

**General Safety Manual for
Washington County**

November 1, 2025

General Safety Manual for Washington County (Updated 11/1/25)

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Washington County Statement of Safety Policy

The success of Washington County depends upon our efficient use of resources to produce a high-quality product for the citizens of our community. Our most important resource is our employees. To protect this resource, we are committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all employees by establishing and maintaining an effective safety and health program. We consider safety to be a core value of our organization's operations.

The occupational safety program of Washington County is organized to give each department responsibility for accident prevention. Employees at all levels of our workforce are directed to make safety a matter of continuing concern, equal in importance to all other operational considerations. We are all expected to cooperate in implementing safety practices and to adopt the concept that the safe way to perform a task is the most efficient, and the only acceptable way to perform it.



(Board of Supervisors, Chairperson)

10-21-25

(Date)



(Safety Coordinator, Safety Committee Chair)

10 / 21 / 2025

(Date)

Safety Responsibilities

Management and Department Head Safety Responsibilities

Management and department heads are responsible for the safety of all employees under their supervision and shall be accountable for providing direction to subordinate supervisory staff regarding safety. Department heads are responsible for developing, evaluating and maintaining all safety programs that relate to operations under their control. Department heads shall provide training and enforce safety rules and initiate discipline when the rules are violated.

Supervisor's Safety Responsibilities

Any employee who is responsible for the oversight of employees is accountable for the safety of their subordinates. Supervisors shall be knowledgeable about the safety rules and policies established by management and work with management to implement and evaluate those policies and rules. Supervisors shall ensure that safety rules and procedures are followed by employees and initiate corrective actions, including discipline, when necessary.

Employee Safety Responsibilities

While the employer is responsible for providing a safe work environment, employees are responsible for following all safety policies and using all safety equipment provided. If you see an unsafe situation or are unsure how to proceed with a task safely, it is your responsibility to report these issues to a supervisor or member of management immediately.

Safety Committee

A safety committee has been established by Washington County and is composed of employees representing many departments. Members of the committee are chosen from those employees recognized for their good work, are safety conscious and have familiarity with the overall work area and equipment. Employees from various work areas are represented, both supervisory and non-supervisory. At any time, the safety committee may designate another employee to join the committee. A chairperson has been selected and will be responsible for scheduling meetings, notifying committee members, and following up on items discussed. To stay on top of safety issues the Safety Committee will meet no less than once quarterly. The committee has the following responsibilities:

1. Review accident/injury investigation reports from all departments to see if corrective measures need to be implemented.
2. Ensure that annual inspections are conducted in each department's work areas to identify safety hazards and recommend ways to correct hazards.
3. Coordinate the development of safety rules and safe work methods.
4. Coordinate safety training between departments when possible. County employees will have online training quarterly, and/or other safety meetings as designated by the department head.
5. Report the activities of the committee as requested.
6. Set annual safety goals for the organization.

Pre-Employment Assessment Practices

Pre-Employment Practices

Safety starts with the proper hiring practices to ensure that the person being hired for a position is physically and technically capable of performing a set of tasks. Washington County requires a job-related medical examination after you have been offered a position and before you begin work. The candidate will be directed to the County's Designated Physician Clinic and the cost of the physical shall be paid by Washington County. The provider performing the physical shall present an opinion as the potential employee's ability to perform the essential functions of the position.

More information on “Medical Examinations” may be found in the Washington County Employee Information Handbook, Section. 2.4.

Job Descriptions

It shall be the responsibility of the department head or Human Resources to provide a copy of the applicable job description to the provider conducting a pre-placement physical for each new employee. Each department head shall be responsible for periodically updating all job descriptions within their department to ensure they adequately reflect the requirements of the job.

Incident Reporting and Company Nurse

As a member of the Iowa Municipalities Workers’ Compensation Association (IMWCA), Washington County’s employees are required to report all potential work-related illnesses or injuries using Company Nurse. Materials about Company Nurse are provided during new hire orientation.

Reporting claims through Company Nurse provides employee access to 24-hour, 7 days a week claims reporting and medical recommendations (triage) from a registered nurse.

To report a claim through Company Nurse, call 1-888-770-0928 and use member specification location code:

Employer Name: **Washington County** Search Code: **IA540**

Failure by an employee to report an illness or injury to Company Nurse within 24 hours will be subject to discipline. If the employee is unable to call, the immediate supervisor shall be held responsible for reporting within the allotted time.

