

# Maintenance

## Meaning of Maintenance

Maintenance function of human resource management is concerned with protecting and promoting the physical and mental health of employees. In order to achieve these objective several types of fringe-benefits such as housing, medical and, educational facilities, conveyance facilities etc. are provided to the employees.

Social security measures like provident fund, pension, gratuity, maternity benefits, group insurance etc. are also arranged. Health, safety and welfare measures are designed to preserve the human resources of the organization.

## Employee Health and Safety

Health and safety of the employees is an important aspect of a company's smooth and successful functioning. It is a decisive factor in organizational effectiveness. It ensures an accident-free industrial environment. Companies must attach the same importance towards achieving high OH&S performance as they do to the other key objectives of their business activities. This is because, proper attention to the safety and welfare of the employees can yield valuable returns to a company by improving employee morale, reducing absenteeism and enhancing productivity, minimizing potential of work-related injuries and illnesses and increasing the quality of manufactured products and/ or rendered services.

The Constitution of India has also specified provisions for ensuring occupational health and safety for workers in the form of three Articles i.e. 24, 39(e and f) and 42. The regulation of labour and safety in mines and oil fields is under the Union list. While the welfare of labour including conditions of work, provident funds, employers' invalidity and old age pension and maternity benefit are in the Concurrent list.

The **Ministry of Labor**, Government of India and Labor Departments of the States and Union Territories are responsible for safety and health of workers. **Directorate General of Mines Safety (DGMS)** and **Directorate General Factory Advice Services & Labor Institutes**

(DGFASLI) assist the Ministry in technical aspects of occupational safety and health in mines and factories & ports sectors, respectively.

DGMS exercises preventive as well as educational influence over the mining industry. Its mission is the reduction in risks of occupational diseases and casualty to persons employed in mines, by drafting appropriate legislation and setting standards and through a variety of promotional initiatives and awareness programmes. It undertakes inspection of mines, investigation of all fatal accidents, grant of statutory permission, exemptions and relaxations in respect of various mining operation, approval of mines safety equipment, appliances and material, conduct examinations for grant of statutory competency certificate, safety promotional incentives including organization of national awards and national safety conference, etc.

### **Reasons why health and safety is good for business**

There is, however, a very strong and positive business case for OSH compliance. While most CEOs know their legal responsibilities, many still don't know the significant benefits OSH has for business. As an HR professional, you can help make it clear to the directors that if increasing employee productivity, enhancing the company's public reputation and increasing annual profits all sound like the type of things they would like to see more of, it's time to start paying more attention to health and safety.

**1. Injuries and ill-health caused by poor working conditions can impose significant and often unrecognized financial and legal costs on business.** Not to mention the ramifications that could result if the company directors are found to have been negligent. Word also gets out and a company with a poor health and safety record will be far less appealing in a tender bid than one which is already fully compliant and has a good health and safety record. Even those companies that do not tender for work still need to protect their reputation.

**2. A happy and healthy employee is a more productive employee.** The last thing any employer wants is a group of increasingly disgruntled employees who might view their organization's management team as one that cares only about profits and nothing for employee well-being because this group will not be very productive.

**3. Health and safety compliance can have an extensive and highly positive impact on your organization.** The costs involved in becoming OSH compliant and maintaining compliance are not at all high, when compared with the possible costs involved in an accident or fire. In short, health and safety compliance is a long-term investment in the well-being of a company, its staff and its reputation.

## **Strategies to Promote Employee Health and Safety**

### **1. Establish Open Communication**

A key component in maintaining the trust of the employees is to encourage open communication on any health or safety related issues. No employee should fear in expressing concern for safety goals in the company. An HR Personnel should hold one-on-one meetings with the employees so that if any employee is fearing to express safety concerns to the direct managers, will feel more at ease while talking to an HR personnel.

### **2. Implement strict safety policy**

Those employees, who are not designated to work in a certain high-risk position should be discouraged to enter hazardous zones. By labeling unsafe environments, posting stringent warning signs and mentioning the qualifications required for such jobs on worksites, the candidates will get to know if they are suitable for such roles. For a corporate office that have less physical risks, it is advisable to identify all potential hazards early on such as broken glass or any kind of leaks.

### **3. Provide health and safety training**

It is a must to provide required safety training programs for all employees who should necessarily include emergency action plan training and how to treat yourself while injured and alone. Make sure the employees are well efficient at the time of crisis by holding fire and emergency drills from time to time.

Encourage employees to be responsible if they fall sick and take leaves without reprimand.

With safety standards in place, a company can identify all the potential risks and keep the employees safe and sound while on the ground.

#### **4. Coordinate with facility management**

Facilities department play an important role in carrying out safety policies for business. By harmonizing Occupational Health and Safety goals in the organization, facilities manager can better protect employees. Encourage them to invest in safety tools and equipments, such as anti-slip safety mats, Eye Protection, Ear Protection, masks etc. These simple yet effective products will cultivate a general sense of wellbeing in the workplace.

