Safety program self-assessment: small animal care providers

This assessment helps you evaluate your safety and health programs so you can celebrate your successes and identify areas of opportunity. The assessment is divided into sections so it can be distributed to different work areas, which will help you gather the most accurate information.

Upon completing the assessment, you will want to prioritize your findings so you can tackle the most important issues first. This list is comprehensive, so set small goals to correct opportunities, rather than attempting to address everything at once.

While this assessment does include information on Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Administration rules, the focus is on injury prevention, not compliance. You may want to consult your own attorney regarding aspects of Oregon OSHA that may affect you.

Here are a few resources to help:

SAIF | saif.com/safety

Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) | osha.oregon.gov

Oregon Veterinary Medical Association | oregonvma.org/resources/health-safety

Date forms completed
(mm/dd/yyyy)

Scheduled progress review date
(mm/dd/yyyy)

SMALL ANIMAL CARE PROVIDER

Clinic/facility name

City   State   Zip   Phone

Completed by (Name, title, committee)

Oregon OSHA compliance and regulation

This covers some of Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) required written programs.

Program elements	Do you feel your program/procedure:			
	Is effective	Needs improvement	Not applicable	Comments
Bloodborne pathogen exposure plan				
Emergency action plan (consider regular business hours and after hours)				
Eye wash/deluge shower				
Fire extinguishers				
First aid/CPR				
Fire prevention plan				
Hazard communication—chemicals				
Hazardous energy—lockout/tagout				
Hearing conservation—noise				
Inspection procedure				
OSHA recording and reporting— injuries/illnesses				
Personal protective equipment				
Pressurized air use				
Respiratory protection				
Safety meetings and committees				
Toxic and hazardous substances (e.g. formaldehyde, ethylene oxide)				

Notes and follow-up

Resources

Oregon OSHA's guide to rules that have special requirements | bit.ly/46BaWuB

Accountability

Assessment form

Program elements	Do you feel your program/procedure:			
	Is effective	Needs improvement	Not applicable	Comments
Safety is addressed in company vision, mission, and/or goals				
Safety is included in all job descriptions				
Safety is in performance assessments and evaluations				
Managers set a positive example of safety and health leadership				
Annual safety program evaluation				
Safety policies and procedures				
Progressive discipline policy in place				
Progressive discipline policies enforced				
Employee safety is discussed at meetings				

Notes and follow-up

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Resources

SAIF leadership series | saif.com/learntolead

SAIF employee policy topics | saif.com/employeepolicy

Accident and incident analysis

Assessment form

Program elements	Do you feel your program/procedure:			
	Is effective	Needs improvement	Not applicable	Comments
Employees know who to notify for on-the-job accidents				
Employees report all accidents and incidents				
Supervisor involvement				
Fact-finding process				
Root cause analysis				
Corrective action development				
Documentation				
Safety committee review				
Management review				
Corrective action follow-up				

Notes and follow-up

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Resources

SAIF Accident and incident analysis | saif.com/analysis

Oregon OSHA Accident and incident analysis | bit.ly/44jTrxl

Communication and animal handling
Assessment form

Do you have a written policy on animal handling? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Are employees provided training on the following items:			Description
Behavior recognition and response	☐ Yes	☐ No	
How to safely approach an animal	☐ Yes	☐ No	
How to recognize signs of fear and aggression	☐ Yes	☐ No	
How to properly use restraint and handling devices	☐ Yes	☐ No	
When and how to use chemical restraint (sedative or other)	☐ Yes	☐ No	
Use of slip resistant mats to support animal footing and decrease fear	☐ Yes	☐ No	

How often do you re-train or review these policies and procedures with your employees?

☐ Annually ☐ Semi-annually ☐ Quarterly ☐ Monthly ☐ Weekly ☐ As needed

If an animal shows behavioral markers, like signs of fear or aggression, using short warning phrases such as "clear the hall," can quickly alert staff.
Provide two examples of communication warnings employees are trained to use:

1.

2.

Is an animal's file marked and the behavior noted if they display aggression or signs of aggression? ☐ Yes ☐ No

> **Example:** A sticker on the chart or highlighted name, and note detailing behavior. "Dog becomes anxious and postures if touched on the back."
> "Cat does not like other cats and becomes severely agitated when other cats are present."

Are employees trained on properly breaking up a dog fight? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Include these messages in training:

> Never get between fighting dogs. Never reach in with your hands to separate fighting dogs. Never put your face close to a dog fight.
> Never grab a dog's tail in fights.

What tools/equipment are provided to employees to break up a fight if it does occur?
(Examples: water hose, barriers (board), umbrella, air horn, vinegar or citronella spray.)

Do employees practice and handle the needed tools/equipment? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Are employees able to quickly escape runs or enclosures? Are there impediments (such as locks) that would slow their exit? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Notes and follow-up

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Lifting and materials handling

Assessment form

Items lifted by employees			Weight range
Animals	☐ Yes	☐ No	
Large bags of pet food	☐ Yes	☐ No	
Large bags of cat litter	☐ Yes	☐ No	
Medium/large equipment	☐ Yes	☐ No	
Other:	☐ Yes	☐ No	

Use safe lifting calculator to determine if employees are lifting safe amounts or if they are lifting too much weight.

Safe lifting calculator (bit.ly/3JPUIUu)

If there are animals or items over the safe lifting weight, consider engineering controls. Engineering controls are methods that are built into the design of an office, equipment, or process to minimize the hazard. Engineering controls are a very reliable way to control worker exposures as long as the controls are designed, used, and maintained properly.

Items lifted by employees			Comments
Company lifting limit	☐ Yes	☐ No	
Do you provide training on lift equipment and proper lifting?	☐ Yes	☐ No	

Which types of lifting equipment are available in your clinic/facility?

☐ Lifts
☐ Hydraulic/pneumatic/electric cot
☐ Hand truck or dolly
☐ Ramps/stairs
☐ Other: _____

Notes and follow-up

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Resources

SAIF Workplace ergonomics: Hierarchy of controls for musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) | saif.com/S1041

Safety In Motion®: Leverage Zone Poster | saif.com/S1060

SAIF Strengthen and Lengthen Poster | saif.com/S941

Hazard communication

Assessment form

Chemicals in the workplace	Yes	No	Comments
Written hazard communication plan/program	☐	☐	
Safety data sheets (SDS) for all chemicals	☐	☐	
Secondary containers labeled	☐	☐	
Employees trained in hazard communication including safe handling, proper PPE, SDS, GHS format.	☐	☐	

Notes and follow-up

Resources

SAIF Hazard Communication/GHS | saif.com/hazcom

Miscellaneous communication

Assessment form

Additional safety checks	Yes	No	Comments
Medical equipment evaluation (anesthesia machines, oxygen, etc.)	☐	☐	
Proper certification for X-ray providers	☐	☐	
Appropriate policies, training, and PPE evaluation for radiation exposure	☐	☐	
Employee break room away from potentially contaminated areas	☐	☐	
Housekeeping policies/procedures	☐	☐	
Policy on clothing	☐	☐	
Policy on footwear	☐	☐	
Policy and training on zoonotic diseases	☐	☐	
Discussions and preventative measures for stress and compassion fatigue	☐	☐	