

The “Safety Culture”



Ensuring safety within the your departments framework is crucial to protect employees, residents, and the environment. Below are some tips to aid you in developing a “SAFETY CULTURE”

Safety Committees

Safety Committee Roles:

- Regular Meetings: Conduct monthly or quarterly meetings to review safety incidents, policies, and training needs.
- Incident Review: Analyze accidents and incidents to identify root causes and prevent recurrence.
- Safety Audits: Perform regular safety audits and inspections of workplaces and field operations.

Training

- Employee Training: Develop and coordinate safety training programs for all employees.
- Onboarding: Ensure new employees receive comprehensive safety orientation.
- Record Keeping: Maintain records of safety training, incidents, and compliance with safety regulations.

Department Safety Representative (DSR)

- Selection should be someone who has the authority to make changes.
- Conduct risk assessments and hazard analyses for departmental operations.
- Compliance Monitoring
 - Ensure compliance with California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal-OSHA) regulations and other relevant safety standards.
- Incident Reporting: Facilitate prompt reporting and investigation of workplace accidents and near-misses.

Office-Based Employee Responsibilities

Individual Responsibilities:

- Ergonomics: Set up workstations to minimize strain and injury.
- Emergency Preparedness: Familiarize oneself with emergency procedures and participate in drills.
- Housekeeping: Keep work areas tidy and free from hazards that could cause slips, trips, or falls.

Field-Based Employee Responsibilities

Responsibilities:

- PPE Usage: Always use appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for tasks.
- Vehicle Safety: Follow safe driving practices and perform vehicle inspections.
- Environmental Awareness: Be aware of environmental hazards and weather conditions, especially when working outdoors.

Parking Lot Safety



Everyone should be aware of the potential risks and ways to stay safe in parking lots, which can be a common location for accidents and crime. We will be covering safety tips to follow when parking in lots during the day, night, at work, and around town.

Daytime Safety:

The chances of accidents increase when parking lots are busy and crowded during the day. To ensure your safety during the day, park in well-lit areas and keep your car close to the entrance when possible. Make sure you're aware of your surroundings, walk confidently to your car, and avoid distractions such as texting or talking on the phone.

Nighttime Safety:

Parking lots can be more dangerous at night due to reduced visibility. When parking at night, choose well-lit areas and avoid parking next to large vehicles or in secluded spots. If you feel unsafe, ask a security guard to escort you to your car. Always have your keys ready and check the backseat before getting in.

Safety at Work:

Parking lots at workplaces can also pose safety risks. Parking lots should be well-lit and monitored by security cameras, as employers should ensure. Using designated parking areas, locking their cars, and not leaving valuables in plain sight is a must for employees. Carpooling or walking to the parking lot with a coworker can also improve safety.

Safety Around Town:

Parking lots in public places like shopping centers or recreational areas can attract criminals. To stay safe around town, park in well-lit areas with good visibility. Avoid parking near vans or large vehicles with tinted windows. Trust your instincts – if a parking lot feels unsafe, find an alternative location to park.

Parking lot safety is a critical aspect of personal safety that should not be overlooked. By following the tips provided in this newsletter, you can reduce the risk of accidents and avoid becoming a target for criminal activity. Remember to always stay alert, be proactive about your safety, and report any suspicious activity to authorities. Stay safe out there!



DE-ESCALATION

Tips on deescalating

As someone who works for the County of Riverside, you have the chance to interact with members of the public every day. Although most interactions are positive, there are certain ones that can be quite different. By de-escalating a tense situation, it is possible to protect both staff and the public while demonstrating good governance. These tips will help you diffuse confrontations.

- Try to keep yourself in a state of calm
- Anger feeds anger while calm professionalism defuses confrontations it
- Acknowledge their point-of-view
- Assure them that you want to understand and help them
- Provide a detailed explanation of the situation and policies involved
- Confirm mutual understanding through a summary of key points

Cooperative resolution of most disputes can be achieved with careful attention and empathy. Read on for additional methods to transform hostility into harmony.



Remain calm and control your own emotions!

Keeping calm and composed is the key to effectively de-escalating a tense situation with the customer. Avoid getting defensive or raising your voice, as doing so could potentially make the customer angrier and escalate the dispute.

