

Community Action of Southeast Iowa

# Employee Health & Safety Handbook

A Guide to Safety Policies & Procedures to Support a  
Safety Conscious Work Environment



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**Community Action of Southeast Iowa** strives to safeguard our employees through training, provision of appropriate work surroundings, and procedures that foster protection of health and safety (Personnel Policy 501 Safety). Community Action has established a workplace Health & Safety Program to assist in providing a safe and healthful work environment for employees, customers, and visitors. This program is a top priority for Community Action. The program is structured around our Personnel Policies.

Our goal is to prevent workplace accidents and we are committed to providing a safe working environment for all employees. All work conducted by Community Action of Southeast Iowa employees will take into account the intent of this policy. No duty, no matter what its perceived result, will be deemed more important than employee health and safety.

Employees must immediately report any unsafe condition to the appropriate supervisor. All accidents and incidents are to be reported to the Human Resource Manager or Executive Assistant immediately (Personnel Policy 306 Worker's Compensation).

A key factor in implementing this policy will be the strict compliance to all applicable federal, state, local, and agency policies and procedures.

### **Community Action of Southeast Iowa subscribes to these principles:**

1. Accidents are preventable through implementation of effective Safety and Health policies and programs. Safety and health controls are a major part of our work every day.
2. Accident prevention is good business. It minimizes human suffering, promotes better working conditions for everyone and increases productivity. Community Action of Southeast Iowa will comply with safety and health regulations which apply to the course and scope of services.
3. Program Directors have the responsibility for implementing, administering, monitoring, and evaluating the safety of their program. Consequently, management of Community Action of Southeast Iowa is committed to allocating and providing resources needed to promote and effectively implement this safety policy.
4. Employees are responsible for following safe work practices and agency rules, and for preventing accidents and injuries. Management will establish lines of communication to receive information, suggestions and assistance from employees where safety and health are concerned.
5. Management and supervisors of Community Action of Southeast Iowa will set an example with good attitudes and strong commitment to safety and health in the workplace. Management will monitor agency health and safety performance, working environment and conditions to ensure that program objectives are achieved.
6. Our safety program applies to all employees and persons affected or associated in any way by the agency. Everyone's goal must be to constantly improve safety awareness and to prevent accidents and injuries. Safety is a team effort!

**General Safety:** General safety standards have been enacted to assure the safety and well-being of persons employed by Community Action of Southeast Iowa. Failure to abide by these standards can result in corrective action which may include termination. Personnel Policies relating to safety are incorporated into the safety program.

The primary responsibility of the employees of Community Action of Southeast Iowa is to perform their duties in a safe manner in order to prevent injury to themselves and others. Each employee is expected to obey safety rules and to exercise caution in all work activities. Employees must immediately report any unsafe condition to the appropriate supervisor. Employees who violate safety standards, cause dangerous situations, or who fail to report or remedy such situations, may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment (Personnel Policy 501 Safety).

Certain programs may have more restrictive and more detailed policies and standards. You will be given this information during your initial training by your Supervisor. Employees must learn and follow the approved safe practices and procedures that apply to their specific jobs.

**Conduct:** Employees are required to work in an injury-free manner displaying accepted levels of behavior and avoid behaviors which jeopardize health, safety or security. This includes, but is not limited to, horseplay, ‘practical jokes’, acts of violence, and threats of violence or fighting. Any conduct that places the employee or others at risk, or which threatens or intimidates others, is forbidden. These are considered serious misconduct and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment (Personnel Policy 701).

Conduct that places the employee or others at risk, or which threatens or intimidates others, is forbidden. Any employee who is subjected to or who witnesses such behavior should report the incident immediately to his or her supervisor or the Program Director. Dangerous items, including firearms, ammunition, other weapons or similar articles are strictly forbidden at Community Action worksites, in Community Action vehicles, or in one’s personal possession when representing Community Action of Southeast Iowa.

Use and/or possession of illegal drugs or alcohol on agency property or on agency time is forbidden. Reporting for work while under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol is forbidden (Personnel Policy 702 Drug and Alcohol Use).

If an employee has reason to believe that events in their personal life could result in acts of violence occurring at work, they are urged to confidentially discuss the issue with the Program Director so that a prevention plan can be developed.

**Smoking:** In keeping with Community Action's intent to provide a safe and healthful work environment, smoking and tobacco products are prohibited throughout the workplace, including Agency vehicles, and playground areas. This applies to employees, clients and visitors (Personnel Policy 505 Smoking). Smoking is also prohibited on the property of clients served by Community Action.

Smoking is only allowed in outdoor areas designated as “smoking areas” and must not be visible to the Head Start playground area. If the property leased has more restrictive prohibitions, the agency will conform to the restrictions.

