Retail Worker Safety Meeting Kit



WHAT’S AT STAKE

Retail workers sell a variety of products to people who use them. Examples include:

- Building materials
- Beverages and specialty food
- Department stores
- Home centers
- Nurseries/gardening supplies
- Motor vehicles and parts
- Pet supplies
- Sporting goods, hobbies, books, and music
- Tire and auto stores
- Supermarkets and smaller groceries
- Warehouse clubs and superstores

WHAT´S THE DANGER

RETAIL SALESPERSONS HEALTH AND SAFETY CONCERNS

- Slips, trips and falls.
- Risk of overhead materials falling.
- Working on ladders.
- Risk of violent attack.
- Working alone.
- Handling money.
- Bullying.
- Stress.
- Fire.
- Standing for long hours.
- Repetitive manual tasks or working in awkward positions.
- Risk of back injury from pushing, pulling, or lifting objects.
- Injuries from sharp objects, knives, scissors, box cutters, etc.
- Exposure to extreme temperatures.
- Exposure to common viruses such as colds and seasonal influenza.
- Exposure to various chemicals and materials, which may include paints, solvents, pesticides, fertilizers, perfumes, or cleaning products.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

SPECIFIC SAFETY MEASURES FOR RETAIL WORKERS

1. **Slips, trips, and falls**

- Wear non-slip footwear.
- Keep high-traffic areas and walking paths free of debris and clutter.
- Use a dolly to transport items if they are too heavy.
- Have a clear field of vision when carrying items.
- Place the heaviest items at waist height on stock shelves.

1. **Machinery**

- Wear the proper PPE (such as safety boots, hard hat, safety glasses)
- Secure items properly.
- Never carry a passenger.
- Keep people away from machinery while in operation.
- Use signs and/or audible warnings when operating.

1. **Harassment**

- Make eye contact with customers and greet them politely.
- Tell any harassers to stop and report the incident to your supervisor. Record the incident on paper.

1. **Stepladders**

- Inspect the ladder before placing it to make sure there is no damage that could result in the ladder breaking while in use.
- Ensure the ladder is set up on a flat, even surface.
- Never stand on the top two steps, or the shelf (if applicable).
- Maintain 3 points of contact with the ladder (if it is not a short stepladder).
- Don’t carry items that are too heavy or awkward when going up or down the ladder.

1. **Biological Hazards**

- Wash or sanitize their hands after handling payment cards or money.
- Do not touch your face with your hands unless they have been properly sanitized.
- Don’t pick up contaminated sharp objects unless you have been trained to do this.
- If you come in contact with blood or other bodily fluids, get first aid as quickly as possible.

1. **Musculoskeletal Stress Injuries**

- Take breaks to move around and stretch.
- Take frequent breaks when doing repetitive tasks, or swap tasks with other employees regularly.
- Wear comfortable shoes.
- Use tools or automation that prevent MSIs where possible.
- Use proper lifting techniques.

1. **Sharps**

- Inspect these tools to make sure they are sharp. Dull knives can result in injuries as well.
- Cut objects in a motion that moves away from their bodies.
- Store sharps safely away from customers, and other tools.
- Wear gloves if required.

1. **Theft**

- Contact security immediately if you suspect someone of theft. Keep the store well lit.
- Keep the cash register contents to a minimum – make frequent deposits to a lock box or safe.

FINAL WORD

Retail workers may face ergonomic, fall-related, vehicle-related, and crime-related hazards in their work environments. Train employees on safe lifting and ergonomics, fall prevention, safe vehicle operation, and your facility’s policies on workplace violence and criminal activity.