



Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development Department of Labor Standards

Executive Order 511: Establishing the Massachusetts Safety & Health Advisory Committee

In April 2009, Governor Patrick enacted Executive Order 511 (EO 511), with the goal of reducing the incidence of work-related injuries and illnesses experienced by employees of the Commonwealth, and the significant associated human and financial costs, such as loss of life, loss of quality of life, and financial expenditure, to below the current rate of over 1,000 lost-time incidents per year. The Commonwealth spends approximately \$31 million annually on direct medical and workers' compensation costs in the Executive Branch, and an estimated \$62 million in total costs. Incidence reduction can be accomplished by fostering comprehensive and cost-effective health and safety management. The methods being implemented through EO 511 are designed to help the Secretariats identify and implement sustainable pathways of strategic and practical steps toward incidence reduction. This will provide a foundation of proactive, systems-based management for worker health and safety, and shift the existing health and safety culture towards injury and illness prevention. At its core, EO 511 challenges the belief that the current number of job-related injuries/illnesses and associated costs are acceptable due to the hazardous nature of much of the work conducted by the Commonwealth's workforce, such as corrections, law enforcement, emergency management, and working in critical care settings.

EO 511 Accomplishments Overview:

- Creation of a centralized, connected infrastructure for health and safety, including:
 - The formation of the Governor's Employee Safety and Health Advisory Committee.
 - Appointment of a Health and Safety Coordinator for each Secretariat.
 - Creation of 90 joint labor-management health and safety committees.
- A comprehensive gap analysis of health and safety management of serious hazards conducted by the agency health and safety committees, identifying strategic improvement actions.
- Implementation of the annual secretariat/agency health and safety management planning and review process, which led to creation of a senior management hierarchy for health and safety planning, among many other elements.
- Improved collection and use of injury and illness statistics, including creation of comprehensive injury and illness reports to aid Secretariats in understanding the scope of fiscal losses, to aid in effective fiscal planning, and in risk-based prioritization of prevention.
- Information and resource sharing, such as development of a web-based wiki site.

Key Advisory Committee Recommendations:

- Ensure that the nationally-recognized worker protection standards, including the OSHA standards, become the minimum standards of practice for state workers.
 - First, through a centralized policy that these standards are to be the basis of prevention programs.
 - Second, through establishing by legislation an OSHA-type program of training, technical assistance, and enforcement for state government using these standards.
- Conduct comprehensive guided health and safety management review and planning efforts on an annual basis at the secretariat/agency senior management level.
- Have the health and safety committees continue in their front-line role of identifying health and safety needs, ensuring that these identified needs are evaluated, prioritized and implemented in coordination with senior management, and that committees continue to receive technical assistance and training.
- Continue to share best practices across agencies, as well as resources such as training and equipment, where feasible.