Complaints concerning smoking will be processed in accordance with Personnel Policy #718.

**Drug and Alcohol Use:** It is Community Action's goal to provide a drug-free, healthful, and safe workplace. To promote this goal, employees are required to report to work in appropriate mental and physical condition to perform their jobs in a satisfactory manner.

**Drug Free Awareness:** To inform employees about important provisions of this policy, Community Action has established a drug-free awareness program. The program provides information on the dangers and effects of substance abuse in the workplace, resources available to employees, and consequences for violations of this policy.

While on Community Action premises and while conducting business-related activities off Agency premises, no employee, volunteer, or consultant may use, possess, distribute, sell, manufacture or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs (Personnel Policy 702 Drug and Alcohol Use). Violations of this policy which may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination of employment, and/or required participation in a substance abuse rehabilitation or treatment program. Such violations may also have legal consequences.

If an employee reports to work and appears to be under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol and is unable to perform their job, they will be asked to leave immediately. Transportation will be arranged by the supervisor to get the employee home. Any employee who is reasonably suspected of being impaired, or under the influence of a prohibited substance (e.g., having a prohibited substance in the body) shall be suspended from job duties pending an investigation.

Employees with drug or alcohol problems that are not the immediate subject of disciplinary action, may request approval to take eligible leave to participate in a rehabilitation or treatment program. Leave may be granted if the employee agrees to abstain from use of the problem substance; abides by all Community Action policies, rules, and prohibitions relating to conduct in the workplace; and if granting the leave will not cause Community Action any undue hardship.

**Notification of a Criminal Drug Conviction:** Under the Drug-Free Workplace Act, an employee who performs work for a government contract or grant, must notify Community Action of a criminal conviction for drug-related activity occurring in the workplace. The report must be made within five days of the conviction.

**Access to Facilities & Keys:** Some areas of our facilities are locked for security purposes. Access is granted to those employees who should properly have access to these areas. Keys or combination numbers are not to be loaned or given to any person other than those designated to have them. Duplication of any such keys is strictly forbidden. Requests for keys and reports of lost keys should be made to your Program Director who will notify the appropriate parties. All keys must be surrendered at the time of separation from the agency.

**Facility & Office Safety:** The following areas must remain clear of obstructions:

1. Keep aisles, exits, fire extinguishers, emergency equipment, electrical breakers, controls, and switches clear and free of obstructions.
2. When an employee notices that the entrance to a facility is icy, they should spread ice melt on the walkway.
3. Employees must always wear safe footwear appropriate for their work environment.
4. Personal space heaters are only allowed in rare situations and must be approved by the

Program Director prior to use. Employees using space heaters are responsible for turning the heater off when leaving their desk for extended periods of time (lunch, end of the workday).

5. Extension cords can only be used for an immediate and temporary use. Extension cords should be placed away from walking spaces. If extension cords must be used in walking spaces, they must be taped down or covered with an extension cord mat.
6. Never leave file drawers open or open multiple file drawers at once.
7. Do not stack heavy or bulky objects on top of cabinets.
8. Do not store frequently used objects above shoulder height or below knee height.
9. Never reach into office machines without turning them off and unplugging them.
10. Inspect step stools and ladders before use.
11. Never use defective or broken equipment. Report these problems to your supervisor.
12. Employees that need help moving or lifting material should request assistance.
13. No candles or open flames are allowed within Community Action facilities.
14. Employees are responsible to keep their work area clean and safe.
15. Immediately report any unsafe conditions to the supervisor or Program Director.

**Safety Drills:** Each agency location has an Emergency Plan. All staff are responsible for reviewing the plan and knowing the location of fire extinguishers, alarms, first aid kits, tornado shelters, and safety exits at their worksites.

All staff are expected to fully cooperate in emergency drills and emergency situations. Any employee having a mobility, visual, hearing, or other condition which may hinder them from becoming aware of an emergency or evacuation, should have an evacuation assistance plan in place. The assistance plan should be developed with the Program Director and employee's supervisor in consultation with the Executive Assistant.

**Severe Weather:** Staff should consult and review the Emergency Plan for their work location.

1. All staff are responsible for knowing the location of tornado shelters at their worksites.
2. All staff are expected to fully cooperate in emergency drills.
3. If a severe weather warning is issued, employees should proceed immediately to designated shelter areas.
4. If a weather radio is available it should be brought to the shelter area. When the severe weather warning is cancelled, everyone will spread the word that it is safe to return to your normal work areas. A general announcement will also be made, if possible.

**Fire:** All Community Action of Southeast Iowa employees should consult the Emergency Plan for their work location in the event of a fire. Generally, at all locations the following guidelines should be followed:

1. Upon identification of a fire, notify the Receptionist or designated employee immediately who will then call 911. All employees will then be notified to exit the location.
2. All doors should be shut upon exiting.

