



## Workers' Compensation Best Practices Survey

CSDP&LP has provided below a list of “best practices” that can be used by members to evaluate their own operations in comparison to what their peers have identified as the best practices for managing workers’ compensation risk. This survey is intended as a tool that districts can use to measure their progress. We realize that many districts are poorly funded and do not have the resources to fully implement all of these practices. That is why we have a statewide association to assist with identifying what you are not able to accomplish on your own and help you figure out what we and the other members of CSDP&LP can do to help.

Please rate the following best practices in relation to your own operations. This information will be used to assist CSDP&LP in designing education programs and tailoring its loss control and management consulting services to meet the needs of your district.

| <b>Written Policies and Procedures Manuals reviewed by legal counsel and available to the directors and employees including:</b>   | <b>Rating System</b>                                 |   |   |   |   |                       |               |                      |               |
|--|--|---|---|---|---|-----------------------|---------------|----------------------|---------------|
|  | <b>1 = Not Implemented<br/>5 = Fully Implemented</b> |   |   |   |   |                       |               |                      |               |
| <b>Written Procedures - Loss Control</b>   |  |   |   |   |   |                       |               |                      |               |
| 01. Job Safety Analysis (all tasks, all employees)   | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |                       |               |                      |               |
| 02. Personal Protective Equipment Program  | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |                       |               |                      |               |
| 03. Safety Awareness and Loss Prevention Training  | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |                       |               |                      |               |
| 04. Hazard Communication & Material Safety Datasheet Program   | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |                       |               |                      |               |
| <b>Written Procedures – Claims</b>   |  |   |   |   |   |                       |               |                      |               |
| 05. Claims Management and Accident Investigation Procedures  | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |                       |               |                      |               |
| 06. Drug/Alcohol Testing Program   | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |                       |               |                      |               |
| 07. Designation of two Medical Providers   | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |                       |               |                      |               |
| 08. Early Return to Work Program (employees and volunteers)  | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |                       |               |                      |               |
| <b>Written Procedures - Other</b>  |  |   |   |   |   |                       |               |                      |               |
| 09. American’s with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)   | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |                       |               |                      |               |
| 10. Employee Assistance Program (EAP)  | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |                       |               |                      |               |
| 11. Employment Related Practices   | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |                       |               |                      |               |
| 12. Handling Workplace Violence  | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |                       |               |                      |               |
| 13. All premises maintained free of hazards to visitors and employees (duty to inspect & correct)  | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |                       |               |                      |               |
| 14. Claims, accidents and near miss reviews are conducted to prevent recurrences   | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |                       |               |                      |               |
| 15. Safety Committee meets quarterly (recommended for districts with 10 or more employees)   | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |                       |               |                      |               |
| 16. Volunteer Policy (only answer if your district has volunteers)   | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |                       |               |                      |               |
| 17. Safety Rules are posted  | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |                       |               |                      |               |
| 18. Required State Notices are posted  | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |                       |               |                      |               |
| <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;"><b>District Name:</b></td> <td style="width: 50%;"><b>Phone:</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Completed by:</b></td> <td><b>Title:</b></td> </tr> </table> |  |   |   |   |   | <b>District Name:</b> | <b>Phone:</b> | <b>Completed by:</b> | <b>Title:</b> |
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## **Colorado Special District Property and Liability Pool Workers' Compensation Best Practices Reference Guide**

For assistance in creating manual or procedures identified below, contact Jenniffer Alvarado at 1-888-313-7322 Ext. 4. (Numbers match corresponding survey questions.)

01. Each job analysis should incorporate not only the job description but also the functional capacity of each task to comply with ADA regulations as well as to improve the overall safety of each position. Descriptions should include safety requirements, i. e.: personal protective equipment, ergonomic standards, etc. Finally, an analysis involves conducting a survey of employees to determine if they have received safety education for their specific job tasks.
02. A Personal Protective Equipment Program should address requirements of any attire or gear necessary to protect an employee from injury. Equipment requirements should be tailored to the job function. Steel-toed boots, protective eyewear, and hearing protection are examples of personal protective equipment. Your local office of OSHA can provide you with a pamphlet that will assist in writing your procedures.
03. Safety Awareness and Loss Prevention Training are imperative in achieving a safe work environment. Safety training focuses on clear instructions and directions that show employees how to perform their jobs safely. Your manual should outline the types of training programs available and the frequency with which they are offered.
04. Many special districts have hazardous material training requirements imposed by governmental agencies. Written procedures of the required training and documentation of completion is critical. A manual containing all Material Safety Datasheets must be readily accessible to employees and review of the manual should be part of your new hire orientation and ongoing education.
05. Claims Management and Accident Investigation Procedures implemented will be dependent upon the size of your district. All districts should have a manual outlining who is responsible for completion of claim forms and reporting of claims to the Third Party Administrator (TPA). Your designated provider should be identified. Responsibility for investigation of the incident/accident should also be addressed. Creation of light duty or modified return-to-work should be delegated. Authority surrounding litigation and settlement issues should also be outlined.
06. Districts subject to USDOT regulations must comply with USDOT Drug and Alcohol Testing policies for all subject drivers. Drug and alcohol policies can be designed to apply to all employees and can incorporate pre-employment, post accident and for cause testing. Review of the program by an attorney who is familiar with laws in this area is recommended.

