

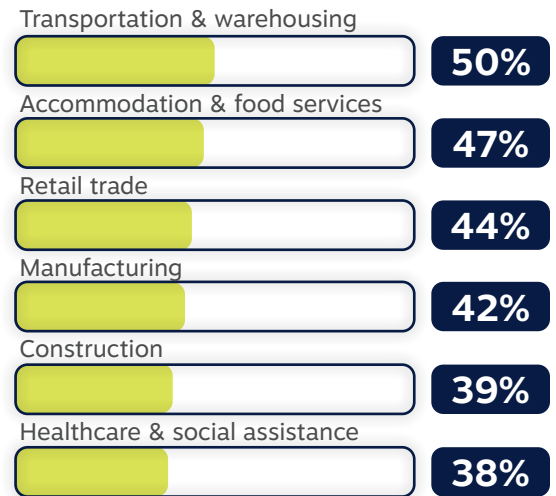
# New Hire Safety: The Data Behind the Risk

**New hires are at a higher risk of workplace injury.**

Source: MEM data



What percentage of claims are new hires?  
Industry breakdown:



**The cost of these injuries is significant.**

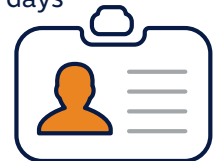


**You can reduce the risk of new hire injuries.**

The data points to a clear opportunity. Employers who get this right aren't doing anything complicated. They're simply:

- Asking better questions during the hiring process
- Setting clear expectations on day one
- Following through in the first 90 days

MEM's New Hire Safety Toolkit includes the fundamentals to help you do exactly that.



Protect your new hires from day one with our free safety resource library at [mem-ins.com/resources](https://mem-ins.com/resources).

# Checklist: 5 Steps to Hire for Safety Fit



After one severe new hire claim, you could see your work comp premium increase by 20% over the next three years. That's why hiring a new employee is one of the most important safety decisions you'll make. Who you hire – and how thoroughly you vet them – sets the safety foundation for everything that follows. Follow these steps to build a hiring process that brings the right person on board.

- 1. Conduct an in-depth interview.**  
Ask open-ended, situational questions that reveal how a candidate has actually behaved on the job – not just how they'd answer a hypothetical. Examples include:
  - Tell me about a time you noticed a potential hazard at work. What did you do?
  - Describe a situation where you disagreed with how something was done. How did you handle it?
  - What's the most physically or mentally demanding role you've held? How did you manage it?
- 2. Do a thorough background check.**  
Include job-related injuries and any safety records as part of this check (to the extent laws allow). Note any gaps in employment history or patterns of short tenure – these don't disqualify a candidate, but they're worth exploring. Ensure all screening criteria are job-related, consistently applied, and compliant with applicable laws, including the Fair Credit Reporting Act.
- 3. Verify prior employment and contact references.**  
A call to a former supervisor can confirm whether a candidate's self-reported experience matches reality. Ask behavior-focused questions and pay attention to tone, hesitation, and what doesn't get said.
- 4. Administer skills and personality assessment.**  
Skills tests evaluate what a candidate can do. Personality assessments reveal how they'll behave when no one's watching. Will they follow safety procedures under pressure or cut corners when it's convenient? Be sure to use validated, job-related assessments, administer them consistently, and review results for adverse impact.
- 5. Make a conditional job offer and require pre-employment screening.**  
Screening should include drug testing and, for physically demanding roles, Post Offer Employment Testing (POET). POET confirms a candidate can safely perform the essential functions of the job and establishes a physical baseline that can be referenced if a claim arises later.