3. Feel closed doors to make sure they are not hot before opening.
4. Keep as close to the floor as possible if the area contains smoke.
5. Meet with Attendance Taker at the outside designated meeting area.

**Agency Vehicles and Driver Safety:** The following policy has been established to encourage safe operation of vehicles, and to clarify insurance issues relating to drivers and Community Action of Southeast Iowa. This policy applies to vehicles owned, leased or rented to Community Action of Southeast Iowa and personally owned vehicles driven by employees on behalf of the agency.

Only employees authorized by Community Action of Southeast Iowa are permitted to operate Community Action of Southeast Iowa vehicles or operate personal vehicles for work purposes.

1. All drivers must have a valid driver's license. Employees must maintain a current driver's license with the appropriate classifications and endorsements.
2. Your Supervisor must be notified of any change in your license status or driving record.
3. Motor Vehicle Records will be checked periodically. Driving privileges may be suspended or terminated if your record indicates an unacceptable number of accidents or violations. If an employee's record falls within our insurance carrier's guidelines of an 'unacceptable driver', your authorization to drive for Community Action business will be terminated, which could also affect your employment status.
4. Personal Auto Liability insurance is the primary payer in the event of an accident is a personal vehicle.
5. Evidence of current insurance coverage must be provided to Community Action. The documentation can be a copy of your policy's Declaration page or a Certificate of Insurance.
6. Community Action of Southeast Iowa is not responsible for any physical damage to your vehicle.

**When operating a Community Action vehicle:**

1. No 'side trips' or personal use of agency vehicles are permitted. No unauthorized riders, hitchhikers, etc., are allowed.
2. No smoking.
3. Seat belts/shoulder harnesses must be worn whenever the vehicle is in motion.
4. All local and state traffic regulations and signs must be followed.
5. Driving while under the influence of alcohol or other drugs is forbidden.
6. The agency prohibits the use of cell phones by employees while driving on agency business.

Employees driving their personal vehicles on agency business must follow items 3. through 6. shown above.

**In the event of a vehicle accident:**

1. Take necessary steps to protect the lives of yourself and others.
2. Comply with police instructions.

3. Do not assume or admit fault. Others will determine liability and negligence after thorough investigation.
4. Report the accident to the Program Director and Executive Assistant as soon as possible.

**Work at Client Homes:** Employees of Community Action of Southeast Iowa are required to follow all client safety and security procedures when working at client homes.

1. Prior to an employee leaving to work at a client's home, they must notify a supervisor or other individual about their schedule and the home location.
2. Employees should be aware of emergency exit locations.
3. If the home cannot be safely accessed (broken steps, snow, ice), the employee should leave and report the issue to their supervisor.
4. If pets are in the home, request that the client secure the pet in another room or a kennel.
5. If an employee feels unsafe in a client's home they should notify their supervisor so precautions can be taken.

**Hazard Communication:** Community Action of Southeast Iowa employees have a right to know with which chemicals they work, what the hazards are, and how to handle them safely. The agency has a Hazard Communication Policy which provides guidance on the use and storage of chemicals.

**Reporting Employee Injuries:** Employees who sustain work-related injuries or illnesses must inform the Human Resource Manager or Executive Assistant immediately.

1. No matter how minor an on-the-job injury may appear, it is important that it be reported immediately. This will enable an eligible employee to qualify for coverage as quickly as possible. (Personnel Policy 306 Worker's Compensation).
2. An accident investigation will be conducted if medical attention is required.
3. If the injury requires emergency attention the employee should proceed to the emergency room. The Human Resource Manager will direct employees with non-emergency injuries to a health provider.

**Step-Stool & Ladder Use:** Employees who need to reach, must use the following procedures:

1. Always use a ladder that is the appropriate height for the job.
2. Inspect all ladders/step-stools prior to each use.
3. Ladders and step-stools must be placed on secure footing.
4. Only one person is allowed on a ladder at a time, unless it is rated for two.
5. Never stand on the top two steps of a stepladder.
6. Always maintain 3-point contact when working on ladders and step-stools.
7. Never reach beyond arm length when working on a ladder and step-stools.
8. Never use metal ladders/step-stools when working on or around electrical equipment.

**Facility Safety:** Safety at the agency facilities is the responsibility of all employees. Employees should report unsafe conditions. Inspection of the facilities will be supervised by the Center Director.

**Classroom Safety:** Head Start and Early Head Start classrooms have specific safety procedures to ensure the safety of the children. Employees should obtain a copy of the safety procedures when orientated by their Head Start supervisor. Inspection of the facilities will be supervised by the Head Start Facilities and Transportation Coordinator.

