

## **CHANGING UNSAFE BEHAVIOR (Detention)**

### **OBJECTIVES**

- Staff will learn how everyday behavior impacts safety
- Staff will identify observed unsafe behavior at work
- Staff will learn the characteristics that constitute a positive safety attitude

We see unsafe behavior everyday in detention. Why do detention officers take chances with their lives or risk suffering a disabling injury at work?

*(Note to presenter)*

*Ask the group the following question and discuss their responses, "What sort of unsafe behavior have you seen on the job?"*

We would never:

- Walk down the middle of the Interstate at rush hour
- Stick our tongue in an electrical outlet
- Swim with an energized hair dryer in our hand
- Light a match to look inside a gas can

We would never engage in any of these behaviors because we know the consequences. These types of behaviors would likely get us injured or killed.

That same thought process- "knowing that certain behaviors can have very serious consequences"- can keep you safer at work when you apply it to your daily activities.

It's that simple. Most of our behavior will become second nature once we learn how to do things safely. Just remember, your actions do have consequences.

### **Why we should worry about safety**

- Employees that don't work safely are at a higher risk of being injured. There are approximately 4.4 million workplace injuries and over 5,000 worker fatalities every year;
- Assaults are the leading cause of injury to detention officers in New Mexico. Every assault has the potential of being fatal;

- No one likes pain! If you are injured, there is pain and suffering associated with the injury. If you could avoid an injury wouldn't you want to;
- Even with workers' compensation and disability insurance, most injured employees who are out of work receive less money than their regular wages. Lost time away from work will impact your salary, take-home pay;
- Your retirement contributions freeze while you're on workers' compensation. If you are on workers' compensation for a month, the time will not be credited toward your retirement;
- Employees that work unsafe don't just affect themselves; it can also affect the people working around you, the inmates and the public.

## **DEVELOPING A POSITIVE SAFETY ATTITUDE**

- Take responsibility for working safe. If you don't need to run to an officer assistance call, don't; if you are escorting an inmate, stay alert don't take chances. If a task requires personal protective equipment (PPE), use it.
- If you see an unsafe condition, you own it, either fix it or report it. This unsafe condition could seriously injure you or another officer.
- Don't willingly or knowingly do something hazardous or unsafe.
- Don't get carelessness, be attentive to every situation. Understand that virtually every situation in detention operations can injure you.
- Don't get complacent, just because you've done something many times in the past, doesn't mean you won't get hurt the next time. Understand that the more frequent you accomplish a task, the more likely you are to get injured.

## **POLICY**

*Discuss all organizational policies related to compliance with safety rules.*

## **CLOSING**

*Discuss the presentation and the officer's examples of unsafe behavior seen on the job. Also, remind staff that there are no legitimate reasons for not following all safety rules.*