

MUNICIPAL LAW ENFORCEMENT SAFETY AUDIT/SURVEY TOOL

Injury prevention during law enforcement operations

Instructions: This is a scored pro-active safety auditing tool designed for periodic use to reduce high risk behaviors and increase safe behaviors. “Yes” answers should be scored at (1) and “No” answers should be scored at (0). In the corrective action column, either a time frame for completing the correction or the actual date corrective action was completed should be noted. Check the “NA” column if this item is not applicable. Total and track audit scores over time to track up or down trends along with tracking the number of incidents, accidents and injuries sustained.

We recommend that the tool be administered by divisions, for example, motor patrol, K-9, dispatch, and detectives by administrators at the Sargeant level or above. The tool is designed to take no more than one to two hours of staff time per quarter and can potentially be used four times annually to monitor work practices and work settings to try to prevent accidents before they happen

Law enforcement has traditionally been a hazardous occupation and use of this tool will possibly keep personnel safer, more professional, and more defensible in court cases. This tool should help assure proper training to policies and procedures and accountability to following policies and procedures. This should help reduce liability and workers’ compensation costs and claim numbers by increasing the level of service and professionalism in the department. At the core of the problem are situations which are low frequency but high risk.

We recommend using the “Graham Model” of frequent brief policy review and brief quizzes to refresh personnel on safe procedures during high risk operations. This should be reviewed by personnel of their department’s specific policies for these areas. For example, we recommend frequent review of policies covering Emergency Vehicle Operation and Pursuit Driving, Use of Force, Electronic Control Devices, Partner and Family Member Assault Intervention, Employee Involved in Family Member Assault, Search and Seizure, Criminal Justice Information, Accommodating Persons with Disabilities, Special Tactics, Intoxicated Persons, Use of force, Bias Based Policing, Juvenile Arrest and Custody Guidelines, General Arrest and Custody, Transporting Suspects in Custody, Complaints and Internal Investigations, Intoxicated Persons, and News Media Relations.

The audit tool might also be used to enhance departmental public relations. With more professionalism and adherence to policies, departments could better serve the public, and reduce costs to the public.

The Montana Municipal Insurance Authority and the Montana Law Enforcement Academy have recently completed updates on 16 key policies covering high risk workplace injury and liability situations pertaining to law enforcement operations. We recommend training

and reviewing these policies as needed and incorporating them into your departments' operations as needed.

The majority of law enforcement injuries can be attributed to inattentive driving, or human error while driving, vehicle pursuits, foot pursuits, and criminal intervention activities. Some injuries to hands and feet have resulted from non-use of personal protective equipment (PPE) while assisting EMS at traffic crashes or during vehicle searches (needle sticks to hands and fingers). Physical fitness, proper use of PPE and proper lifting techniques during patient care can help reduce injuries. Good mental health support can help enhance employee engagement and morale.

Task/Job Part – Pre-Employment & Workplace Wellness	Yes	No	Corrective action date	NA
Pre-employment physical & fitness test				
Pre-employment mental health and personality testing				
Background check completed				
Effective communication through chain of command in place				
Employees given incentives to stay physically fit				
Employees have access to effective mental health support with Employee Assistance Program (EAP) resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ EAP explained, and employees review and sign off on policy 				
Personnel have access to effective critical incident stress debriefing				

Task/Job Part – Personnel	Yes	No	Corrective action date	NA
Personnel policy in place <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Policy reviewed and updated every three years ✓ Personnel trained on personnel policy and procedures ✓ Personnel has reviewed and signed off on policy 				
Personnel policies applied in a consistent manner				
Progressive discipline in place with emphasis on worker integrity and accountability				
Sexual harassment prevention training completed				

Task/Job Part – Proper Training & Records	Yes	No	Corrective action date	NA
Personnel trained on and have signed off on operational policies				
Annual Blood-Borne Pathogen training completed				
New employee safety orientation completed				
New employee job-specific safety training completed				
Employee job-specific refresher safety training completed				
All training records current and complete				
Other				

