



Subcontractors and Site Safety

Generally speaking, prime contractors hire subcontractors to perform the majority of the scope of work. The subcontract agreements should outline specific performance requirements for the subcontractor in matters pertaining to safety.

The question here is “Do you actually review, on an ongoing basis, the subcontractors compliance to those obligations”? When I ask this question to most GC’s I get that blank look! You know that look – same one you get when you ask one of your employees “how in the world did the natural stained prefinished \$4,500 mahogany conference room doors get painted white after they were installed”?

Let’s start my asking, do you have a fool proof process for safety communications, plan implementation and site safety inspections on your jobsites? What procedures do you have in place to guarantee all team members and trades on your site message, train and practice safety?

First and foremost, include a safety clause in your subcontract agreement that specifies exactly what is expected from each tier of subcontractor or vendors while they are on your jobsites. You will want your legal counsel to prepare this clause but here are some practical items, aside from the legalese, you may wish to include:

1. All Subcontractors shall be held responsible for safety training, initiating and maintaining an effective jobsite Safety Program and Hazard Communication Program as specified in the contract documents.
2. Prior to commencement of work all Subcontractors shall submit in writing the names of their designated, qualified and competent representatives that will be on site at all times while their work is in progress.
3. Regardless of their tier, all Subcontractors shall effectively supervise their workers to assure they follow safe work practices as outlined by OSHA, EPA, NFPA, including all federal, state and local codes, laws and regulations.
4. In addition to attending the Contractors' ToolBox Talks, Subcontractors shall hold weekly ToolBox Talks and submit a copy of the written meeting minutes, attendees sign in log and equipment daily inspection reports to the contractor.

5. Encourage all on site personnel to immediately report any unsafe act or unsafe work condition to a supervisor and follow up to assure immediate corrective action is taken.

The main point I want to make is that you *can* have a bulletproof safety program. But it is just that - a program - and it will fail if you do not include and actively engage each tier of subcontractors and the entire site workforce when messaging job site safety.

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Kent Leighton kent@flatrockgroup.com 830-201-0678

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