GEORGIA MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION

SHARE

SAFETY HEALTH AND RISK E-CONNECT NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2026
ISSUE #5



KEEP THE FUN IN *City Events*

Follow these best practices to reduce risk and keep special events focused on making memories. - p. 6

FALL HOLIDAY SAFETY

Simple precautions to ensure everyone enjoys the season. - p. 17

INTERNAL INVESTIGATIONS

Learn why thorough investigations matter to law enforcement leaders. - p. 10

A COSTLY CLICK

Prepare for cyber attacks. - p. 8

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Cover photo: Children in costume at the Halloween PathParade golf cart parade, held each year on the LifePath multi-use pathway in Braselton, Georgia. Photo courtesy of the Town of Braselton.

The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and do not reflect the views of GMA.

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UPCOMING WEBINARS AND TRAINING

Coming soon!

New regional training dates will be announced shortly. Stay tuned for more details!

PAST WEBINARS ON YOUTUBE

Ashley Wilson Act & First Responders PTSD Program
Oct. 16, 2025

Law Enforcement Crisis Communications
Oct. 15, 2025

Elected Official Crisis Communications
Oct. 7, 2025

Role of the Certified Swimming Pool & Splash Pad Operator
May 22, 2025

Responding to a Use of Force Incident
Jan. 24, 2024

Georgia Open Records Act
Sept. 21, 2023

View more webinars on YouTube!
@LGRMSofficial

Events subject to change.
Check website for updates.

riskcontrol.gacities.com/lgrms-calendar



A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR



By Dennis Watts
Sr. Manager, Loss Control & Prevention Services

Welcome to the October edition of SHARE from GMA Risk Control. SHARE is our primary channel for communicating safety and risk topics to Georgia local government employees. Each month's Safety Theme provides a ready-made framework for holding safety meetings, documenting attendance and meeting a core training requirement—all with minimal time and resources.

October is Cybersecurity Awareness Month, and it also kicks off the busiest stretch of the year for most cities. Shorter days, wet roads, festivals, parades and holiday travel all arrive at once, and so do the scammers counting on a busy staff to miss something. The articles in this issue take on that season from several angles: a payment request that deserves a second call, an event permit that spells out who is responsible, a ladder inspected before the gutter work starts and a complaint process that treats every resident fairly. Small steps taken now carry a city safely into the new year.

In this issue

A Costly Click

Cindy Mallett explains how bad actors have targeted GIRMA members with fake vendor banking changes, urgent wire requests, payroll diversion and ransomware. She lists red flags, protective measures and what to do right after an incident. One step matters most: Independent callback verification before changing any payment instructions is required for GIRMA Social Engineering Fraud coverage to apply. The article closes with a note on check washing and Positive Pay.

Risk Management for Special Events

Vincent Scott walks through the planning that keeps festivals, parades and holiday celebrations safe and defensible. He starts with the city's role, sponsor or permitting authority, then outlines seven practices: a written special events policy, a coordinator and review team, clear insurance and indemnification requirements, event-specific risk assessments, coordinated public safety resources, extra safeguards for high-risk activities and a review after every major event.

Fall Safety Tips

Weston Cox covers the hazards that arrive with cooler weather: deer at dawn and dusk, slick entrances and walkways, and ladder work on gutters and trees. His tips include pre-trip vehicle inspections, wet-floor signs at public entrances, the 4-to-1

ladder rule and fall protection at 6 feet and above.

Why Thorough Internal Affairs Investigations Matter

Griffin Attaberry makes the case that a professional complaint process is a leadership tool, not just a disciplinary function. He explains how an agency's handling of complaints can come under scrutiny in litigation and why small departments need a clear, accessible process. A model policy from LLRMI on internal affairs and citizen complaints follows the article.

Safety Theme: Holiday Safety

This month's theme follows employees and their families from trick-or-treat night to Thanksgiving dinner. Dennis Watts covers costume and decoration safety, Halloween driving, child passenger safety, winter vehicle prep, holiday travel and kitchen fire prevention. Use the printable checklist with the article to lead a quick safety meeting and send employees home with a reminder for the whole family.

The next issue of SHARE, a combined November/December edition, will be published on or about Dec. 11, 2026, and directed to GMA members. We want this newsletter to reflect the real work happening in communities across Georgia — if your department has a safety initiative, a success story or a close call worth sharing, please reach out. Photos and accomplishments are always welcome.

Be safe.

Dennis

CONTACT: Dennis Watts, dwatts@gacities.com



HOW TO USE THE MONTHLY SAFETY THEME

Here are some hints to help you get the safety message across to all employees each month.

Theme Page

Guidance for communicating important safety information to your team.

Theme Poster

Make copies to share in your safety meeting or post wherever you will get the most impact.

