



Florida Municipal Safety Initiative

Fire Department Self-Evaluation



Fire Department
Rev 0.0-10-30-2019

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By accepting FLC Risk and Safety Services (Services), Member acknowledges and agrees: Services are solely intended to assist Member to reasonably identify, assess and address sources of potential exposure to liability, claims, losses or damages; Member remains responsible for maintaining the safety of its property and operations for itself and others; and for all Services provided, FLC does not warrant or guarantee: the safety of any Member property; that additional risks will not result or materialize at Member property or elsewhere; or that any suggested or recommended measures implemented by Member will prevent exposure to liability, claims, losses or damages.

Introduction:

Basic Premise and Goal:

- A well-implemented safety management system will lead to a reduction in losses, injuries, and illnesses.
- The goal of the Florida Municipal Safety Initiative is to provide each participating organization the knowledge and tools needed to easily develop and implement an effective safety management system.

Voluntary Accreditation:

- The Florida Municipal Safety Initiative is a VOLUNTARY SAFETY ACCREDITATION PROGRAM available to all FMIT members.
- To become accredited, the organization must develop and implement an effective safety management system that meets the FMIT established standards.

Accreditation Paths:

- There are 5 separate accreditation paths that are chosen based on the organizations size and the type of public services provided.
- The 5 paths include:
 1. Large Entity
 2. Small Entity
 3. Office Only
 4. Law Enforcement
 5. Fire Department

Why are Law Enforcement Agencies and Fire Departments treated separately for purposes of the Florida Municipal Safety Initiative?

- Law Enforcement and Fire/EMS employees face very different risks than other municipal workers.
- For that reason, any **Law Enforcement Agency or Fire Department** can achieve (or decide not to achieve) a Certificate of Safety Excellence independent from their municipality.
- **For a Law Enforcement Agency or Fire Department** to obtain a Certificate of Safety Excellence, the implementation of their Safety Management system is evaluated. The department must meet the required scores to obtain a Certificate of Safety Excellence.

Self-Assessment Instructions:

Step 1- Organizational Safety and Risk Management Assessment

- Conduct a self-assessment of the overall safety management process for your organization. This assessment is divided into 7 sections.
 - Section 1: Commitment to Safety and Health
 - Section 2: Emergency Readiness
 - Section 3: Incident and Claims Management
 - Section 4: Hazard Identification and Control

- Section 5: Training and Communication
- Section 6: Physical Readiness
- Section 7: Fire Department Specific Safety Issues
- Each question is worth 1 point.
- Award 1 point only if there is objective, observable and measurable evidence.
 - Look for documentation, written programs, training records, or other supporting information that can demonstrate the actual implementation of the question.
 - For example:
 - Question 13 reads “Does the department have Automatic External Defibrillators (AED’s)? If so are the AED’s being maintained including being visually checked monthly? (in facilities and vehicles)”
 - Look for a completed checklist or talk to the person who conducts the monthly inspection. Also look at vehicles inspections to make sure they include AED Checks.
- For any question that is not applicable (NA) to your operations simply subtract that point from the section total when calculating the section score.

Step 2- Scoring Summary

- Tabulate the scores on the last page of this document and determine if you have met the minimum requirement for your level.
 - If you HAVE met the minimum score, schedule your Safety Improvement Assessment with your FMIT Safety and Risk Consultant.
 - If you HAVE NOT met the minimum score use the Suggestions and Resources (including the hyperlinked documents) to implement the missing elements.

Self-Assessment:

Section 1: Commitment to Safety and Health

Question		Possible Score	Score	Recommendations
1.	Does the department have a written Health and Safety Management Policy?	1		Fire departments need to produce a climate, which promotes health and safety, and emphasize that deviation from safety standards, at whatever level, is not acceptable.
2.	Have people within the department been assigned specific safety responsibilities?	1		The department safety policy sets the direction for health and safety, but on its own it is limited without the means to deliver it. Line management must be assigned specific and measurable responsibilities and they must take responsibly for the safety performance of their team.
3.	Does line management take responsibility for the department's safety performance?	1		Line management must understand that when confronted by abnormal or even emergency situations the 'get it done' attitude is not acceptable and unsafe behavior or situations are not to be allowed.
4.	Do employees take responsibility for their safety performance?	1		Employees must understand and follow their responsibilities. Participation by all employees is vital to success in managing health and safety. It encourages 'ownership,' and taps the knowledge of those with the first-hand experience of tasks.
5.	If the department has 20 or more employees, is there an active safety committee?	1		To promote health and safety the FLORIDA FIREFIGHTERS OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH ACT requires each firefighter employer of 20 or more firefighter employees to establish and administer a workplace safety committee.
6.	Are front line supervisors (lieutenant, captain, etc.) communicating with employees about safety issues as they are observed?	1		<p>If a supervisor ignores something unsafe they have just given the employee permission to continue.</p> <p>"Key point" tipping is a tried and tested tool used in safety and quality management. This process simply involves talking with employees and specifically thanking them for things they are doing right. It also involves discussing deficiencies in a constructive and positive manner when needed.</p> <p>For example, "Hey Mark, I noticed you were wearing your safety glasses when handling that last job. Nice work".</p>

