

**SAMPLE FIRE DEPARTMENT RISK MANAGEMENT SOP
CUSTOMIZE FOR LOCAL NEEDS**

Purpose:

The fire department employs a risk management plan as a component of a comprehensive safety and health program with the following objectives:

1. To limit the exposure of the fire department to situations and occurrences that could have harmful or undesirable consequences to the department or its members.
2. To provide a safe working environment for the members of the fire department while recognizing the risks inherent to the fire department's mission.
3. To require all personnel to use the concept of risk vs. benefit as a primary consideration during fire department operations.

Scope:

The Risk Management Plan shall apply to all fire department personnel. It is intended to comply with the requirements of the National Fire Protection Association Standard 1500, *Standard on Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Program*.

1. The plan shall reduce or eliminate risk in the following categories:
 - a. Personnel losses; Death, injury, illness, and exposures
 - b. Property Loss; Damage to equipment, apparatus, facilities
 - c. Legal Liabilities; Loss from lawsuits from employees and the public
2. The plan shall address the following areas of risk:
 - a. Administration
 - b. Facilities
 - c. Training
 - d. Vehicle operations, emergency and non-emergency
 - e. Protective clothing and equipment
 - f. Operations at emergency incidents
 - g. Operations at non emergency incidents
 - h. Other related activities

Responsibility:

1. The fire chief has the responsibility for the implementation and operation of the department's risk management plan.
2. The Department's Health and Safety Committee shall be responsible for management and revision of the risk management plan annually based on potential exposures.

3. All members have the responsibility for their health and safety through compliance with the requirements set forth in the Risk Management Plan.

Risk Management Plan Process:

1. Risk Identification:

Identification of potential exposures for all operations, both emergency and non-emergency. This shall include, but not be limited to the following information:

- a. Listing of risks to which members are or may be exposed.
- b. Records of previous accidents, illnesses, injuries, and exposures both locally and nationally.
- c. Information on potential exposures specific to known hazards in the community.
- d. Facility, apparatus, and equipment inspections.

2. Risk Evaluation:

Evaluate the list of exposures using the following criteria:

- a. Frequency of occurrence.
- b. Severity and impact of occurrence

3. Prioritization:

The fire department will prioritize risks based on a risk evaluation. Risks with low or high frequencies and high severity shall be considered high priority and require immediate action. Special attention should be given to low frequency, high severity risks. Training, hazard identification, and sound decision making are critical for successful mitigation of low frequency, high severity risks.

4. Risk Control measures:

- a. Avoiding Risk:

Avoiding the activity creating risk. This is the ideal method of risk management, and, though sometimes not possible in the emergency services, can be employed in certain cases.

Example:

Risk: Needle stick from recapping needles

Avoidance: Activity avoided by use of sharps containers

- b. Controlling Risk:

Using control measures to reduce the likelihood of occurrence and severity. Such control measures include; administrative controls (SOPs, etc.), engineering controls (apparatus safety features, etc.), and personal protective equipment (SCBA, etc.).

Example:

Risk: Smoke inhalation

Control: Using SCBA for IDLH atmospheres according to SOPs

c. Transferring Risk:

Transferring the risk to someone else. The most common method of transferring risk (financial) is through insurance. Transferring risk in emergency operations is not always practical, but can be done in certain situations.

Example:

Risk: Exposure to hazardous materials during cleanup

Transfer: Using independent contractors for cleanup

5. Monitoring the Risk Management Program:

The Department's Safety and Health Officer shall, along with the Safety and Health Committee, periodically evaluate (at least annually) the Risk Management Plan for effectiveness. Methods of managing new risks shall be developed and implemented.

6. Risk Management at Emergency Operations:

The concept of risk management shall be used on the basis of the following principles:

- a. Activities that present a significant risk to the safety of members shall be limited to situations where there is a potential to save endangered lives.
- b. Activities that are employed routinely to protect property shall be recognized as inherent risks to the safety of members. Actions shall be taken to reduce or avoid these risks.
- c. No risk to the safety of members shall be acceptable when there is no possibility to save lives or property.
- d. Where the risk to the safety of members is excessive, activities shall be limited to defensive operations.
- e. At significant incidents or special operations, the Incident Commander shall designate qualified personnel with specific authority and responsibility to evaluate hazards and provide direction with respect to the safety of operations.

SAMPLE RISK WORKSHEET

Risk	Frequency/severity	Priority	Control Measures
Strains and Sprains	0		Assemble adequate personnel to perform task Training and use of proper lifting techniques Physical conditioning Work footwear providing ankle support
Facility Safety	0		Conduct station safety inspections Submit repair orders for safety hazards Practice electrical safety (ground faults, proper cords, etc) Proper storage of flammable and combustibles Use of equipment guards and gloves and safety glasses Practice good housekeeping practices Fire safety systems maintenance
Vehicle Accidents	0		Obey all traffic laws Use seatbelts at all times Quality preventive maintenance program Conduct emergency vehicle operations training Use appropriate response modes for non-emergencies Driver checks prior to moving
Personal protective equipment	0		Annual SCBA training Annual SCBA mask fit testing SCBA inspection and service as required Semiannual gear inspections
Equipment accidents	0		Annual ladder testing Proper inspection and reporting Appropriate PPE

Annual fire pump testing

Health Exposures	0	<p>Infection control plan Appropriate level of EMS PPE based on patient/procedure Proper decontamination and SOPs Proper reporting and follow-up for exposures</p>
Financial Liabilities	0	<p>Adequate worker, facility, and vehicle insurances Use of available counsel and Human resources for policy Adoption and adherence to laws, policies, and procedures Sound budgeting and effective purchase policy</p>
Training Injuries	0	<p>Use of same PPE for training as incidents Use of qualified instructors Appoint safety officers during drills Compliance with applicable standards (NFPA 1403, etc.)</p>
Health and Wellness	0	<p>Conduct annual physical for all employees Develop and provide physical fitness program Provide full range employee assistance program</p>
Slips and Falls	0	<p>Provide railings as required identify and eliminate tripping hazards Clean walking surfaces clean and dry Provide adequate lighting for all spaces</p>

Fire Department Risk and Frequency Graph