Safety Meeting Agenda

- **Assemble participants.**
- **Hand out copy of theme poster.**
- **Pass around Safety Meeting Attendance Sign Up Sheet.**
- **Read theme out loud and discuss aspects of the theme in the department. Give examples. Ask for ideas, etc.**
- **Discuss accidents/incidents/near misses over the last month.**
- **Issue safety General Self Inspection Program Checklists for each department inspection team.**
- **Discuss inspection items noted from last reports and the status of completion of reported items.**



NOTES from the ROAD

BEST PRACTICES FOR SAFE TRAVELS



By Weston Cox
GMA Risk Control Consultant

Fall Safety Tips

Driving, Rainy Season Hazards and Fall Protection

As temperatures ease across South Georgia, fall brings relief from the summer heat, along with new hazards. Shorter days, changing weather and a busy end-of-year workload call for a fresh look at how we work, drive and prepare.

Seasonal Driving and Fleet Safety

Daylight is shrinking, and fall is peak deer season in Georgia, especially at dawn and dusk. Morning fog, sudden rain and wet leaves also increase stopping distances.

✅ Complete a pre-trip inspection every time, checking lights, tires, wipers and brakes.

⚠️ Slow down at dawn and dusk, and watch the road edges for deer. If one crosses, expect others.

🦌 If a collision with an animal is unavoidable, brake firmly and stay in your lane. Swerving causes more serious crashes.

✋ Increase following distance on wet roads. Use low beams in fog.

📱Put the phone down. Use a spotter when backing.

Rainy Season Hazards

Wet weather turns everyday surfaces into slip hazards. Sidewalks, painted crosswalks, metal grates, manhole covers, loading docks and building entrances become especially slick, and wet leaves make it worse.

👟 Wear footwear with good tread, and replace worn soles.

❗ Walk, don't run, and use handrails on steps, ramps and curbs.

⚠️ Protect the public. Visitors track water into city buildings, so place mats and wet-floor signs at entrances and lobbies, and keep walkways clear of leaves and debris.

💦 Check entrances often during rain. Mop or dry tile floors promptly. Report leaks, spills and standing water right away. Post signs that are easy to see at all public entrances.

Ladder and Fall Protection

Fall cleanup work such as gutter cleaning, tree work and facility maintenance increases our exposure. Damp mornings and leaf debris make surfaces slick.

✅ Inspect ladders before each use. Remove any with cracks, bent rails or damaged feet from service.

📏 Follow the 4-to-1 rule: Place the base 1 foot out for every 4 feet of height.

3️⃣ Maintain three points of contact, and never carry loads that prevent you from gripping the ladder.

💯 Use fall protection at heights of 6 feet or more. Inspect harnesses and lanyards for proper fitting.

🌳 Clear wet leaves and debris from walkways and work areas.

LIABILITY BEAT

HELPING CITIES REDUCE PROPERTY AND LIABILITY RISK



By Vincent Scott
GMA Risk Control Consultant

Keep the Fun in City Events

Risk Management Practices for Special Events

Festivals, parades, concerts, holiday celebrations and other community gatherings are among the most visible services a Georgia municipality may provide or permit. Special events also bring real public safety and liability risks, so they need careful planning and oversight.

A special event generally is an organized activity on public or private property that needs city services. Those can include traffic control, police protection, emergency response or street closures. Large crowds, increased pedestrian and vehicle traffic, temporary structures, food vendors, alcohol and unpredictable weather can all raise the risk of injuries, property damage and liability claims.

An important first step is defining the municipality's role. A city that sponsors and runs an event may take on different responsibilities from a city that simply issues a permit to an outside organizer. Municipal leaders should be clear about whether the city is acting as the event's sponsor, co-sponsor, property owner or permitting authority.

A well-planned special event protects employees, residents and visitors. It also strengthens public confidence in the municipality's ability to host safe, enjoyable community events. Read on to learn best practices for keeping the fun in your city events:



Photo: Halloween PathParade golf cart parade in Braselton, Ga. Photo courtesy of Town of Braselton.

SPECIAL EVENTS

RECOMMENDED RISK MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR MUNICIPAL EVENTS

1. Establish a Written Special Events Policy

Municipalities should adopt a comprehensive policy outlining the application process, permit requirements, approval responsibilities, insurance standards and public safety expectations. A tiered review based on event size, location and possible hazards helps make sure higher-risk events get a closer look. Permit decisions should rely on objective, content-neutral standards (rules based on aspects like size and safety, not the event's purpose). Those standards should respect constitutional rights.

2. Designate an Event Coordinator and Review Team

Name one city staff member to coordinate review and approval. Depending on the event, the review team should include representatives from police, fire, emergency medical services, public works, parks and recreation, risk management and the city attorney's office. Working together early helps catch problems before the event takes place.

