



TEAMSTERS

Safety & Health FACTS

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HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEES- CONTRACT LANGUAGE

Bargaining for Safety and Health

Some Possible Goals

Both the union safety committee and the joint labor-management committee will be most effective if strong, specific language on safety and health is written into the union contract.

Strategy for bargaining on safety issues must be worked out by the local union, the region, and the international union. The following does not list proposed demands, but rather some possible goals for discussion. No attempt has been made to provide exact wording.

Employer's General Duties

- ♦ Management will provide a job and a place to work that are free of recognized hazards that could cause death, injury or illness.
- ♦ Management will obey all legal requirements for protection of the safety and health of employees.
- ♦ Management agrees that hazards will be eliminated or reduced by using engineering controls or other changes in the physical environment. Personal protective equipment such as masks or earplugs will be used only as a temporary solution until engineering changes can be made.

Employer's Duty To Provide Information

- ♦ Management will provide affected workers and the union complete information on accidents and injuries, illnesses, medical tests, monitoring for exposure to

hazards, generic names and potential hazards of toxic substances, and any other information relating to safety and health.

Health And Safety Committee And Stewards

- ♦ Management will recognize safety stewards or committee members chosen by the union to cover each shift in each department.
- ♦ The union may select members who will represent the union in the joint union-management safety committee. The president and other officers of the local may also be members of the joint committee.
- ♦ Safety stewards or committee members shall have access to the plant in order to carry out their duties.
- ♦ They shall be paid at their normal rate while performing their duties.
- ♦ Safety stewards or committee members shall be told immediately of any accident, near accident, injury or illness which occurs on the job or is work-related so they can conduct an immediate investigation.
- ♦ The joint committee shall meet at least once a month and at other times when either side feels it is necessary. Either side may place any safety and health matters on the agenda.
- ♦ Before each meeting, the committee shall conduct an inspection of any parts of the operations the union feels necessary to identify current safety and health problems and to check on progress made correcting problems discussed at previous meetings.
- ♦ The union must approve minutes of committee meetings.
- ♦ All proposed changes in the workplace, including the introduction of different substances or processes, will be reviewed by the committee in sufficient time before they are implemented so that the committee may make recommendations concerning the possible impact on safety and health.
- ♦ Any safety steward or committee member may bring problems to the attention of management. The employer will within hours provide a written response indicating whether the employer agrees that the problem exists. If so, the employer's response will indicate how the employer plans to correct the problem and by when.
- ♦ Copies of all safety and health-related grievances and the employer's responses will be provided to the joint committee. The employer will notify the safety steward or committee member and the joint committee when the problem has been corrected.

- ♦ If a committee member has a good faith, reasonable belief that a condition may cause immediate danger to employees, that committee member may place a red tag on the appropriate machine or area indicating that no worker shall be required to work there until the condition is corrected and the committee member removes the tag.
- ♦ The joint committee will provide __ hours of safety and health training for new employees or employees who are changing duties, and __ hours of refresher training each year.
- ♦ If safety meetings are held for employees in each department or the entire plant, the meetings shall be planned and run jointly by management and a safety committee member chosen by the union.

Other Union Rights

- ♦ Management recognizes the union's right to bring into the plant any union staff or other experts who can assist in investigating safety and health conditions.
- ♦ Whenever any government agency sends a representative to the plant to discuss or investigate matters related to safety and health, the union may select someone to accompany the government representative. If the union representative is an employee, he or she shall receive normal pay for the time.

Worker Rights

- ♦ No worker shall be punished or discriminated against in any way for refusing work that he or she believes in good faith to be immediately dangerous or for bringing health and safety problems to the attention of any person.
- ♦ Any employee who must be given different work because of job-related injury or illness will not be paid at a lower rate as a result.

Other Employer Duties

- ♦ Management will provide all equipment and clothing necessary to protect workers' safety, health, and sanitation.
- ♦ Management will provide for emergency medical care, including first-aid training and supplies, ambulance service, emergency medical technician training for enough workers to cover the operations on each shift, and (if plant size makes it necessary) a full-time nurse

Disputes

- ♦ Disputes under this article will be handled under the regular grievance procedure, except that the time limits will be shorter at each step.