7.	Is someone within the department appointed as being responsible for the overall administration of the safety/risk management process?	1	<p>The programs coordinators primary function when it comes to safety should be to provide the framework and resources tor line management so that they can best implement an effective safety management system in their group.</p> <p>The program coordinator should be tasked with managing and coordinating the safety process instead of enforcing the rules. In no way should the overall administrator be the “enforcer” of safety.</p>
8.	Does the department have a “schedule of activities” to keep track of the completion of all required safety tasks?	1	<p>There are many things that must be done weekly, monthly, quarterly and annually. It’s hard to keep track of everything so undoubtedly things fall through the cracks.</p> <p>A simple schedule of activities can be used to ensure that each task gets completed. Simply list the tasks outlined in your written documents on the schedule by month. Then include a sign off and date completed column to document when the task was completed.</p> <p>For example, January could be respirator fit testing. On the other hand, inspecting the firehall should be listed under each month.</p>

Section 2: Emergency Readiness

	Question	Possible Score	Score	Recommendations
9.	Is the emergency power source tested at least monthly? (Documented check)	1		<p>NFPA 110 describes Emergency Generator Testing Requirements for both monthly and annual testing. During testing, a generator should operate under available load for a minimum of thirty minutes. A successful test is one in which the generator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieves the minimum exhaust gas temperature for monthly testing as indicated by the owner’s manual, or • Operates at normal temperature while running at no less than 30% of the nameplate Kilowatt rating. <p>If a generator cannot operate until its water and oil pressures have stabilized, it should be tested for less than thirty minutes to avoid prolonging its down time.</p>

10.	Does the department have an overall emergency response plan?	1		Every department must have effective emergency response plans. In many cases these plans do not need to be complex; in fact, a simple plan can be more effective than a complex plan. All plans must be communicated, reviewed and practiced.
11.	Does the plan cover all pertinent incidents such as fire, natural disasters, severe weather, spills, business continuity, loss of data, etc?	1		
12.	Have the emergency response plans been practiced and or reviewed within the last year to ensure their functionality?	1		
13.	Does the department have Automatic External Defibrillators (AED's)? If so are the AED's being maintained including being visually checked monthly? (in facilities and vehicles)	1		If you have AED's it is your responsibility to make sure they will work when needed. To ensure this happens develop a self-inspection and maintenance plan which includes monthly inspections at a minimum.
14.	Are fire extinguishers being visually checked monthly and serviced by a licensed fire extinguisher contractor on an annual basis? (in facilities and vehicles)	1		Local and state fire codes require the selection and placement of fire extinguishers based on the space and occupancy. If your facilities have fire extinguishers they must be maintained in an operable condition. This is most often done by completing monthly checks on each extinguisher. It is recommended to include these fire extinguisher checks in a more wholistic monthly facility inspection when possible.
15.	Does the department have evacuation plans including exit routes and employee meeting places?	1		All workplaces should have a specific evacuation plan for fires that is separate from the department's broad emergency response plans. One of the most commonly missed aspects of these plans is an established meeting place for building occupants.
16.	Is there an effective way to account for employees and if applicable members of the public after an evacuation?	1		Once an evacuation has been completed you should have a system to account for all employees and visitors (when possible).

