

MARION COUNTY SAFETY MANUAL ANNEX O – ACCIDENT PROCEDURES

Overview

This annex will identify the procedures to be followed in reporting, investigating and review of all accidents involving Marion County employees. Any situation that is not covered in this annex shall be referred to the County Risk Manager or County Safety Team for resolution.

The procedures outlined in this annex will apply to all County employees. All County employees will be trained on these procedures and are expected to fully comply with these procedures. Any employee that fails to report or attempts to conceal an accident that causes damage to County or private property, and/or injury to an employee or citizen will be subject to disciplinary action as specified in the County Personnel Handbook.

Accident Procedures

In order to accomplish Marion County's mission, County vehicles and employees will be engaged in numerous activities around the clock, therefore accidents will occur. This annex provides guidelines for reporting, investigating and reviewing all accidents (vehicle, equipment, personnel, etc). The following procedures will be followed at all times.

1. Reporting vehicle and equipment accidents: Accidents involving County vehicles and equipment will be reported through the Marion County 911 Communication Center. Following these accidents, the County Risk Manager and other Safety Team members will investigate the accident. Employees are cautioned not to make any admissions of fault at the accident scene. It is the responsibility of the investigating law enforcement agency to determine fault of an accident.
2. Reporting personnel accidents: Accidents involving County employees will be reported directly to the department head or supervisor. The Supervisor's First Report of Injury Form, MCSM Form 1, will be used to document the employee's injuries. The first report of injury MUST be submitted within 24 hours of the accident to the County Personnel Director. Remember, inmates are considered County employees for insurance purposes. If an injury occurs involving a non-county employee, in a County vehicle or on County property, a Non-employee Injury Report Form, MCSM Form 2, should be completed. Department heads or supervisors will be responsible for investigating accidents involving non-county employees. These investigations can be documented using the Supervisor's Accident Investigation Form, MCSM Form 5. Assistance may be requested from the Safety Team, as needed.

3. Investigating Vehicle and Equipment Accidents: For accidents occurring within Marion County and involving a County vehicle or equipment, a member of the Marion County Safety Team will conduct an investigation and prepare a Safety Team Accident Investigation Report, MCSM Form 3. For accidents occurring outside of Marion County, the operator of the vehicle will complete an Out-of-County Accident Report, MCSM Form 4. Following all accidents involving County vehicles, the operator will complete an Employee Accident Statement Form, MCSM Form 6, and the form will be submitted to the County Risk Manager.
4. Investigating Personnel Accidents: Accidents involving personnel will be reviewed by the Personnel Director and County Risk Manager, using a copy of the Worker's Compensation First Report of Injury. All First Report of Injury Forms will be initially submitted to the Personnel Director for processing. The Personnel Director will then forward a copy of the First Report of Injury to the County Risk Manager. The form will then be reviewed by the County Risk Manager and investigated will be initiated if necessary.

Accident Investigations by Department Heads and Supervisors

Accident investigations should be conducted by department heads and supervisors following any accident occurring within their department and/or involving one of their employees. The purpose of conducting an accident investigation is to determine:

1. What happened in the accident?
2. What caused the accident?
3. Are changes necessary to prevent the accident from re-occurring?
4. Were existing safety procedures or policies violated?
5. Is disciplinary action necessary?
6. Who or what was at fault in the accident? (This should be the last priority during an accident investigation.)

During an accident investigation it is important not to turn the situation into a blame game. All accident investigations should be documented on the appropriate forms and submitted to the Personnel Director and the County Risk Manager. The Safety Team will review accidents each quarter and will make appropriate recommendations. Although the Safety Team may recommend disciplinary actions, the final decision to impose disciplinary actions rests with the department head and the County Administrator. It should be noted that if an OSHA Investigation occurs following an accident, the OSHA Inspector(s) will examine disciplinary records. Appropriate disciplinary actions shall be administered where safety guidelines have been violated.

Worker's Compensation Entitlements

The Marion County Personnel Director shall ensure that records of work related injuries, illnesses and vehicular collisions are maintained in the personnel office.

