

Chapter 9

Safety and Workers' Compensation

EMPLOYEE SAFETY

Work Safety Policy

Responsibilities of safety and health are shared between the City and its employees. The goal of the City's Safety program is to provide a safe working environment, free from potential hazards, that will reduce the number of work-related injuries and accidents.

Management, with the direction and assistance of the Safety Services Section, is responsible for providing safety and health programs, their effectiveness and improvement, and safeguards ensuring safe working conditions.

Supervisors are responsible for developing proper work procedures and guidelines, promoting safety practices, and enforcing safety rules.

Employees are responsible for supporting and participating in all aspects of the City's Safety Program. This includes complying with all rules and regulations, and always following common sense safety practices while performing their duties.

Monthly Safety Meetings

Safety meetings are held each month in many sections, during which current safety problems and other assigned work safety topics are discussed. Additional suggestions and constructive criticism on how to make the workplace more safe is always encouraged.

Vehicle Accidents

Any accident involving a City vehicle must be reported to your supervisor immediately. The Administrative Services Division must also be notified. In most cases, your supervisor will notify the Police Division.

Safety Training

State and federal laws require employees in particular classifications to receive training and instruction in the performance of the various job assignments. The Safety Services Section and your supervisor will work jointly to provide this training when necessary.

ON-THE-JOB INJURY

Any on-the-job injury should be reported immediately to your supervisor. The Workers' Compensation Section should be contacted as soon as possible when any injury occurs that requires treatment and/or lost work time. In the event of a serious injury, you should be taken to the nearest emergency facility. The City's Safety Administrator must investigate all injuries, and therefore should be contacted as soon as possible.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

In accordance with the State Labor Code, the City provides protection for you against financial losses from on-the-job injuries. This includes payment of all reasonable medical expenses incurred as a result of such injuries. Claims must be made within five days of the incident. Since these laws are constantly changing, any questions regarding Workers' Compensation should be directed to the Workers' Compensation Section in the Personnel Division.

Temporary Disability

You will be paid full salary for the first 320 hours after an on-the-job injury. After this period, temporary disability benefits will be paid at the State statutory rate. The City allows you to use your sick leave, vacation and floating holidays to bring your check up to your regular salary. There are additional benefits if you are off work for an extended period of time. Sworn Police and Fire employees are covered under separate provisions of State law.

Specific Medical Benefits

You are entitled to receive medical, surgical and hospital services reasonably required to cure or relieve you from the effects of your injury, including nursing care and such things as crutches and artificial limbs.

State law allows you to be treated for an on-the-job injury by your personal physician as long as you have notified the Worker's Compensation Section in writing prior to an injury. You must still first report your injury to the Workers' Compensation Section, who will then release you to see your personal physician.

Thirty days after reporting your injury, State law allows you to choose a physician of your choice for medical treatment. Before making this change, be sure to notify the City's Workers' Compensation Section, who can assist you.

Permanent Disability

Some injuries may produce permanent disability, entitling the injured employee to compensation based upon the degree of disability. A rating cannot be made until the employee's condition becomes permanent and stationary; that is, when his condition will not reasonably change for better or worse. In some cases a stationary condition is not reached for a long period of time. The fact that you return to work does not affect your right to compensation for disability. The degree of disability is provided for

loss due to the inability to compete in the open labor market.

Employee Rehabilitation

If an industrial injury keeps you from returning to your usual job, you may qualify for vocational rehabilitation and training. Through this program, the City attempts to place employees in other jobs, both within the City and outside. Any questions regarding vocational rehabilitation should be directed to the Workers' Compensation Section of the Personnel Division.

*“The quality of a person’s life
is in direct proportion to their
commitment to excellence,
regardless of their chosen
field of endeavor.”*

Vincent T. Lombardi