, evaluations, recommendations, management responses, and other safety and health-related items presented to the committee
- The date management agrees to respond to recommendations
- Keep the records for at least three years and make them available to workers who request them

**Centralized safety committees.** If a business has multiple locations, it can have one central safety committee instead of separate committees – but only if:

- The locations are close enough so that workers know who is on the committee, when it meets, and how information is shared.
- The workers know they have the right to have their safety and health concerns heard by the committee and how to report their concerns, incidents, and accidents.
- The centralized committee represents the safety and health interests of all workers at all locations.

## Safety meetings – requirements

### Who needs to attend safety meetings?

Include all available employees, including at least one management representative. Seasonal workers can – but are not required to – attend.

### How often do we have to meet?

Meet at least monthly, on company time, with employees paid at their regular rate.

### What do we have to do at safety meetings?

- Discuss safety and health issues relevant to your workplace.
- Discuss reports and recommendations from quarterly workplace safety inspections and injury investigations.
- Give workers an opportunity to ask questions, bring up safety and health concerns, and make suggestions.

### What records do I need to keep?

Keep a record of each meeting. Include:

- Meeting date
- Names of those attending
- Topics discussed

**Note:** If all your workers attend a safety meeting, just record the meeting date and the names of those who attended.

Keep the records for at least three years and make them available to workers who request them.



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## Workers

Your employer cannot retaliate against you for reporting a workplace health or safety concern or violation. For more information about your rights, visit the Oregon OSHA website.

*The Technical Section of Oregon OSHA produced this fact sheet to highlight health and safety programs and rules. The information is intended to explain the rules and provide best practices to employers.*