All on-the-job injuries shall be reported by employees to their department head or supervisor within 24 hours of the injury occurring. Then the following reporting procedures will take place:

1. The department head or supervisor will complete a Supervisor's First Report of Injury Form, Employee First report of Injury, along with a Supervisor's Investigation Report, WC Form. These forms will then be forwarded to the Personnel Director within 24 hours from the time of the accident for review and reporting purposes.
2. The Personnel Director will process the Worker's Compensation Employer's First Report of Injury Form to the worker's compensation carrier and forward a copy of the report to the group health insurance company to prevent duplicate payment of bills.
3. The Personnel Director is responsible for all records and files, and for total coordination of the County's worker's compensation program. It is the department head or supervisor's responsibility to make certain that an accident report is turned into the Personnel Director within 24 hours of injury.
4. In the event that the status of an injury changes, these changes should be reported to the Personnel Director immediately for processing and reporting.

Following an injury, employees will not be permitted to return to work until the employee can present a written doctor's release indicating that the employee is physically qualified to resume his/her duties. A copy of this release will be given to the department head or supervisor and the County Risk Manager, with the original being filed by the Personnel Director. Department heads or supervisors will be responsible for completing a Notice of Return to Work Form and forwarding this form to the Personnel Director.

In an effort to return injured employees to the workplace, employees will be permitted to return to work on limited duty or as a transitional worker, providing the attending physician allows this activity through a written release. It should be clear what limitations will apply to the employee's work.

Worker's Compensation benefits will be provided under one of three categories identified under the Worker's Compensation Laws. These categories are listed below:

1. Cash Benefits or Compensation: This category includes both impairment benefits and disability benefits. Impairment benefits are paid whenever there is a physical impairment to an employee arising out of or in the course of his/her employment. Disability benefits are available whenever there is an impairment and a wage loss. Cash benefits which replace loss of income or earning capacity due to occupational injury or disease are classified into the following disabilities. There are four (4) sub-categories that fall within this category, and they are listed below:
 - Permanent Total Disability: generally indicates that the employee is regarded as totally or permanently unable to perform gainful employment.
 - Temporary Total Disability: covers benefits paid to employees while they are unable to do any productive work because of an occupational injury. That is, the employee, although totally disabled during the period when benefits were payable, is expected to recover and return to employment.
 - Temporary Partial Compensation: benefits are paid to employees who have returned to work, but due to the injury earn less than they did before the injury. They are generally paid 2/3 of the difference in earnings between the two jobs.
 - Permanent Partial Compensation: benefits are listed as either non scheduled or scheduled disabilities which involve loss or loss of use of specific body members, where wage loss based on the nature of impairment is presumed. The actual amount payable is a specific number of weeks of benefits.
2. Medical Benefits: These benefits are provided without dollar or time limits. In the case of most occupational injuries, only medical benefits are provided since substantial impairment or wage loss is not involved.
3. Rehabilitation Benefits: These benefits include both medical rehabilitation and vocational rehabilitation for those cases involving severe disabilities.

Drug and Alcohol Testing

Following any accident involving a County employee the accident investigator will determine if the employee should be drug and alcohol tested in accordance with this plan. Employees will be subject to drug and alcohol testing when any of the following criteria are present:

- An accident results in bodily injury which requires medical treatment away from the scene.
- An accident results in a fatality.
- An accident in which a County vehicle incurs disabling damage.
- At the discretion of the accident investigator.

Employees will **not** be subject to drug and alcohol testing for accidents with the following criteria:

- An accident involving a County vehicle that is legally parked, and the vehicle is unoccupied at the time of the accident.
- An accident involving animals such as deer, livestock, etc.

Marion County employees may also be subject to random drug and alcohol testing. Random drug and alcohol testing will occur during normal work hours. Employees will be selected based on employee identification numbers being entered into an online randomizer. Employees may also be selected for drug and alcohol testing if their department head or supervisor suspects they are using illegal drugs or alcohol while on the job.