3. Clearly Define Responsibilities and Insurance Requirements

Written agreements should identify the responsibilities of event organizers, vendors, contractors and municipal departments. When appropriate, require proof of general liability insurance and an endorsement naming the city as an additional insured. Also require indemnification language, where the organizer agrees to cover certain losses, reviewed by the city attorney. Alcohol sales, amusement rides, fireworks and other higher-risk activities may need extra coverage. Cities should also consult their insurance provider or risk pool about what is and isn't covered and what must be reported.

4. Require Event-Specific Risk Assessments

Event organizers should submit a site plan and a written risk assessment. It should list possible hazards and preventive measures. Plans should address crowd size limits, emergency access, pedestrian safety, traffic control, accessibility, severe weather, evacuation procedures and emergency communications. Municipal staff should review these plans before giving final approval.

5. Coordinate Public Safety Resources

Bring public safety staff into planning early. Cities should decide whether additional staffing, traffic control, emergency medical coverage or physical vehicle barriers are needed. Put in writing ahead of time who will pay for these costs.

6. Address High-Risk Activities

Events with alcohol, fireworks, amusement rides, inflatables, temporary stages, tents or other special equipment require additional safeguards. Municipalities should confirm that the right permits, inspections, operator qualifications and insurance are in place. Follow established safety standards and the manufacturer's instructions when setting up and running equipment.

7. Document Incidents and Evaluate Outcomes

Municipalities should set clear steps for reporting incidents quickly, keeping records and notifying their insurance provider or risk pool when needed. After each major event, participating departments should conduct a brief evaluation to identify concerns, document lessons learned and suggest improvements for next time.

Prepared with AI-assisted drafting and reviewed by Risk Control Consultant Vincent Scott.



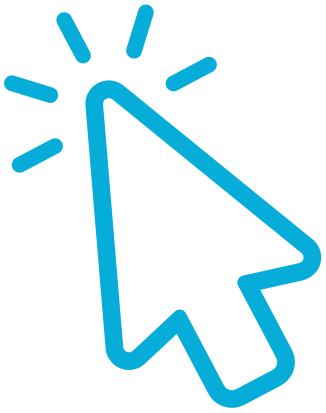
RISK CONNECTION

REDUCING RISK FOR YOU AND YOUR EMPLOYER



A Costly Click

Prepare for social engineering and other cyber threats



By Cindy Mallett
GMA Director of Risk Management

Risk control is about more than physical safety. It also means protecting your organization's finances, data and operations from harm.

Bad actors have recently targeted GIRMA members and other public and private organizations. They use social engineering (tricking people into handing over money or information) and ransomware (malicious software that locks your files until you pay) to access valuable data or funds. These schemes often target routine processes like vendor payments, wire transfers, payroll changes and remote access systems.

Just like any other risk, spotting a problem early and using simple safeguards can make the difference between a close call and a costly incident. Take a moment to review the following information to help you spot and guard against cyber threats.

Social Engineering Red Flags

- Requests to change vendor banking or payment information
- Urgent wire, ACH or gift card requests that bypass normal procedures
- Emails with unusual wording, pressure to act fast or slightly altered sender addresses
- Payroll direct deposit changes submitted by email without verification

Ransomware Red Flags

- System slowdowns, crashes or locked/encrypted files
- Suspicious links, attachments or unexpected requests to enter your password
- Disabled security tools, missing backups or unusual account activity
- Unexpected remote access activity or large data transfers

Key Protective Measures

- Require independent callback verification before changing any payment or banking instructions. That means calling the requester back at a known, previously validated number. *(Coverage note: This step is required for GIRMA Social Engineering Fraud coverage to apply.)*
- Use dual approval (two people sign off) for wire transfers, ACH payments and vendor setup changes
- Enable multifactor authentication on email, finance and remote access systems
- Train finance, payroll and administrative staff to recognize suspicious requests and report them right away
- Keep tested, offline backups, and keep systems updated with security patches and monitored

If an Incident Occurs

- Contact your financial institution immediately to request fraud recovery assistance
- Report the incident to local law enforcement and the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3)
- Notify your pool or claims contact as soon as possible, before taking steps that could affect recovery or coverage

A Note on Check Fraud

Check washing, when criminals steal checks and chemically erase and rewrite them, is also on the rise. Positive Pay, offered by most banks, flags checks that do not match your records. It's one of the most effective tools available to prevent this type of fraud. Contact your financial institution to learn more.

Taking a few minutes to verify an unusual request costs far less than trying to get funds back after a fraudulent transfer. We encourage every member to review payment approval and email security procedures with staff.

Our team is always available if you have questions. Protecting your organization's people and resources is at the heart of what we do, and we're glad to be a resource along the way.





We Are Here to Assist

Our shared goal is not simply to resolve claims. We want to protect your organization, your employees, and your citizens and customers while working toward fair, efficient and well-informed resolutions.

Risk control does not end when an incident happens. In some cases, that's when it matters most. If you are ever uncertain whether an incident should be reported, please contact us. We are always happy to help you determine the best next steps.