Section 3: Incident and Claims Management

Question		Possible Score	Score	Recommendations
17.	Does the department have a documented process for reporting incidents?	1		An effective reporting process is vital to reduce hazards in the workplace. Not only should serious incidents (medical, lost time, vehicle collisions) be reported, but minor incidents such as near misses and first aid cases should also be reported and tracked.
18.	Are near misses and first aid incidents reported and tracked?	1		A “near miss”, a.k.a “close call”, “near collision”, or “near hit”, is an unplanned event that DID NOT result in injury, illness, or damage – but had the potential to do so. Departments that do not report these near misses lose the opportunity to identify hazards and ultimately prevent future incidents. History has shown that most serious incidents, including those that are catastrophic, were preceded by numerous warnings or near miss incidents. Recognizing and reporting near miss incidents can significantly improve worker safety and enhance a department’s safety culture.
19.	Does the department have a documented process for conducting incident investigations?	1		After an incident your department must identify the root causes and put corrective actions in place to prevent reoccurrence.
20.	Does the investigation process include root cause analysis?	1		A very simple method that investigators can use to identify the root causes is called the 5-Why process. Simply put the investigators ask the question “why” at least 5 times to come to a root cause. In addition, investigator training should be conducted to improve the skill set of those conducting the investigation.
21.	Is there a formal system for acting on the results of the investigation	1		Having a review (and ultimately a sign off) of completed investigations by the chief executive (City Manager, Mayor, Etc) will not only keep him/her in the loop, but also to provide an opportunity to demonstrate their commitment to the overall safety process. Lastly, the investigation results and lessons learned must be communicated across all other departments to ensure that similar events can be prevented at a departmental level.
22.	Does the department have a formal claim reporting and management process including return-to-work?	1		Departments who are actively involved in their claims can greatly reduce the severity of their claims.
23.	Is there a single person (or small group) responsible for	1		It’s important that one person (or a very small group of people) be familiar with the claims reporting and management requirements.

	reporting claims to the FLC claims department?			
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Section 4: Hazard Identification and Control

Question		Possible Score	Score	Recommendations
24.	Does the department have a formal inspection process used to proactively identify hazards? (I.e. Equipment inspections, building inspections, etc.)	1		<p>Conducting inspections can be a simple yet very effective way to identify and correct hazards.</p> <p>Vehicles should be inspected before use to identify mechanical hazards and overall equipment readiness.</p> <p>Buildings and property should be inspected to identify common hazards. For example, offices should be checked for blocked electrical panels, tripping hazards, flammable liquids being stored outside fire cabinets in the maintenance room, etc. In addition, public areas such as lobbies and meeting rooms should be proactively and frequently checked for damage and deterioration.</p>
25.	Are hazards identified during the inspection corrected in a timely manner?	1		<p>Developing a departmental specific inspection program which includes the completion of periodic/scheduled inspections using specific checklists can greatly identify and reduce hazards in your department. Site specific checklists should be developed and used for your vehicles, equipment, buildings and facilities.</p>
26.	Does the department have a "Corrective Action List" used to track identified hazards until they are completed?	1		<p>Once your hazard identification processes (inspection, incident/hazard reporting, etc) are fully implemented suggestions are going to stream in. This is how you know it's working!</p> <p>Although most hazards can be corrected immediately, some hazards may take longer to control especially when they involve costly changes, new equipment, new procedures, etc... In those cases, your department should have a Corrective Action List (which is simply a to-do-list) to track the completion of the hazard control.</p>

Section 5: Training and Communication

Question		Possible Score	Score	Recommendations
27.	Does the department have a formal and documented new hire orientation process?	1		Employees are typically at the greatest risk in the first 6 months of employment. Departments must address this risk by implementing a formal and consistent employee orientation.
28.	Does the orientation cover department safety policies, incident reporting requirements, emergency procedures, etc?	1		Start by developing a matrix of the skills a new employee would need for their position on the first day, at the end of the first week, and at the end of the first month, then put those skills on a checklist. Of course, the new hire training should be documented on the departmental checklist and the training records should be kept in the employees personnel file.
29.	Does the orientation include pairing the new employee with a supervisor or experienced employee?	1		
30.	Does the department have an ongoing training process which includes safety training?	1		Ongoing training starts with the development of a training matrix of topics and skills employees must know. Then the next step involves deciding how often those topics and skills need to be retrained or reassessed. Keep in mind that training and retraining for the sake of training is most often a waste of time and limited resources. Aside from the regulatory training which may have a time requirement, training should only be conducted when needed (i.e. based on goals and skill gaps). Also keep in mind that to ensure your training is effective, include these four steps. 1) Tell, 2) Show, 3) Do, 4) Apply. For example, when teaching an employee to use a chainsaw for storm cleanup 1) Tell the employee about the dangers and general operating methods. 2) Show the employee how to use the saw via a demonstration. 3) Allow the employee to practice the skill under the supervision of the trainer. 4) Allow the employee to apply the new knowledge and skills in real life situations under the supervision of the trainer.
31.	Does the trainer use a Planning Worksheet to plan the session and to anticipate potential dangers?	1		Before hands-on training the trainer(s) should plan the session and should review the lesson plan to anticipate and control hazards.
32.	Before conducting hands-on training do the trainer(s)	1		Prior to the start of any hands-on training the location should be inspected to ensure all hazards have been identified and controlled.