### **Electrical Safety:**

1. Do not tamper with the electrical main switch or breakers.
2. Report all electrical problems and suspected problems to your supervisor or Program Director.
3. All junction boxes, control boxes, connections, and other wiring must have covers securely installed to prevent accidental contact.
4. Inspect all plugs, cords and portable equipment prior to use.
5. Report any damaged electrical equipment to your supervisor. Only authorized personnel are permitted to make repairs.
6. Extension cords are to be used only for temporary applications. Never stretch cords across aisles or areas where others may trip over them. Do not attach extension cords to the building or run them under rugs/mats or through walls.
7. Personal space heaters must be approved by the Program Director prior to use.
8. All electrical panels must remain closed.

**Medical Emergencies:** When employees are confronted with a medical emergency such as chest pains, loss of consciousness or a fall from a height, they should follow the following procedures:

1. Upon discovering a medical emergency, call 911.
2. Stay with the injured person, being careful not to come in contact with any bodily fluids, unless properly trained and equipped. Employees should be familiar with and follow the procedures as listed in the Community Action Blood Borne Pathogens Policy.
3. Administer first aid on an emergency basis only. If you are trained to administer first aid, gloves and other barriers are located with the first aid equipment. If you think that you have been exposed to bodily fluid, notify your Program Director and the HR Manager immediately.

### **General Security Guidelines:**

1. Always be aware of your surroundings.
2. Keep your head up and hands free while walking to and from your car.
2. Immediately report any suspicious activity or persons to the Program Director.
3. When parking, remove all valuables from sight and lock vehicle doors.
4. Keep all valuables (money, purse, jewelry, etc.) out of sight when at your desk. Do not bring large sums of money or other valuables into the building.

5. Secure laptop computers, PDAs and other small electronic devices before leaving your workspace for extended periods of time (lunch, meetings, etc.).
6. If you have been approved to work before or after regular business hours, on weekends or holidays, observe these additional guidelines:
  - a. Be sure doors close and lock after you.
  - b. Turn on lights as you move through the building.
  - c. Always be aware of the closest telephone.
  - d. Be sure that someone at home knows that you are at work and is expecting you to check in by a specified time.
  - e. Turn off all equipment, lights, etc. as you leave the building.

**Staying Safe:** As a condition of employment, employees must follow Community Action of Southeast Iowa established health and safety policies and procedures. Additionally, employees must learn the approved safe practices and procedures that apply to their specific jobs.

Before beginning special work or new assignments, an employee should review applicable and appropriate safety rules. If an employee has any questions about how a task should be done safely, he or she is under instruction not to begin the task until he or she discusses the situation with his or her supervisor or Program Director. Together, they will determine the safe way to do the job. An employee is not required to perform work that he or she believes is unsafe, or that he or she thinks is likely to cause injury or a health risk to themselves or others.

**Weatherization Work Site Safety:** Weatherization has safety procedures that apply specifically to work done at clients homes. These procedures include:

**Equipment Operation:** You must specifically be trained and authorized to operate the following:

1. Agency vehicles.
2. Forklifts and Lifting Devices:
  - a. Inspect all forklifts and lifting devices (slings, hooks, etc.) prior to each use. Never use damaged equipment.
  - b. Never walk under a load suspended from a lifting device.
  - c. Keep all personnel clear of the 'fall zone' of the lifting device.
  - d. Know the weight of material being lifted. Never overload a lifting device.
3. When operating machines: Do not wear loose clothing, long hair should be tied up and back, remove jewelry, and sleeves should either be rolled all the way up, or all the way down.
4. Never operate damaged or defective equipment. Turn the machine off and report it to your supervisor immediately.
5. Never tamper with, remove or deactivate machine guards or controls designed to ensure safe operations.
6. Never reach into an operating machine or moving machine part.

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** Inspect protective equipment prior to each use. Do not use damaged PPE. You are required to maintain and keep PPE clean.

1. Safety glasses must be worn at all times in designated areas or environments.
2. Hard hats must be worn at all times in designated areas or environments.
3. Work gloves must be worn at all times when handling sharp or rough stock, or performing other jobs, which could cause hand injuries. Synthetic gloves must be worn when handling chemicals and biohazard material.
4. Hearing protection is required in areas where noise exposure is more than 90dBA (85dBA if you already have experienced a hearing loss).

**Confined Space Entry:** Confined spaces are areas not meant for human occupancy, have limited means of entry/exit, and have electrical, chemical, thermal, atmospheric, or entrapment hazards. Only trained and authorized employees are permitted to enter confined spaces. If you believe that your job requires confined space entry, contact your supervisor prior to undertaking the work.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please Print Clearly)



## Health & Safety Handbook

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I received a copy of the Safety Handbook on \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_