LAW ENFORCEMENT MATTERS

REDUCING RISK FOR PUBLIC SAFETY AGENCIES



The Case for Thorough Internal Affairs Investigations

- Protect public trust
- Protect employees
- Reduce litigation risk

By Griffin Attaberry
GMA Law Enforcement Risk Consultant

For law enforcement leaders, few responsibilities are more important than protecting the integrity and credibility of the organization. Policies alone don't build public trust. Trust is built through consistent actions, accountability and the confidence that the agency will address allegations of misconduct fairly and professionally.

A strong internal affairs process is an essential component of effective law enforcement leadership. It gives command staff a structured, impartial way to evaluate allegations, find the facts and decide whether department policies, procedures, training standards or laws were violated. Just as important, it protects employees by ensuring that allegations are judged on the evidence, not on assumptions, personalities or public pressure.

Leaders should see the complaint process as more than paperwork. Citizen complaints can provide valuable information about the organization's operations, supervision, training, policies and culture. Even complaints that seem minor, unfounded or questionable at first deserve attention and documentation.

Every complaint represents an individual who believes something went wrong during an interaction with the agency. When complaints are routinely dismissed, poorly documented or handled inconsistently, the agency risks damaging public confidence. It also risks creating the impression that accountability doesn't apply equally to everyone.

A professional investigation can lead to several important outcomes. It may show that an employee acted appropriately, identify a need for additional training, reveal a policy or supervisory issue, or substantiate misconduct that requires corrective action. Each of those outcomes gives leaders information they can use to improve the organization.

How an agency handles citizen complaints also has a significant legal and risk management side. Police litigation has demonstrated that an agency's response to misconduct allegations can come under close scrutiny in court. Depending on the circumstances, plaintiffs may use discovery, the pretrial process for gathering evidence, to look not only at the investigation of their own complaint, but also at how the agency handled complaints involving other employees or similar conduct.

That history should get the attention of every chief, command staff member and supervisor.

When an agency fails to consistently receive, document, investigate and resolve complaints, it can create unnecessary legal exposure. On the other hand, a well-established complaint investigation process that is followed consistently gives leaders a stronger foundation. It helps show that allegations are taken seriously, employees are treated fairly and appropriate corrective action is taken when warranted.

Cases such as *Clark v. City of Muskegon* and *Galindez v. Miller* illustrate why agencies should carefully consider how their complaint processes, investigative practices and responses to allegations may be examined in litigation. The specific legal standards and facts of each case matter, but the broader leadership lesson is simple: How an agency responds to misconduct allegations can become just as important as the allegation itself.

This responsibility does not disappear because an agency is small.

Even a department with a limited number of officers should have a professional, accessible and clearly understood process for receiving citizen complaints. That same process should give citizens a way to recognize employees who provide exceptional service. Accountability shouldn't exist only when something goes wrong. Agencies should also have mechanisms for recognizing conduct that reflects positively on the organization.

For law enforcement leaders, then, an effective internal affairs process is a leadership tool — not just a disciplinary function.

An effective internal affairs process helps leadership:

- Protect the integrity of the agency.
- Identify gaps in training and policy.
- Strengthen supervision and accountability.
- Identify recurring problems and potential patterns.
- Ensure employees are treated fairly.
- Document the agency's response to allegations.
- Reduce organizational and litigation risk.
- Reinforce public confidence.
- Identify and recognize exemplary employee performance.

Ultimately, effective leadership means more than responding to problems after they become serious. It means building systems that allow the agency to identify concerns early, investigate them objectively, learn from the findings and take appropriate action.

A professional internal affairs and citizen complaint process demonstrates that accountability is part of the agency's culture — not just a response to litigation, media attention or public criticism.

Strong agencies do not fear complaints. Strong agencies have the leadership, policies and investigative processes necessary to learn from them.

On the following pages, review the Georgia Internal Affairs/Citizen Complaints model policy from the Legal & Liability Risk Management Institute (LLRMI).

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Policy # **Internal Affairs/Citizen Complaints**	Related Policies:
This policy is for internal use only and does not enlarge an employee's civil liability in any way. The policy should not be construed as creating a higher duty of care, in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party civil claims against employees. A violation of this policy, if proven, can only form the basis of a complaint by this agency for non-judicial administrative action in accordance with the laws governing employee discipline.	
Applicable State Statutes:	
CALEA 26.2.1 Complaint Investigation…. Georgia Law Enforcement Certification: 3.7 The agency shall have a written directive requiring all complaints against the agency or its employees be investigated	
Signature:	

I. Purpose: It is imperative that the agency operates in a degree of transparency and is responsive to complaints alleging employee misconduct and external concerns regarding the operation of the agency. Members of the public should be provided with a reasonable avenue for any redress of grievances they may have with the service received by police employees and the conduct of the agency. This policy provides members of the agency with the procedures for the acceptance of complaints, the initiation of the administrative investigative process, the process for conducting a fair and reasonable investigation, the proper methods for adjudication of these administrative investigations, and the methods for the administration of fair, reasonable and defensible discipline. It is not required that every agency have a designated person or unit expressly for IA/OPS operations, but every agency must have someone who becomes the most knowledgeable person regarding these practices.