	conduct a site safety inspection of the training area?			
33.	Before hands-on training do the trainer(s) make sure participants warm up properly?	1		It is estimated that 45% of all FMIT law enforcement and firefighter injuries may have been prevented, or the severity may have been reduced, if the employee was properly warmed up.
34.	Before hands-on training do the trainer(s) conducting a pre-training briefing to set clear expectations?	1		Setting clear expectations for behavior, site safety concerns, and emergency procedures.
35.	During hands-on training do the trainer(s) observe participants to ensure that they do not engage in hazardous activities?	1		One of the key tasks to manage training is to continuously monitor the training area for developing safety issues.
36.	If there is an incident or injury during any training do the trainer(s) conduct an incident investigation?	1		<p>Investigate all incidents experienced during the training session. This includes investigating injuries, property damage, and a near misses (also known as close calls).</p> <p>The investigation should be documented on the agencies Incident Report and Investigation Form. The goal of the investigation is to consider the events leading up to the incident, the root causes, and how the incident could have been prevented.</p> <p>Keep in mind that completed investigation reports should be directed to appropriate agency or city personnel for review and if applicable claims processing.</p>

Section 6: Physical Readiness

Question		Possible Score	Score	Recommendations
37.	Does the department have physical fitness standards?	1		<p>Firefighters have a physically strenuous job, and it is crucial that they always be ready to perform that job. One of the primary components of readiness is health and overall fitness.</p> <p>Whether handling a structural fire or responding to a medical call a firefighter’s physical readiness is essential to ensure the safety of themselves, their fellow employees, and the public.</p>

38.	Does the department have a method to inspire and motivate their firefighters to become physically fit?	1		<p>There are several common ways a department can do this:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide firefighters the time on duty to work out. • Offer incentives to pass a physical fitness assessment; time off or monetary awards. • Provide a work out facility at the department or a membership to a local gym. • Encourage friendly competitions amongst peers. Many firefighters are competitive by nature and this could give them the spark to achieve their fitness goals.
39.	Does the department require firefighters to warm-up prior to each shift and periodically as needed throughout the shift?	1		<p>It is estimated that 45% of all FMIT law enforcement/ firefighter injuries may have been prevented if a proper warmed up was completed.</p> <p>Although most people understand the importance of warming up before they exercise, until recently warming up prior to work has not been widespread. In the past decade however, construction firms, manufacturing plants, warehouses and even retail stores have been warming up prior to their shift with incredible results. Not only do participating employees generally feel better, but sprain and strain injuries in these firms have plummeted!</p>
40.	Do firefighters have access to a nutritionist?	1		<p>It is imperative that firefighters understand how simple nutrition choices can affect their physical readiness on the job.</p> <p>In addition, keeping nutrition a priority can be accomplished by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requiring annual or semi-annual in-service nutrition education. • Department-wide nutrition recommendations/emails. • Reminders during roll call. • Providing educational material such as posters and pamphlets

Section 7: Fire Fighter Specific Safety Issues and Requirements

Question		Possible Score	Score	Recommendations
41.	Does the department have a written policy that addresses a hostile workplace including discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, bullying, etc?	1		<p>Hostile work environments can occur when the work environment is made unpleasant. For example, if employees are experiencing harassment from co-workers or otherwise being made to feel uncomfortable (such as by constantly hearing sexually inappropriate jokes or jokes about their religion).</p> <p>It is important that departments proactively address this risk by instituting clear policies and training all staff on those policies. More importantly, it is vital that every department follow through with the policy if/when they become aware of a potential problem</p>
42.	Does your department provide the state mandated Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) training?	1		In October of 2018 the State of Florida mandated PTSD training for Police, Fire and EMS employees.
43.	Does the department have a written process for cancer prevention?	1		<p>Clean and wear proper PPE on all calls- One of the glaring discoveries from the NIOSH firefighter cancer research is that wearing PPE including SCBA from the moment of entry until the completion of overhaul can greatly reduce exposure to carcinogens.</p> <p>Onsite Equipment Decontamination- Onsite decontamination should be conducted. Fire departments should work to adopt decontamination procedures to address the contaminants of a post-incident structure fire including taken protective measures when cleaning gear. Manage your air and your time: Personnel exiting the area identified as Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health (IDLH) should remain in full PPE with SCBA breathing air until decontamination is complete.</p> <p>Personal Decontamination- Firefighters must clean/wipe their skin upon exit from a fire. This includes cleaning neck, face, arms and groin thoroughly after each fire. These are areas with lots of blood vessels where particulates tend to collect.</p> <p>Preventing Cross Contamination- After the onsite contamination is complete place all the contaminated PPE and equipment in containers or bags.</p> <p>Understand how to get used gear back in service- The final decontamination of equipment back at the station should be done by personnel wearing particulate mask, goggles/safety glasses, and protective gloves.</p>