Designated Clinics for Medical Services

Employees are required to use a County-designated medical clinic for any work-related injury. The designated clinics are:

- *Emergency Room:* Washington County Hospitals & Clinics (WCHC), University of Iowa Hospitals & Clinics (UIHC)
- *During Business Hours:* WCHC Family Medicine Clinic (for follow-up from WCHC visit), University of Iowa Occupational Health (UIOH - Coralville Clinic)

Washington County’s designated clinics for medical services need to be used in *any* instance of a work-related injury or illness. Employees with a work-related illness or injury will be required to have their initial evaluation with this clinic. If an employee decides to go to another provider without the referral from the authorized treating clinic, the employee will be responsible for all expenses related to those visits.

Incident and Injury Investigation

Many incidents and injuries occurring in the workplace or that involve equipment and property are preventable. To prevent future incidents and injuries, it is necessary to immediately review the circumstances surrounding each incident. Once the primary cause for the incident has been established, action shall be taken to prevent recurrence.

The “*Employee Injury or Illness Notification*” form has been developed to facilitate the investigation. The supervisor, in conjunction with the employee, shall complete this form and a copy will be forwarded to the department head and safety committee.

If the investigation determines an employee has contributed to the cause of an incident by failure to obey laws, department or safety rules and regulations, disciplinary action may result.

The department head shall provide a written response to any recommendations by the safety committee that outlines corrective actions taken by the department.

Copies of all incident reports and corrective actions shall be kept on file by the Safety Coordinator or their designee.

Return to Work Program

When an employee is off work and has been released by a medical provider for temporary modified or light duty work, the County will try to make accommodations to do so. Washington County’s Return to Work information may be found in the Employee Information Handbook, Appendix C. The written policy is “Temporary Modified Assignment” in the Washington County Employee Information Handbook, Section 4.6.

Training and Orientation

The department head or their designee will provide ongoing safety training in the following areas as the need arises:

- New equipment purchases.
- New or changes in operations.
- Identified areas of increased incidents and/or injury.
- Newly identified areas of potential risk exposure.

Documentation of Safety Training

Documentation from any training courses or meetings attended by employees, supervisors or managers will be kept for recordkeeping purposes. Documentation associated with safety meetings and training shall be maintained by the Safety Coordinator or their designee. Employees who do not attend regularly scheduled safety meetings or training activities will be identified and scheduled to attend make-up training. Documentation will be noted for employees who attend make-up training.

Safety Orientation

A department head or their designee will provide an orientation to all new, returning and transferring employees to address the hazards of their position. This will include a review of all safety rules, policies and procedures, equipment, etc. that apply to the employee’s area of assignment. The employees will be given an opportunity to ask any relevant questions that may pertain to their assigned duties. Documentation for the safety orientation training for each new, returning and transferring employee shall be maintained.

Medical Services

First Aid

At least one first aid kit shall be maintained in each occupied building. In addition, first aid kits shall be located in each County vehicle. It is recommended that kits be inspected regularly, replacing used, missing, soiled, damaged or outdated items. All employees need to be advised of the location of the first aid kits. Oral medications such as aspirin or antacids are not typically provided in these kits.

Eye Wash Stations

An eye wash station suitable for quick drenching or flushing of the eyes and body shall be provided within the work area for immediate use if employees are exposed to pre-determined harmful chemicals. The eye wash stations shall be inspected and tested monthly.

Safety Audits and Inspections

Department Self-Inspection Checklists

Since the success of any safety program depends on identifying hazards and taking immediate corrective action, quarterly department self-inspections are suggested. Each department shall develop its own checklist to assist in these inspections. The completed checklist should be submitted to the Safety Coordinator or Safety Committee Chairperson and may be reviewed at the safety committee meetings.

Reporting Unsafe Acts or Conditions

All employees are encouraged and required to immediately report any unsafe acts or conditions.

1. Stop work immediately and secure the location or lock out unsafe equipment.
2. Inform an immediate supervisor of the problem.

Safety Violations

Each employee is required to comprehend and abide by the contents of the Washington County General Safety Manual.

Discipline for Safety Violations

Managers and supervisors should make every effort to ensure employees are following safe work practices. Should an employee be observed not following documented safety rules or procedures, the violating employee(s) shall be disciplined according to "Guidelines for Employee Conduct and Discipline" policy in the Washington County Employee Information Handbook, Section 6.7.

**Employee Acknowledgement of
Receipt of General Safety
Manual for Washington County**

I acknowledge receipt of the General Safety Manual for Washington County. I will read through the Safety Manual and ask my Department Head or direct supervisor if I have any questions about the material in the manual. I further understand that I may access the General Safety Manual at any time from the Washington County website at <http://washingtoncounty.iowa.gov/>.

(Employee Name – Print)

(Date)

(Employee Signature)