II. Policy: The agency will accept and document all complaints alleging employee or agency misconduct for the following reasons:

A. To ensure that complaints alleging employee or agency misconduct are accepted and investigated in a consistent and reasonable manner to uncover the truth of the allegations,

B. To identify areas of misunderstanding by the complaining citizen,

C. To identify employees whose attitude, behavior and/or performance is in need of correction and supervisory intervention,

D. To protect agency employees and the agency from erroneous complaints, and

E. To identify agency policies, training and/or practices in need of reevaluation, clarification and/or correction.

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III. Definitions:

A. Complaint of employee misconduct: A complaint is an allegation from any source of an act or omission by an agency employee, which if proven true, would be considered misconduct or a violation of agency policies, rules or regulations

B. Note: Complaints regarding the validity of traffic citations or parking tickets are not considered complaints for this definition and the party should be referred to the proper court for resolution.

C. Complaint of agency dissatisfaction: A complaint from an external source of dissatisfaction with an agency policy or practice

D. Public concerns regarding law enforcement operations not amounting to a complaint: A concern expressed by a member of the public which does not meet the agency's definition of a complaint, but must be documented by the agency employee receiving the information from the member of the public

IV. Procedure:

A. Sources for complaints: A complaint can originate from any of the following sources:

1. Individual aggrieved person,

2. Third party,

3. Anonymous,

4. Agency employee,

5. News media,

6. Governmental agency,

7. Of civil claim,

8. Complaints can be made by members of the public:

a. In person,

b. By telephone,

c. By letter,

d. Email

B. Informational public brochure: The agency has developed an informational public brochure to inform members of the community how to provide the agency with commendations, agency suggestions, dissatisfaction with the agency, or a complaint alleging employee misconduct. (see attachment) These brochures will be maintained in all police facility lobbies, police informational desks, shift supervisor desks, and jail/booking supervisor desks.

C. Police employee responsibilities: Whenever a police employee becomes aware of a citizen's complaint meeting the above complaint definition or becomes aware of misconduct of another police employee, s/he shall:

1. Immediately notify an on-duty supervisor and ensure that follow-up to the complaining person will not be delayed

2. If a supervisor cannot be made available or the party making the complaint refuses to wait for the supervisor, the employee will gather all available information regarding the complaint and contact numbers

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3. The employee shall ensure that this information is given to a supervisor at the earliest moment during the employee's duty shift

4. Failure to follow these acceptance provisions will result in disciplinary action against the involved employee

D. Supervisor's responsibilities: Whenever a supervisor becomes aware of a person requesting to make a complaint or an incident which will likely result in a complaint or administrative investigation, the supervisor shall conduct an immediate preliminary investigation including:

1. Conduct a tape-recorded interview with the complaining person attempting to ascertain each and every allegation of misconduct alleged. The complaining person can refuse to be tape-recorded. In these cases, the supervisor shall continue to interview the complainant and note the refusal on the completed Internal Affairs report. Should the allegations not amount to a complaint consistent with the agency definition of a complaint, the supervisor will advise the party that his/her dissatisfaction will be recorded and forwarded for agency review,

2. The supervisor accepting the complaint, or if the incident is an occurrence likely to result in a complaint or administrative investigation and no specific complaining person is present, the supervisor shall respond to the scene of the police encounter/incident and:

    a. Determine the identity of persons involved, witnesses, other police agency's personnel and agency employees,

    b. Ensure that proper evidence is collected and/or documented.

    c. Ensure that all reasonable documentation and physical evidence is maintained. This includes police reports, communications/dispatch information, MDT transmissions, medical documentation, and video recording of any portion of the police involvement,

    d. Ensure that all necessary medical treatment is provided and documentation is preserved,

    e. Prepare the Public Service Report and obtain a PSR number,

    f. Notify all persons consistent with the specifics of the incident.

E. The complaint initiation process is not incumbent on cooperation of the complaining person. In the event that the complaining person refuses to cooperate with the investigation or there is no identifiable complainant and the information known to the supervisor satisfies the agency's definition of a complaint, the complainant will be listed as agency.

F. Classification of complaints: Complaints and administrative investigations will be classified by the agency and assigned specific numbering (employee misconduct, internal, risk management, traffic accident, critical incident and non-complaint). The agency will maintain specific investigative and reporting protocols for each classification of complaint.

G. Processing the complaint: It is the responsibility of the IA/OPS unit/person to process the complaint for investigation.