#### **5. Use positive consequences**

The fear of discipline which drives under-reporting and stifles involvement must be driven out of culture.

Discipline has a place, but most safety issues can be effectively dealt without discipline, which has side effects that work against building a culture of safety. When discipline is used disproportionately in relation to positive consequences, it leads to lower morale, reduced trust, lower productivity, less teamwork and lack of engagement. It also suppresses reporting incidents which cripples the organization's ability to learn from mistakes and become more proactive.

### **Employee Welfare**

Employee welfare is the voluntary efforts by the employers to provide best conditions of employment in their own industries.

The object of introducing employee welfare scheme is to secure an improved standard of living for the workers, which results in the increase in their productive efficiency.

#### **Employee welfare schemes are aimed at:**

1. Making the employees healthier, sound thinking
2. To motivate people to carry out production in a better way,

3. To improve and maintain employees morale and loyalty.
4. To keep workforce in competition with other organizations,
5. To maintain better employee-employer relations.
6. To meet the social, recreational and cultural needs of the employees.
7. To reduce the employee turn-over, absenteeism.

## **Welfare Measures**

Welfare measures can be categorized as:

### **1. Economic Welfare Measures:**

- (a) Health services and first aid,
- (b) Paid holidays, reduced hours of work,
- (c) Profit sharing,
- (d) Pension scheme,
- (e) Insurance scheme, including group insurance,
- (f) Subsidized lunch, water, electricity, and
- (g) Loans on reduced rate of interest.

### **2. Facilitate Welfare Measures:**

- (a) Housing,
- (b) Transport,
- (c) Canteen and lunch facility,
- (d) Company stores for cheaper shopping,

(e) Sale of company products on discount to employees,

(f) Educational facilities,

(g) Rest rooms,

(h) Safety measures, and

(i) Measures to reduce fatigue.

### **3. Recreational Measures:**

(a) Games and Sports.

(b) Recreational clubs.

(c) Cultural programmes.

(d) Social get-togethers.

## **Social Security**

Social security is a dynamic concept which is considered in all advanced countries of the world as an indispensable chapter of the national programme. With the development of the idea of the welfare state, it has been considered to be most essential for the industrial workers, though it includes all sections of the society.

Social security is that security which the society furnishes through appropriate organization against certain risks or contingencies to which its members are exposed. These risks are essentially contingencies against which the individual cannot afford by his small means and by his ability or foresight alone.

As the name stands for the general well-being of the people it is the duty of the state to promote social security which may provide the citizens with benefits designed to prevent or cure disease, to support him when he is not able to earn and to restore him to gainful activity. To enjoy security one must be confident that benefits will be available as and when required.

## **Characteristics of social security**

The following characteristics of social security can be listed:

- (1) Social security is an instrument of ensuring social and economic justice.
- (2) In a welfare state, social security is an essential part of public policy.
- (3) Social security is not static; it is a dynamic concept which changes with the change in social and economic conditions prevailing in a country at a particular point of time.
- (4) The basic aim of social security is to provide protection to people of small means against risks or contingencies.
- (5) The contingencies which may impair a person's ability to support himself and his family may include sickness, old age, invalidity, unemployment, death etc.
- (6) Social security measures are generally guided by social legislations.
- (7) Social security measures provide for cash payment to affected persons to partly compensate them for the loss of income due to any of the contingencies mentioned in point (5).
- (8) Social security is a must for the protection and stability of the labor force. Social security is a wise investment made by the state which yields good social dividends in the long run.

## **Scope of Social Security**

The scope of social security is very wide. Even though the social security measures differ from country to country, they have some basic features in common.

Generally, the social security schemes are of the following types:

### **(i) Social Insurance:**

Under social insurance, workers and employers make periodical contribution to a fund, with or without a subsidy from the Government. Out of these contributions benefits are provided to the

contributories necessary for satisfying wants during old age, sickness, unemployment and other contingencies of life.

**(ii) Social Assistance:**

Social assistance includes non-contributory benefits towards the maintenance of children, mothers, invalids, the aged, the disabled and others like the unemployed. Under this scheme, the Government provides benefits to persons of small means in sufficient quantity so that their minimum standards of needs could be satisfied.

**The Social Security (Minimum standards) Convention No. 102 of the International Labor Organization prescribes the following components of social security:**

- (a) Medical care
- (b) Sickness benefit
- (c) Old age or retirement benefit
- (d) Employment injury benefit
- (e) Family benefit
- (f) Maternity benefit
- (g) Invalidity benefit
- (h) Survivor's benefit

**(iii) Public Service:**

Public service programmes are usually financed directly by the Government from its general revenue in the form of cash payments or services to every member of the community falling within a defined category.