## MEM endorsed screening solutions

As an MEM policyholder, you have access to discounted rates on several pre-hire screening programs:

### Post-offer drug testing

OralTox® Rapid Oral Fluid Drug Testing via Premier BioTech

**Contact Amy Wimer**  
awimer@premierbiotech.com  
610.360.8710

### Background checks

DISA screening solutions

**Contact Jeff Susic**  
jeff.susic@disa.com  
330.741.4416

### Behavioral integrity testing

IntegrityFirst pre-hire assessments

**Contact safety@mem-ins.com**

*For a deeper look at each of these steps, read the complete guide:  
[How to Hire for Safety Fit: A 5-Step Checklist >](#)*

*This checklist is for informational purposes only and should not be construed as providing legal advice. No actions should be in conflict with state and federal laws.*

# Post Offer Employment Testing (POET)

## Protect New Hires Before Day One



Hiring the right person is only part of the equation. For physically demanding roles, you also need to know they can safely do the job. Post Offer Employment Testing (POET) matches a candidate’s physical capabilities to the essential functions of a role – before they start work.

MEM partners with WorkSTEPS to make POET more affordable for policyholders. This program helps you keep new hires safe by identifying physical limitations early.

POET also creates baseline documentation that can protect your business if a claim arises. The test measures a new hire’s physical capability at the time they begin employment. If a medical issue surfaces, they’re retested. “If the numbers are the same, we’re pretty much done with the claim,” explained Rocky Newsom, EHS Supervisor at US Tool Group, on the WorkSAFE Podcast. “If the numbers are higher, then obviously that gives them some validity.”

When you invest in prevention upfront, you protect your most valuable assets – your employees.

**To get started with POET today, contact WorkSTEPS at 512.617.4100 or [testing@worksteps.com](mailto:testing@worksteps.com).**

### Benefits of POET

- Fewer new hire injuries
- Higher productivity and lower turnover
- Fewer lost work days
- Objective, documented hiring data
- Baseline documentation to distinguish new injuries from pre-existing conditions
- Reduced claim costs leading to e-mod improvement over time

***Listen to our interview with an EHS expert on POET’s benefits, costs, and savings: [Post-Offer Employment Testing: Prevent Injuries with This Proactive Program](#) >***

*This information is for general guidance only and should not be construed as legal advice. POET programs must comply with applicable federal and state employment laws, including the ADA.*

# Your First 90 Days: A Safety Onboarding Roadmap



*New hires are most vulnerable during their first 90 days on the job. Luckily, there are steps you can take to prevent injuries during this crucial window. These four milestones provide a practical framework for helping new hires develop safety habits that stick.*

## Before they start

### Set the tone before day one

Send essential logistics early: Where to go, who to ask for, what to wear or bring.

Communicate any safety requirements in advance, including PPE, footwear, and physical protocols.

Signal that safety is a priority before they ever walk through the door.

## Day one

### Safety orientation lays the groundwork

Walk new hires through workplace hazards specific to your environment. Don't assume they'll recognize risks experienced employees take for granted.

Cover emergency procedures, injury reporting, and safety expectations.

Assign a supervisor escort for any job site or production floor walkthrough – no exceptions.

## First 30 days

### Training that builds real skills

Keep training job-specific, not generic. Focus on the actual tasks, equipment, and hazards your new hire will encounter.

Prioritize hands-on practice over classroom instruction when possible.

Schedule a 30-day supervisor check-in to assess what's been learned and close any gaps before they become habits.

## Days 31-90

### Mentorship and culture transfer

Pair each new hire with an experienced team member who models the behavior you want.

Make the mentor's role explicit. Outline expectations and give employees an on-the-clock time to meet.

Hold 60- and 90-day check-ins to reinforce learning and identify any gaps.

*For more details on how to set new hires up for success at each milestone, get the complete guide: [New Hire Safety: A Complete Onboarding Guide >](#)*



## Hear from the experts on The WorkSAFE Podcast

### New Hire Onboarding: Setting New Employees Up for Success

Sheila Schmidt, Sr. Manager, Safety and Risk Services, MEM

[Listen >](#)

### Safety Mentorship: How Relationships Strengthen Safety

Domini Montgomery, Director of Safety and Risk Management, Saint Louis Zoo

[Listen >](#)

### Safety Meetings 101: How to Share Safety Skills with Your Employees

Flint Walton, Technical Services and Training Specialist, MEM

[Listen >](#)

# New Hire Safety Orientation Checklist



Use this checklist to guide safety orientation for your new hire. Complete all Day One items on the first day of employment. Work through the remaining sections over the first 90 days, checking off topics as they are covered. This checklist is a sample – add any hazards or topics specific to your workplace, industry, and applicable state, federal, or local regulations.

