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Developing an Effective Injury and Illness Prevention Plan (IIPP)

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A safe workplace doesn't happen by chance, it starts with a plan. [Title 8, Section 3203](#) of the California Code of Regulations requires every California employer to develop, implement and maintain an effective Injury and Illness Prevention Plan (IIPP). The IIPP provides a structured approach to identifying, preventing, and responding to workplace hazards. This proactive approach not only protects employees who are essential to delivering public services but also reduces downtime, workers' compensation claims, and liability exposure. Without an IIPP, an agency is unprepared to prevent injuries and respond effectively to workplace hazards, leaving employees and operations vulnerable to avoidable risks. This document is a helpful tool for any agency that is developing or updating their IIPP.

Title 8, section 3203 requires the IIPP to be in writing and to have the following elements:

- 1. Responsibility:** An agency must assign responsibility for the IIPP to a designated person. This individual should be clearly named in the written program and must be given adequate authority and resources to implement and manage the IIPP effectively.
- 2. Compliance:** An effective program requires a system for ensuring employee compliance with safe and healthy work practices. This can include safety training, disciplinary procedures, and recognition systems that encourage and enforce safe behavior across the organization. However, overemphasis on recognition or discipline can unintentionally lead to underreporting, which undermines workplace safety by masking hazards and preventing timely corrective action. A balanced approach encourages transparency, learning, and continuous improvement.

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3. **Communication:** Agencies must establish methods for communicating safety information in a language that is understood by all employees. This may include safety meetings, bulletin boards, posters, written memos, digital communications, or safety committees. Smaller agencies with fewer than 10 employees may fulfill this requirement with oral communication, as long as the content is clear and consistent.

4. **Hazard Assessment:** Agencies need procedures for identifying and evaluating workplace hazards. This should include initial inspections when the IIPP is first implemented, periodic safety inspections (monthly or quarterly), and additional inspections whenever there are changes in operations, equipment, or materials, or after an incident occurs.

5. **Accident Investigation:** In the event of a workplace injury or illness, the agency must investigate to determine the [root cause](#) and identify how to prevent similar incidents in the future. The investigation process should be timely, documented, and include corrective actions.

6. **Hazard Correction:** Once hazards are identified, they must be corrected promptly. Serious hazards should be addressed immediately, and employees should be removed from danger until the issue is resolved. Less serious hazards should still be addressed in a timely manner to prevent escalation or injury. Temporary safeguards like warning signs, barricades, or equipment shutdowns should be used until permanent corrections can be made.

7. **Training:** Training is a key component of the IIPP. Agencies are required to provide training when the program is first established, when new employees are hired, when employees change roles, when new equipment or procedures are introduced, and whenever a new or previously unrecognized hazard is identified. Supervisors must receive training specific to the hazards their teams may encounter.

8. **Access:** Employees and designated representatives must be given access to the written IIPP. Agencies can satisfy this requirement either by providing a printed copy within five business days of an employee request or an electric copy if agreed upon. One way to accomplish this would be to provide employees access to the IIPP via an agency server or website that the employees regularly use for work.

9. **Recordkeeping:** Employers must maintain records of safety inspections and employee training for at least one year. Inspection records should include who conducted them, identified hazards, and corrective actions taken. Employers with fewer than 10 employees may discard these once the hazard is corrected. Training documentation must include each employee's name, training dates, types of training, and providers.

In summary, public agencies should tailor their IIPP to fit the unique needs of their operations while ensuring that all core elements of the program are included and actively maintained. Agencies are encouraged to review their program regularly for updates and improvements.

If you have any questions, please reach out to PRISM's [Risk Control](#) Department.