

903. Cardinal Rules of Safety

Effective: 12/02/2013  
Revised: 3/29/2023

Employee safety is both a management and individual responsibility. Every action must be performed with a focus on safety. The Cardinal Rules of Safety are of the utmost importance in laying the foundation for a safe workplace and cannot be compromised.

.1 Safe Driving and Equipment Operation

- .11 A seatbelt shall be worn by all occupants during the operation of any motor vehicle or equipment that has been equipped with a seatbelt.
- .12 No employees shall Operate a City vehicle without a valid, applicable State license.
- .13 Using a hand-held mobile phone or mobile electronic device while driving vehicles or operating equipment is prohibited. This does not apply to use of cell phones in emergency situations to contact: 911, law enforcement agencies, fire departments, hospitals, and ambulance services.
- .14 Employees shall not drive or operate City vehicles or motorized equipment while under the influence of substances which may impair their ability to work safely.

.2 Machinery & Tools

- .21 All necessary guards and safety devices must be in place and functioning as intended before operating equipment. Bypassing or circumventing safety controls without following established procedures is prohibited.

.3 Personal Protective Equipment

- .31 Employees must always wear the required personal protective equipment identified in a written hazard assessment, for the specific task being performed.
- .32 Respiratory protection equipment must be worn as required and specified in the written hazard assessment.
- .33 Fall protection equipment must be utilized as required and specified in the written hazard assessment.

.4 Jobsite Safety

- .41 Placing yourself, fellow employee(s) or the public in danger which could reasonably be expected to cause death or serious physical harm immediately.
- .42 Employees shall not enter a permit-required confined space until a trained and competent entry supervisor has provided written authorization.
- .43 Employees must verify that all hazardous energy sources have been locked and/or tagged out before performing any type of work in which the unexpected startup or release of stored energy could result in serious injury or death.
- .44 Employees must always use excavation protective systems as they are intended

to be used. At no time shall anyone enter an unprotected excavation four (4) feet or greater.

.5 Education & Coaching

.51 It is essential that employees are educated on the hazards that exist in their work areas and the policies, procedures, and written hazard assessments that are in place to protect them from those hazards. Managers and supervisors should support this policy by reinforcing the requirements and communicating that misconduct will not be tolerated.

.52 Coaching is defined as a method of instructing an individual or group to develop skills to enhance productivity, overcome a performance problem, or correct unsafe behaviors.

.53 Coaching does not constitute discipline but is a vital tool for managers and supervisor in educating employees.

.54 It is appropriate for supervisors to coach employees to correct unsafe behaviors due to:

.541 Lack of training, or

.542 Failure to understand safety policy or procedure.

.55 Guidelines to assist supervisors and managers in coaching employees for safety violations are listed in appendix A.

.56 While some situations may require disciplinary action, if coaching is more appropriate based on the totality of the circumstances, supervisors, management and/or HR should elect to coach without fear of facing disciplinary action for failing to address unsafe practices.

.6 Disciplinary Action

.61 The disciplinary hearing process is necessary for violation of this policy under the following criteria:

.611 Employee is aware of the safety policy requirements yet shows blatant disregard, or

.612 The employee expresses disregard for safety policy while being coached, or

.613 The employee continues to violate a safety policy after being coached for the same policy violation.