

Statement of Policy

Successful Safety Belt Program

Management Commitment

The key component of a successful safety belt program is the employer's continued commitment to employee safety.

The commitment to safety belt use of management helps to convince employees of the need to comply with Kansas seatbelt laws, making the messages contained in the program more believable and gives impetus to compliance efforts.

On-the-job safety belt use by employees should be regarded as critical to an effective and efficient operation. When a worker drives or rides in a motor vehicle while on the job, the vehicle is the workplace and the use of a safety belt should be required for safe operation.

Similarly, management's concern for employee safety should include a positive commitment to support off the job accident prevention activities. Three out of four deaths and more than half of the injuries suffered by workers occur off-the-job. About two-thirds of the off-job deaths and one-third of the off-job injuries of workers are motor vehicle related. Management's commitment to promoting off-the-job safety belt use by employees has considerable potential for reducing these off-job losses.

Goals of a Successful Program

The goals of a successful employee safety belt program are to:

1. Improve knowledge of the effectiveness and operation of safety belts by employees;
2. Create a receptive, positive attitude toward safety belts by employees;
3. Stimulate consistent and proper use of safety belts by employees.

Accountability of Employees

These guidelines apply to all employees and to all occupants of vehicles driven by employees on official business. It is especially important that all managers and supervisors demonstrate their commitment to and support of this project by their strict adherence to it.

Establish enforcement procedures, including penalties and disciplinary procedures for noncompliance with the safety belt use policy.

1. Penalties should be consistent with those involved in other safety regulation violations within the organization.
2. The policy, penalties and disciplinary procedures for noncompliance should be well-publicized among all employees.
3. The certainty of enforcement is more important than the severity of the discipline.

The driver of the vehicle is responsible for enforcing seat belt use by all occupants. The ranking occupant, if other than the driver, shares this responsibility. Peer pressure is a powerful enforcement aid and should be fostered.

Safety Belt Enforcement

All employees are mandated to wear lap or lap and shoulder belts (as equipped) while driving or riding on county business, whether in county-owned or personally owned vehicle.

1. The penalty for first-time noncompliance; the employee gets a reminder and warning of the possibility of disciplinary measures.
2. The penalty for second-time noncompliance; the recommended disciplinary action is _____ (each county shall consider and adopt the appropriate disciplinary action).
3. The penalty for third-time noncompliance; may result in demotion of position or termination of employment.

Recommended Letter to Employees

Dear Employees:

When you get behind the wheel of a car or mobile equipment, do you fasten your safety belt? Every time?

The sad fact is, millions of Americans fail to buckle up—with tragic results. Motor vehicle accidents are the leading cause of death for people under the age of 40. They kill and cripple more children than any disease. Every 12 minutes, someone in this nation dies in a motor vehicle crash. Each year more than 30,000 people are killed in motor vehicles, but more than 9,000 of them could survive if they wore safety belts.

(INSERT YOUR MESSAGE HERE)

There are many excuses for not wearing safety belts, ranging from “seat belts are uncomfortable,” to “I’m only taking a short trip.” There is no excuse for not protecting yourself and your loved ones. By pledging to use your safety belt every time you get into a car, as a driver or a passenger, you can show your family how much you care.

Very truly yours,

Commissioner (Chair)