To manage your emotions, take deep breaths and respond in a measured and even tone. Your body language and tone of voice can have a huge impact on the customer, so make sure to avoid aggressive stances and gestures. Maintain an open posture and speak with gentleness and compassion.

It's important to refrain from taking the customer's anger personally. Keep in mind that their frustration is not about you, but rather the situation. It's best to avoid arguing or demanding too much, as doing so can lead to their frustration. Stay focused on the current issue, not the past grievance.

Listen actively and empathize.

To understand their perspective and concerns, give the customer your full attention and listen without judgment. Show that you are listening by making eye contact and nodding. Validate their emotions by saying something like 'I understand why you feel that way'. Maintain calm while empathizing with their frustration.

Do not interrupt

Allow the customer to speak freely without interruptions. Only interject to ask clarifying questions or restate what they have said to confirm you understand. Interrupting the customer or speaking over them is disrespectful and can further escalate the situation.

Remain open minded and receptive to the customer's perspective without prejudging them or the situation. Do not assume that you know the full story or make excuses for their organization. Approach the conversation with empathy respect and a willingness to understand the root cause of the customer's frustration.

Ask questions

Politely ask open-ended questions to make sure you fully grasp the customer's concerns needs and desired resolution questions like "can you tell me more about what happened?" or "how can I help resolve this issue?" can help clarify the situation and show you want to help. Repeat back the key details and main issues to confirm your understanding.

Apologize sincerely

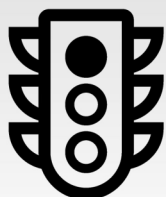
As a representative of Riverside County you strive to serve citizens to the best of your ability. However mistakes and oversights can occur, leading to a breakdown in service that negatively impacts customers. Recognizing how the customer may feel in this situation, such as upset, disrespected or ignored, helps build understand and allows you to have a constructive conversation.

DE-ESCALATION - continued

If it's appropriate for the situation, give a sincere apology. Instead of saying 'I'm sorry,' say 'I apologize'. An apology combined with empathy can help diffuse anger and build rapport. Acknowledge any errors, accept responsibility, and confirm to the customer that the problem will be addressed. However, do not apologize if you have done nothing wrong, as this may set the wrong expectation. Use discretion and take responsibility only when due.

Your responsibility as a county employee is to serve your community professionally. While it can be challenging to deal with frustrated citizens, it's important to remain calm, actively listen, and concentrate on solving the underlying issue. By adhering to the de-escalation guidelines presented here, you can maintain your calm, validate the member of the public's concern, and work together to come up with a satisfactory solution. Patience and empathy can often transform a tense interaction into a positive experience that leaves the citizen feeling heard and respected. You have the power to turn a negative encounter into a constructive one that upholds the high standards of public service. Stay centered, be understanding, and lead by example. Your community is counting on you.

Your efforts are greatly appreciated!



AVOID THESE OBSTACLES

- **Distractions:** Keep your phone out of sight.
- **Getting Preoccupied:** Stay engaged in the conversation by actively listening rather than thinking about what to have for supper.
- **Focusing on the Facts Alone:** Consider where the speaker is coming from as well.
- **Watching How Someone Speaks:** Pay attention to what is being said rather than how it is being said.



BUILD UP YOUR EQ

- Understand how to read a room.
- Interpret the needs of others.
- Put yourself in other people's shoes.
- Keep your own emotions in check during tense situations.
- Make it your objective to get to an agreement.

Workplace Violence Survey

To ensure all employees have an opportunity to be involved and share their thoughts regarding the County and Workplace Violence, we ask that you please participate in the linked survey.

To better serve you, and the Departments, the Safety Loss Control Division will be collecting this information to gain an understanding of any Workplace Violence concerns or potential Workplace Violence hazards throughout the County.

Please click the link below and provide feedback regarding the County's Workplace Violence Program. If you have any additional questions regarding this, please contact us at:

(951) 955-3520 or SafetyDivision@rivco.org

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FHMWK9L>



**Workplace
Violence
Prevention**

SURVEY LINK

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FHMWK9L>