1. Assign the complaint the appropriate control number

2. Log the complaint into the record management system

3. Ensure that the complainant receives a letter notifying that the complaint has been received and will be assigned for investigation

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4. Assign the investigation to the appropriate agency employee for investigation

5. Assign the investigation a due date for completion within 30 days. Extensions of this due date must be submitted in writing for approval by the person in charge of the IA/OPS process and made part of the final investigative report.

H. Investigative procedures. The employee assigned to conduct the administrative investigation shall:

1. Evaluate the allegations contained in the Public Service Report, listen to the tape recording of the complainant, if available, and consult with the person accepting the complaint or learning of the allegation(s)

2. Obtain all police reports, communications/dispatch records, MDT transmissions, video recordings, and other police documents

3. Determine the specific allegations of the complainant and identify any other possible agency violations, whether alleged by the complainant or not

4. Conduct interview normally in the following sequence:

   a. Complaining person

   b. Other public witnesses

   c. Agency witnesses

   d. Accused employees

I. Disposition:

1. The investigating person will prepare the investigative report and submit it through the chain of command for adjudication and disposition. The investigator is a fact finder only and is not expected to make findings or recommendations.

2. The adjudication person will make a recommendation for the disposition findings for each allegation using the following classifications using the burden of proof of a preponderance of the evidence:

   a. Sustained: there was a preponderance of evidence to prove the allegation

   b. Not Sustained: there was not sufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation

   c. Exonerated: the actions of the employee were consistent with the law and agency policies, rules, regulations and practice

   d. Unfounded: the allegation did not occur

   e. Policy and/or training deficiency: the allegation occurred but was the fault of deficiencies in agency policy and/or training and cannot be accountable to the employee involved

   f. These disposition recommendations shall be forwarded through IA/OPS or the designated person for review and concurrence. The final authority for the disposition is the Chief of Police or his designee. Both IA/OPS and the Chief of Police are responsible to ensure that the investigation and the final recommendation are consistent with the investigation and the practice of the agency.

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g. When allegations are sustained, the specific charges and processing will be conducted according to the personnel practices of the agency.

J. Role of IA/OPS or the designated person

1. IA/OPS shall prepare the letter to the complainant following the conclusion of the investigation and the disposition of the complaint advising the person that the matter has been resolved.

2. IA/OPS is responsible for the quality control of the complaint and administrative investigation process and shall:

a. Review all final complaint investigations to ensure that they are consistent with the practices of the agency

b. Maintain records of the process

c. Maintain the completed investigative and adjudication files in a secure, confidential manner

d. Conduct an annual audit of the process

e. Maintain statistical documentation regarding the process and prepare any overall reports consistent with the directions of the Chief of Police

f. Alert the agency to any noticeable trends requiring that may require specific supervisory direction, policy review or training evaluation.

K. When criminal allegations involving a member of the agency are identified the chief of police and internal affairs shall be notified immediately:

1. Crime within agency jurisdiction: the appropriate criminal investigation unit will investigate the criminal aspect unless the agency elects to have the investigation conducted by an outside entity. The administrative investigation will be conducted by internal affairs and is not dependent on the conclusion of the criminal investigation. Normally the initiation of a personnel complaint and the start of the administrative investigation will proceed concurrently with the criminal investigation.

2. Crime outside agency jurisdiction: Internal Affairs will:

a. Develop and maintain liaison with the involved agency and

b. Conduct the administrative investigation the same as it would had the incident occurred within this agency's jurisdiction.

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SAFETY THEME

GUIDANCE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

Holiday Safety

Have a safe Halloween and Thanksgiving by following these tips



By Dennis Watts
Sr. Manager, Loss Control & Prevention Services

The fall holidays bring costumes, candy, family gatherings and a lot of travel. They also bring more children on the streets after dark, more cooking and decorations around open flames and heavier traffic. A few simple precautions at home, on the road and in the kitchen help everyone enjoy the season safely.

From trick-or-treat night through Thanksgiving dinner, most holiday injuries are preventable. Take a few extra minutes to slow down, check your equipment, and plan ahead. If something looks unsafe, stop and fix it or report it to your supervisor.

Sources: National Safety Council (Check to Protect), NHTSA, NFPA and the Air Force Safety Center (safety.af.mil, Thanksgiving Safety).

HALLOWEEN SAFETY TIPS

TRICK-OR-TREATERS

Always trick-or-treat with an adult, and stay in well-lit, familiar areas.

Never enter a stranger's home.

If trick-or-treating after dark, fasten reflective tape to costumes and bags, or use glow sticks.

Check all treats before eating them or allowing children to eat them.

COSTUMES

Choose fire-resistant costumes, wigs and accessories.

Avoid masks, which can obstruct vision.

Make sure Halloween makeup is nontoxic, and test it on a small area of skin first.

Remove makeup before children go to bed to prevent skin and eye irritation.

