

Model Letter for Establishing a Workplace Health and Safety Committee

Introduction:

Under [OSHA](#), all workers have the right to raise health and safety issues with management without discrimination or reprisal whether they are acting individually or collectively. This right is strengthened when part of a group activity by the rights afforded by the [National Labor Relations Act](#). Workplace health and safety committees can be an effective tool to engage management on a regular basis on workplace health and safety issues. [COVID-19 has amplified the need to demand protections](#) for all workers from workplace hazards.

Many union contracts have language that establishes joint union/management health and safety committees. Where there is not a committee in place currently, the model letter below is intended to assist worker representatives and workers in requesting that a committee get set up. It's always best to have several workers sign on to any health and safety request to management, but this may depend on your situation.

Regardless of whether a committee gets established, remember that workers have the right to file a [safety complaint with the employer](#) or with [OSHA](#) or [State Plan OSHA](#).

[Date]

To: Interested Parties

Subject: Workplace health & safety committee

It's common practice for workplaces to establish and support committees to discuss and help implement [health and safety programs in workplaces](#). Although the legal responsibility to provide a safe workplace is with the employer, it's well recognized that [worker involvement in all aspects of the development and implementation of injury and illness prevention programs](#) is critical.

Every workplace has its own set of health and safety hazards. These hazards can be identified and mitigated by the implementation of a safety system that can be aided by a committee of management, worker representatives and workers. Where a union exists, the union has the right to select representatives to the health and safety committee.

Effective health and safety committees can use many resources that are available from organizations to implement injury and illness prevention programs. These programs should address the total of health and safety hazards in the workplace. Health and safety committees typically have regular scheduled meetings and have the ability to function between meetings to

research hazards and controls and interact with workers and management to help carry out the health and safety program.

Given the current need for workplace programs to address [preventing the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace](#), we request to meet with management representatives to plan and discuss setting up a committee as soon as possible. This committee would address the current crisis related to infectious disease as well as all other health and safety issues in the workplace. The work of the committee does not impact the legal responsibility of the employer to maintain a “workplace free from recognized hazards” as cited in the [OSHA Act](#) and State Plan.

We look forward to working together to create a space to discuss workplace health and safety currently and in the future.

Signatures