DAY ONE	COMPLETED			DATE COMPLETED
	YES	NO	N/A	
<b>POLICY STATEMENT:</b> Safety and health policy statement reviewed				
<b>SAFETY CULTURE AND EXPECTATIONS:</b> Workplace safety standards, what is expected, what will not be tolerated, employee's right and responsibility to raise concerns				
<b>INJURY REPORTING:</b> How and when to report an injury, NurseAid 24/7 work injury line, selecting medical providers Pro tip: Confirm the extent to which your state laws permit direction of medical care				
<b>EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN:</b> Evacuation routes, assembly areas, emergency contacts, emergency procedures				
<b>INCIDENT/ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION:</b> Prompt reporting, injury report forms, corrective actions				
<b>DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY:</b> Post-offer, post-incident, random, and reasonable suspicion testing expectations Pro tip: Confirm your designated medical providers can administer tests, or work with MEM's oral testing partner				
<b>RETURN TO WORK POLICY:</b> Light duty return to work expectations Pro tip: Make sure medical providers know that your company has light duty work available				

## SIGNATURES

EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

EMPLOYEE PRINTED NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

INITIAL DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ DEPARTMENT/LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_

SUPERVISOR SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

COMPLETE WITHIN 90 DAYS	COMPLETED			DATE COMPLETED
	YES	NO	N/A	
<b>Slips, Trips, and Falls</b>				
SLIP/TRIP/FALL ON SAME LEVEL: Footwear, housekeeping, walking surfaces, wet floors				
FALLS FROM ELEVATION: Fall protection requirements, inspection of equipment, three-point contact when climbing on/off vehicles and equipment				
<b>Material Handling and Ergonomics</b>				
LIFTING: Proper lifting techniques, use of material handling equipment, team lifting, maximum lifting weight				
ERGONOMICS: Workstation setup, repetitive motion awareness, alternating sit/stand, early symptom reporting				
<b>Healthcare and Social Services</b>				
PATIENT/CLIENT HANDLING: Safe patient handling techniques, mechanical lift equipment use, repositioning procedures				
BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS: Exposure control plan, PPE, post-exposure procedures				
WORKPLACE VIOLENCE: De-escalation, reporting procedures, safe response protocols				
<b>Equipment and Vehicles</b>				
PPE: Head protection, eye/face protection, hearing protection, high visibility/reflective apparel, task-specific PPE requirements				
MOTOR VEHICLES: Seat belt policy, no cell phone/distracted driving policy, driver safety rules, pre/post-trip inspection, preventive maintenance, backing and pedestrian safety				
FORKLIFTS: Inspection, seat belt use, safe operating speed, load limits, proper fueling/recharging				
HEAVY EQUIPMENT: SOPs, inspection, three-point contact when climbing on/off, seat belt use, underground utility locates				
HAND AND POWER TOOLS: Safe use, inspection, guarding				
MACHINE GUARDING: Tool/equipment guarding, interlocks				
LOADING DOCK SAFETY: Dock levelers, trailer restraints, fall hazards, communication procedures				
<b>Hazardous Environments</b>				
ELECTRICAL SAFETY: Safe work practices, inspection, working near energized equipment				
CHEMICAL SAFETY/HAZARD COMMUNICATION: GHS labeling, SDS sheets, proper mixing and storage, exposure limits				
HEAT/COLD STRESS: Recognition of symptoms, hydration, appropriate clothing, reporting procedures				
BURNS AND HEAT EXPOSURE: Safe handling of hot equipment, surfaces, and liquids				
CONFINED SPACE: Inspection, use of direct reading instrument, permit system, ventilation, fall protection/rescue device, authorized entrant, attendant, and entry supervisor				
TRENCHING/EXCAVATION: Competent person, underground utility locates, inspection, soil classification, cave-in protection, access/egress				
LOCKOUT/TAGOUT: Inspection, authorized employee(s), affected employee(s), proper procedures, use of locks and tags				