HALLOWEEN DRIVING

Popular trick-or-treating hours run from 5:30 to 9:30 p.m.

Slow down and be especially alert for children in neighborhoods.

Turn on your headlights, and take extra time to look for children at intersections, medians and curbs.

Enter and exit driveways and alleys slowly.

2X CHANCE OF A CHILD BEING HIT AND KILLED BY A CAR ON HALLOWEEN.

FIRE PREVENTION

Use battery-operated candles or glow sticks instead of candles in jack-o'-lanterns.

Keep decorations away from open flames and heat sources such as light bulbs and heaters.

Teach children to stay away from open flames and to "stop, drop and roll."

Make sure smoke alarms work. Keep escape routes clear of decorations.

835 HOME FIRES CAUSED BY DECORATIONS EACH YEAR.



THANKSGIVING SAFETY TIPS

Thanksgiving is one of the busiest travel weekends of the year and a peak time for kitchen fires and foodborne illness. Planning ahead covers all three.

🚙 TRAVEL

Flying: Pack light. Most airlines charge extra for checked bags, and a carry-on avoids the cost and the risk of lost luggage.

Book flights early to avoid higher prices or sold-out flights. Arrive early, too, since getting another flight if you miss yours is unlikely.

Driving: Leave early in the morning to avoid traffic, and use a traffic app to check conditions if traveling through a big city.

Pack extra snacks and water to cut down on frequent stops.

Have vehicle maintenance done before you leave, check tire pressure and fluids, and fill your tank.

🦃 COOKING

Wash your hands and surfaces often with warm, soapy water.

Keep raw turkey separated from all other foods to avoid cross-contamination.

Cook foods to the correct temperature, and check them with a food thermometer.

Fry a thawed turkey outside only, well away from your home, and do not overfill or overheat the oil in the fryer.

Never leave cooking food unattended on the stove.

Refrigerate food promptly if you are not eating right away.

🔥 KITCHEN FIRE SAFETY

Keep all flammable items away from the stove and oven.

Keep a fire extinguisher in the kitchen, and teach your family how to use it.

Never wear loose-fitting clothing while cooking. Open sleeves can catch fire from a flame or hot burner.

Create a “kid-free” zone of at least 3 feet around the stove and any area where hot foods and drinks are prepared or carried.

Have smoke alarms on every level of your home. Test monthly, replace batteries twice a year, and replace alarms that are 10 or more years old.

Place burning candles away from flammable items, and blow them out before leaving the room.

DRIVE SAFELY

FOLLOW THESE TIPS YEAR-ROUND FOR SAFE TRAVELS

01 SAFE DRIVING

Distracted driving claimed 3,208 lives in 2024, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). Whether you are driving a fleet vehicle or the family car, these habits matter every day.

- ☐ Buckle up, and make sure all passengers do too.
- ☐ Don't text and drive. Keep your eyes on the road, and watch for pedestrians in or near the road.
- ☐ Avoid fatigue by getting plenty of rest, stopping at least every three hours and rotating drivers when possible.
- ☐ If you plan to drink alcohol, designate a sober driver or use a taxi or rideshare.
- ☐ Plan your route, allow plenty of time, check the weather and let others know your route and arrival time.
- ☐ Slow down and increase your following distance when light rain begins to fall. A little water mixed with oil on the road makes it slippery.
- ☐ Avoid large puddles. Driving through water can impair your brakes, cause hydroplaning or hide large holes.

02 CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY

Car crashes are a leading cause of death for children ages 1 to 13.

- ☐ Use a car seat or booster seat appropriate for your child's age. install it properly, and register it with the manufacturer to be notified of recalls.
- ☐ Never place a rear-facing infant seat in front of an air bag, and keep children 12 and younger in the back seat.
- ☐ Never leave a child alone in a vehicle.
- ☐ Check for vehicle recalls regularly at checktoprotect.org or nhtsa.gov/recalls using your VIN or license plate.

03 VEHICLE MAINTENANCE IN COLD WEATHER

As temperatures drop, get your vehicle ready before you need it.

- ☐ Check wipers, windows, headlights, taillights, brake lights and turn signals.
- ☐ Check tire pressure monthly, along with tire tread, the battery and fluids. Use no-freeze washer fluid.
- ☐ On ice or snow, steer into a skid, allow longer stopping distances and know how your brakes work: stomp on antilock brakes and pump non-antilock brakes.
- ☐ Never idle for a long time with the windows up or in an enclosed space, due to risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.
- ☐ Keep a winter kit in the car with a flashlight, jumper cables, sand or kitty litter, a shovel, a snow brush and ice scraper, flares and blankets. For long trips, add food, water, medication and a phone charger.

