

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.