Task/Job Part – Completion of all Certifications & Licenses	Yes	No	Corrective action date	NA
All certifications completed and current <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Firearm certified and up to date ✓ O.C. Certified ✓ ASP/Pr 24 ✓ Taser Certified ✓ Other 				
P.O.S.T. Certified <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ MLEA Basic certification within statutory requirements 				
Defensive Driving Course (Nat'l Safety Council or other) annually				
Employees have attended a defensive driving training clinic with vehicle operations annually				
Other				

Task/Job Part – Proper lifting technique	Yes	No	Corrective action date	NA
Proper training in safe lifting techniques				
Proper position and technique				
2 or more workers if load is more than 50# (i.e. 50# per person lifting limit)				
Multiple staff on lifts assisting EMS with patients				
No lift above waist level				

Task/Job Part – Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	Yes	No	Corrective action date	NA
Use of all required PPE for life threatening emergencies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Bullet proof vests provided and worn ✓ Personal equipment properly maintained and used ✓ Equipment to restrain criminals to minimize injuries to all involved properly used 				
Use of universal precautions for first aid work and possible exposure to blood borne pathogens (BBP) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Goggles or other splash/eye protection ✓ Non-latex rubber glove ✓ Puncture resistant outer glove 				
Use of appropriate footwear (consider ankle injury protection) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Fall prevention slip-on cleat in winter conditions 				
Use of heavy work gloves (puncture resistant type) and turnout coat with coveralls for work at traffic crash sites, especially when working in or around the vehicle (vehicle searches)				
Hearing protection available in accordance with OSHA guidelines				
Other				

Task/Job Part – Enhanced Safety for Personnel	Yes	No	Corrective action date	NA
Safety audits and regular training on policy – especially low frequency, high risk/loss events				
Firearm practice				
Incidents, near-misses, accidents and injuries involving safety can be investigated to gradually reduce hazardous situations and work practices. These should be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Recorded with input from the employee and immediate supervisor ✓ Fact finding rather than punitive ✓ Investigated with safety committee help ✓ Recommendations for correcting the incident are made ✓ Incident investigations and recommendations for change are a core safety training activity 				
Periodic safety meetings with incident reviews and corrective actions as a core safety training activity				

Task/Job Part – Safe Driving, Safe Code Responses and Safe Vehicle Pursuits	Yes	No	Corrective action date	NA
Policy-driven operations for safe, attentive driving – driver accountability to follow policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 100% seat belt use with accountability and progressive discipline ✓ attentive, engaged driving while on patrol with driver accountability for mistakes resulting in property damage to vehicles 				
Safer Code Responses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Personnel are compliant with policy, trained to policy, and accountable to following policy ✓ During silent code responses, all motor vehicle laws obeyed ✓ Use care when backing, parking, doing traffic control or traffic stops ✓ Safe, attentive operation for conditions and traffic conditions 				
Safer Vehicle Pursuits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Drivers held accountable to follow operations policy for pursuits and code responses ✓ Drivers held accountable to frequently review policy and train on the same ✓ Frequent brief training on pursuit policies, with frequent safety auditing ✓ If applicable, supervisory oversight/monitoring of pursuit 				

Task/Job Part – Foot Pursuits	Yes	No	Corrective action date	NA
Foot pursuits are dangerous and can lead to injury or death. An officer must look at all factors when deciding to pursue: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ What is the need to apprehend? ✓ What is the risk of apprehension? ✓ What is the likelihood of apprehension? 				
All available methods and strategies used to minimize foot pursuits (undercover operations, keg registry, later contact and arrest, etc.) Foot pursuits are dangerous to officers in terms of injury – use discretion				
Other				

Task/Job Part – Best Practices to Reduce Injury and Death to Personnel and Citizens	Yes	No	Corrective action date	NA
Driver accountability for safe and attentive driving with consistent discipline for preventable mistakes				
Consistent, effective public relations campaign to enhance public support for law enforcement operations				
Effective use of technology to reduce injuries and deaths to officers and citizens (Tasers, etc.)				

TOTAL SCORE

Signature _____

Print Name _____

Date _____