07. Designation of two medical providers is required by statute. It allows a district to select two physicians who are familiar with your district's operations. A good working relationship with a network of quality medical providers assures the best medical treatment for your injured workers at reasonable pre-negotiated fees. A physician who is proactive in returning employees to gainful employment including light duty will reduce your ultimate costs.
08. An Early Return to Work program is the most critical step in cost reduction for claims management. Early Return to Work programs should be viewed primarily as *transitional* duty programs, in that they are designed to bring employee back to their original job (or close to it), either immediately or over a short period of time. Teamwork, communication, and early intervention between the special district, the medical provider, and the claims administrator are required for a program to be effective. This procedure can be done in a separate manual or incorporated into your Claims Management and Accident Investigation Procedures.
09. Compliance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA) are mandatory. While all employers take care to follow ADA guidelines in initial hiring practices, care should also be taken when offering light duty or modified work after an injury so that these guidelines continue to be met. Occasionally a job intending to be temporary for a recovering employee becomes permanent because of ADA rules. Or, a temporarily disabled employee may choose to stay out of work on unpaid leave (not workers' comp) under the FMLA rules. For assistance in writing job offers, contact CTSI at 1-888-559-6829 or, 303-861-0507.
10. Injured workers often have issues that may not be addressed by the workers' compensation system, but can be offered through an Employee Assistance Program (EAP). A well-designed EAP can help employees cope with a range of personal problems that may lead to decreased productivity, or increased medical problems. A successful EAP can help resolve or diminish the effects of such problems, creating a win-win situation for the employer and employee. Through the reduction of absenteeism and healthy, productive employees, your district benefits. Formally notify employees of your district's Employee Assistance Program.
11. One of the most costly types of claim a district can have is an employment practices related claim such as a suit for wrongful termination of benefits. These claims can be avoided by ensuring that appropriate procedures are in place and followed. Protect your district by accurately documenting your personnel files.
12. Educating employees on how to avoid incidents is key to preventing workplace violence. The district management and its' employees must learn to notice the signs, not to ignore them, and to deal with actions that may escalate to violence. Training employees to be prepared for potentially violent situations is taking a proactive step in being able to respond appropriately to diffuse a situation before it becomes a critical or even deadly incident. Prevention programs, security audits, workplace conduct, and both personal safety and business training can be an integral part of your District's Preventative Program Manual.

13. Districts should conduct a physical audit of the facilities to identify hazards for business invitees. One of the most common types of claims is from visitors or employees slipping, tripping, or falling on a district's premises as the result of a hazard. These claims can be expensive but easy to prevent through a regular safety audit and maintenance program. If your district would like to talk to a consultant about creating a walkthrough checklist that fits your needs, please contact CTSI.
14. Each District must take responsibility for investigating accidents proactively in order to minimize preventable recurrences. Your district should be incorporating measures to alleviate incidents by reviewing what went wrong. A meeting of the safety committee should be conducted to discuss the cause of the accident followed by an action plan addressing the problem before it happens again.
15. Every district with 10 or more employees should hold regular safety committee meetings. The purpose is to review safety procedures, identify hazards, and make recommendations. Even if your district does not have 10 employees, having a safety committee can go a long way toward reducing accidents and improving employee safety.
16. Districts that regularly receive assistance from volunteers should have a policy to guide volunteer duties and responsibilities. Volunteers should be required to review other district policies and procedures, which relate to their activities. Volunteers include anyone your district names, who performs a job without receiving wages or benefits.
17. Safety rules should outline district procedures that are to be followed in order to make specific areas and types of equipment safe and hazard free. Clear and concise written procedures are the best protection you can provide to your employees.
18. By statute, Colorado requires the posting of specific forms in a conspicuous area where all employees can view them. Failure to post these notices subjects your district to potential fines and penalties. The two required Postings are: *Notice to Employees* and *Notice to Employer of Injury*.