

Toolbox Talk – Company Health and Safety Policies – What They Mean to You



Purpose / objectives	This talk covers some important aspects of both the employer's and employee (you) duties
Hazards / risks	Everyone at work must be aware of their company health and safety policy We all need to understand our duties to protect our wellbeing and safety

Company health and safety policy	A company health and safety policy is a written statement of how your employer manages health and safety. A health and safety policy is required by law.
	Both the employer and employees have legal duties in the workplace and are provided with protection by following the guidance set out in their health and safety policy
	The health and safety policy for a larger organisation may consist of many different elements / documents
	Areas such as employee consultation, welfare provision and training will be covered in your employer's health and safety policy

Health and safety policy content	The health and safety policy contains information on how the company will manage its legal duties relating to health and safety in order to comply with the law
	At the beginning of the policy, a statement of intent sets out the objectives and intentions of the company and summarises how it will manage its business in order to comply with legal requirements
	The organisation's structure (such as identification of health and safety advisors) is detailed, followed by the arrangements for policy implementation (such as risk assessment approach, welfare provision, training for employees, etc.)
	Also included are the duties of each individual duty holder (such as managers, supervisors, company directors, operatives, first aiders and fire wardens)

What it means for you:

- The policy is a set of procedures to protect workers and others
- You should be given access to a copy of your employer's health and safety policy on your first day of employment and at any time thereafter
- You should understand its contents and follow the guidance and procedures set out in it
- On average 43 construction workers are killed every year due to accidents.
By understanding and following your health and safety policy, you can help reduce accidents and incidents at work, which will in turn, help to keep you alive and well
- If you have a doubt or concern, you have a legal duty to ask for an explanation
- Take care of yourself and others – We are all our own safety supervisors

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Consultation	<p>Consultation is more than your employer / supervisor / manager just giving you information. Consultation is about employers listening to and taking account of what you say, before they make decisions that will affect your health and safety</p>
	<p>Employers may carry out consultation by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Involving trade union safety representatives or other appointed representatives in discussions - Having regular health and safety committee meetings or forums - Using inductions, daily briefings and toolbox talks to explain what is happening, and to listen to and take action upon your comments - Talking to you directly during informal visits or walkabouts - Setting up a system that lets you report problems or suggest safer ways of doing your work such as suggestion boxes
	<p>These measures help to make construction work safer, so that you can return home in one piece at the end of each day</p>

Questions

- Can you name your health and safety representative?
- When should you ask questions about the company health and safety policy?
- Why is it important to report unsafe situations?
- What immediate actions should you take if you found a workmate doing something unsafely?
- What actions could you take to improve your own safety in your workplace?

Remember:

You are responsible for your own health and safety, and that of others!

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