44.	Does the department use any chemicals? If so is there a formal HazCom/safety process?	1		A written Hazard Communication (HazCom) program is required along with a list of hazardous materials used in your department. Then ensure that you have Safety Data Sheets for every material on the list. Finally, employee training?
45.	Does the department have a respirator program?	1		Since respirators are the last line of defense it is important that they be selected, fitted, used and maintained. This starts with a written respirator program specific to your operations. Then it included having employees medically qualified to wear those respirators, fit tested annually, and trained annually.
46.	Vehicles- Does the department use, handle or store flammable liquids such as gasoline? If so is there a formal safety process?	1		You should develop a written procedure which lays out the requirements for the use, transportation and storage of flammable liquids. In addition, you must ensure that employees have been trained on the requirements of the procedure.
47.	Vehicles- Does the department have a driver safety management program?	1		A fleet safety program which includes driver record checks, new-hire driver onboarding and training, collision reporting, post-incident investigations, general driving requirements, etc.
48.	Vehicles- Does the department have a documented vehicle inspection program? (i.e. daily, weekly driver inspections based on your needs and policies)	1		Drivers should conduct vehicle inspections periodically. This inspection should include a check of their equipment, first aid supplies, fire extinguisher, AED (if equipped), etc.
49.	Vehicles- Does the department provide additional training for specialized vehicles or equipment? (i.e. ATV, Utility vehicles, boats, etc)	1		If you have employees who operate other types of powered equipment you should develop a written procedure for that equipment. Then you should train your employees on that procedure and provide the appropriate equipment including appropriate helmets, PFD's, etc...
50.	Exposure Control- Does the department have an exposure control plan that is reviewed annually?	1		Firefighters can be stuck with needles, exposed to viruses in the blood of trauma victims, get body fluids on their skin, and can be bit, scratched or spit on. A written program or procedure based on your exposures should be developed and reviewed for accuracy each year.

51.	Exposure Control- Does the department provide annual training on the exposure control plan?	1		The risk of infection can be greatly reduced with proper training, equipment, and in some cases vaccinations. For that reason, annual bloodborne pathogen training should be conducted.
52.	Exposure Control- Does the department offer Hepatitis B vaccinations to all potentially exposed employees?	1		The HBV vaccine is greater than 90 percent effective in providing protection against the Hepatitis B virus. Inoculation with HBV vaccine is the simplest way for firefighters to protect themselves from becoming infected with HBV. If an employee declines the vaccination it should be documented.
53.	Exposure Control- Does the department have a post exposure plan in place including decontamination/ cleaning, exposure reporting and medical assessment?	1		<p>If a firefighter becomes exposed to potential pathogens immediately wash the area with soap and water. If splashed in the nose, mouth, or exposure to non-intact skin (abraded or chafed) occur, immediately flush the exposed areas with water for at least 15 minutes.</p> <p>Once the area of exposure has been cleansed, supervision must be notified, and a post-exposure medical evaluation should be conducted.</p>

Self-Assessment Score Sheet Summary:

Safety Improvement Assessment Element Name	Total Points	Max Points Poss.	Percent
Departmental Safety and Risk Management			
Section 1: Commitment to Safety and Health		7	%
Section 2: Emergency Readiness		8	%
Section 3: Incident and Claims Management		7	%
Section 4: Hazard Identification and Control		3	%
Section 5: Training and Communication		21	%
Section 6: Physical Readiness		4	%
Section 7: Fire Department Specific Safety Issues		14	%
Overall Score			%
Summary			
		Yes	No
If Level 1: Did you achieve a minimum overall score of at least 65% with no applicable elements scoring less than 50%? If yes contact your Safety/Risk Consultant to schedule your Safety Improvement Assessment.		Book Level 1 Safety Improvement Assessment	Implement Missing Elements
If Level 2: Did you achieve a minimum overall score of at least 75% with no applicable elements scoring less than 60%? If yes contact your Safety/Risk Consultant to schedule your Safety Improvement Assessment.		Book Level 2 Safety Improvement Assessment	Implement Missing Elements
If Level 3: Did you achieve a minimum overall score of at least 85% with no applicable elements scoring less than 70%? If yes contact your Safety/Risk Consultant to schedule your Safety Improvement Assessment		Book Level 3 Safety Improvement Assessment	Implement Missing Elements