



Weekly Safety Briefings

Week 1 – January 4 - January 8, 2021

Return to Work

Introduction

It's a brand new year and now is the chance to start off the year right by renewing your commitment to stay safe in the workplace. Whether coming back from only a couple of days off or a couple of weeks off, it might take some adjustment to get back in the right mindset to work safely. This week we are going to discuss ways to get back in the swing of things to keep yourself and your co-workers safe as you transition back into the normal work routine.

Monday – Ease into It

Transitioning from vacation back to the full fledged work week can be jarring. Today we will discuss ways to ease yourself back into the work routine without feeling overwhelmed.

1. Take a buffer day if possible. Hopping straight from the road trip to workplace doesn't allow time to mentally prepare for the upcoming work routine. A buffer/rest day will allow you time to relax and transition back into the work week.
2. Get some exercise. It may sound odd but getting exercise can help mitigate the blues from missing vacation time by boosting endorphins that allow the good feelings to flow before jumping back into the work week.
3. Get organized. Jumping straight into all the tasks that piled up during your absence can create a sense of overwhelm. Having a plan of attack can reduce the stress of the situation and create a more productive workday.
4. Take breaks. You need to allow time to adjust to the pace of the workweek. You may not be ready to go 100% on the first day back. Allow yourself some time to adjust to the cadence of the workday.

Tuesday – Last Minute Risk Assessment

The last-minute risk assessment is a useful tool to utilize on a daily basis, but it is especially important when transitioning back into the safe work mindset. Today we will give a brief example of a general last-minute risk assessment.

Before starting a task, ask the following questions.

- a. What work needs to be performed?
- b. Who is the work to be performed?
- c. What are the risk?

Next follow these steps:

1. Assess the risk.
2. Establish measures to reduce or eliminate the risk.
3. Take action to ensure safe performance.

If the task cannot be performed safely, don't do it!

Wednesday – COVID-19 Awareness

Unfortunately, COVID-19 is an ever-present threat. The best time to mitigate the spread of the virus in the workplace is before returning to work. However, that is not always possible since symptoms can appear days to weeks after exposure. Being aware of the signs and symptoms is the first steps to recognize you may be at risk of spreading the illness to your co-workers or friends and family so you can take proper steps to isolate and stop the spread. Today we will provide a brief overview of the common symptoms.

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing



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- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

Thursday – Preparing the Workplace for COVID-19

During the holidays many employees will be gathering with friends and family members to celebrate. These traditions are an important part of our culture, but it also poses an increased risk in exposure to the COVID-19 virus. After months of implementing COVID-19 mitigation measures, there may be a tendency to let standards become lax but now is the time to renew efforts to mitigate the spread as much as possible. Today we will review basic steps employers can make to renew these standards.

- Reinforce mandatory masks for employees in the workplace.
- Review social distancing practices in workspaces.
- Ensure cleaning supplies and hand sanitizer/soap are readily available. Review current cleaning practices for effectiveness.
- Communicate with employees on steps the company has taken to reduce the risk and steps they can continue to take to protect their coworkers.

Friday – Open Discussion

This week we've provided an overview of ways to transition from vacation mode to work mode to properly get into the safe workplace mindset. Now let's open it up to the group to discuss your methods of transitioning.

- Do you have any methods for mentally or physically transitioning from vacation to work?
- What type of things do you do to get in the safe workplace mindset?
- How do you feel when returning from vacation? Do you feel prepared to return to work? Why or why not?
- If not, what could you do differently?