

HBI SAFETY & HEALTH MANAGEMENT PLANS

PA DLI Updates Insight on Safety Committee Meetings Affected by COVID-19

The COVID-19 outbreak has disrupted many business and social services, and disruptions are expected to continue for several more weeks. The Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry, which administers the Certified Safety Committee Program, has provided guidance on safety committee operations during COVID-19 Outbreak. At this time the DLI recognizes that many employers are participating in remote work arrangements as well as voluntary and non-voluntary closures which can have a significant impact on the way in which a safety committee meeting can be held.

At this time the DLI Health and Safety Division is encouraging virtual or conference call safety committee meetings. In person meetings should be postponed until social distancing activities are no longer necessary. Accordingly the DLI has issued the following statement:

“The Bureau of Workers’ Compensation commends all employers for making the safety of their employees a priority – especially when dealing with COVID-19. The Bureau recognizes what an asset a safety committee can be during a crisis. However, we will not view the lack of in-person safety committee meetings as an issue of non-compliance. When evaluating compliance with the regulations, the safety committee process is evaluated for a three-year period. The inability to hold meetings during this defined crisis period will not impact that evaluation. In addition, we do not intend to require employers focused on getting operational again to double-up on safety committee meetings.”

Organizations planning to continue safety committee meetings during the COVID-19 outbreak should to the best of their ability adhere to common state meeting criteria:

- Have an agenda distributed prior to the meeting
- Have a member quorum of 51%
- Keep and post minutes for all employees to see

As the COVID-19 situation continues to evolve your partners at Henderson Brothers will monitor the State’s guidance on safety committee meetings. If you need further assistance please contact your Henderson Brothers Risk Control representative or email riskcontrol@hendersonbrothers.com.