General Self Inspection Program

Location, Area, or Department: _____ Date: _____

Surveyor: _____

General Evaluation

	Needs Action	Needs Improvement	Good	Very Good
A. Property/Liability				
a. Fire protection	_____	_____	_____	_____
b. Housekeeping	_____	_____	_____	_____
c. Slip/trip/fall	_____	_____	_____	_____
d. Public safety	_____	_____	_____	_____
B. Employee Safety				
a. Safety meetings	_____	_____	_____	_____
b. Safety rules	_____	_____	_____	_____
c. Work conditions	_____	_____	_____	_____
d. Auto/equipment	_____	_____	_____	_____

Property/Liability

	Yes	No
Fire protection	☐	☐
Emergency numbers posted	☐	☐
Fire extinguishers available/serviced	☐	☐
Fire alarm panel showing system is operational; no warning lights.	☐	☐
Automatic sprinkler system control valve locked in open position.	☐	☐
Automatic sprinkler heads clear of storage within three feet.	☐	☐
Flammable, combustible liquids stored in UL-listed containers.	☐	☐
Flammable, combustible liquid containers stored in proper cabinet or container.	☐	☐
Smoking, No Smoking areas designated/marked.	☐	☐
Any cigarette butts noticed in No Smoking areas.	☐	☐

Comments:_____

_____

Housekeeping

Stairwells clear of combustible items.	☐	☐
Furnace, hot water heater, and electrical panel areas clear of combustible items.	☐	☐
Work and public areas are clear of extension cords, boxes, equipment, or other tripping hazards.	☐	☐
Floor surfaces kept clear of oils, other fluids, or water.	☐	☐
Stored items are not leaning or improperly supported; heavy items are not up high.	☐	☐

Comments:_____

_____

Slip/Trip/Fall

Stair treads are in good condition; not worn, damaged or loose.	☐	☐
Handrails for all stairs/steps.	☐	☐
Guardrails for all elevated platforms.	☐	☐
Stair handrails are in good condition; not loose or broken.	☐	☐
Floor surfaces are even, with non-slip wax if applicable.	☐	☐
All rugs are held down or have non-slip backing.	☐	☐
Any holes, pits or depressions are marked with tape, barricades, or guardrails.	☐	☐
Wet floor signs are available and used.	☐	☐

Comments:_____

_____

General Self Inspection Program

Public Safety

	Yes	No
Public areas kept clear of storage and supplies.	☐	☐
Emergency lighting for public assembly areas in buildings.	☐	☐
Evacuation plans posted for public assembly areas in buildings.	☐	☐
Public areas have necessary warning or directional signs.	☐	☐
Construction work has barriers, covers, and markings.	☐	☐
Street and road signs noted in good condition, clear of obstructions.	☐	☐
Sidewalks smooth and even; no holes, no raised or broken areas.	☐	☐

Comments:_____

_____

Employee Safety

Safety Meetings

Held in the department.	☐	☐
Meetings held ___ monthly ___ quarterly ___ other _____ ; documented		
Different topic each time.	☐	☐
Covers department safety rules.	☐	☐

Safety Rules

Rules specific for this department.	☐	☐
Rules are written, posted in the department.	☐	☐
Reviewed with new employees.	☐	☐

Work Conditions

Employees exposed to: __ Heat __ Cold __ Rain/sleet/snow __ Use of chemicals
__ Noise __ Work in confined spaces __ Work in trenches
__ Traffic __ Blood/body fluids __ Other _____

Proper personal protective equipment available
Respirators, goggles, face shields, chemical gloves, traffic vests, appropriate clothing
Trench boxes/shoring for trenching, ear plugs/muffs, body armor (law enforcement)
Confined space equipment, harness, air testing equipment, ventilation equipment, tripod
Fire department turn-out gear, blood-borne pathogens kits

Personal protective equipment required to be worn.	☐	☐
Employees trained on proper use.	☐	☐
Equipment properly maintained.	☐	☐
Shop equipment has proper guards to protect from pinch or caught-between type injuries.	☐	☐
Chemicals used in the department.	☐	☐
MSDS sheets available; employees trained on hazards, proper use, proper PPE to use.	☐	☐

Comments:_____

_____

Auto and Equipment

Seat belts provided.	☐	☐
Seat belts required to be used.	☐	☐
Drivers noted wearing seat belts.	☐	☐
All lights working including strobe lights, turn signals.	☐	☐
Tires in good condition, tread, sidewalls.	☐	☐
Glass in good condition; not cracked, broken.	☐	☐
Reflective tape, signs in good condition.	☐	☐
Any periodic, documented, self-inspection of the vehicles/equipment.	☐	☐
Proper guards on mowers, other equipment.	☐	☐

Comments:_____

_____

Safety Meeting Attendance Sign Up Sheet

City/County: _____

Date: _____

Department: _____

Topic: _____

Attendees:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Next meeting scheduled for _____

Safety Coordinator _____

CONTACTS

LET US KNOW HOW WE CAN HELP YOU

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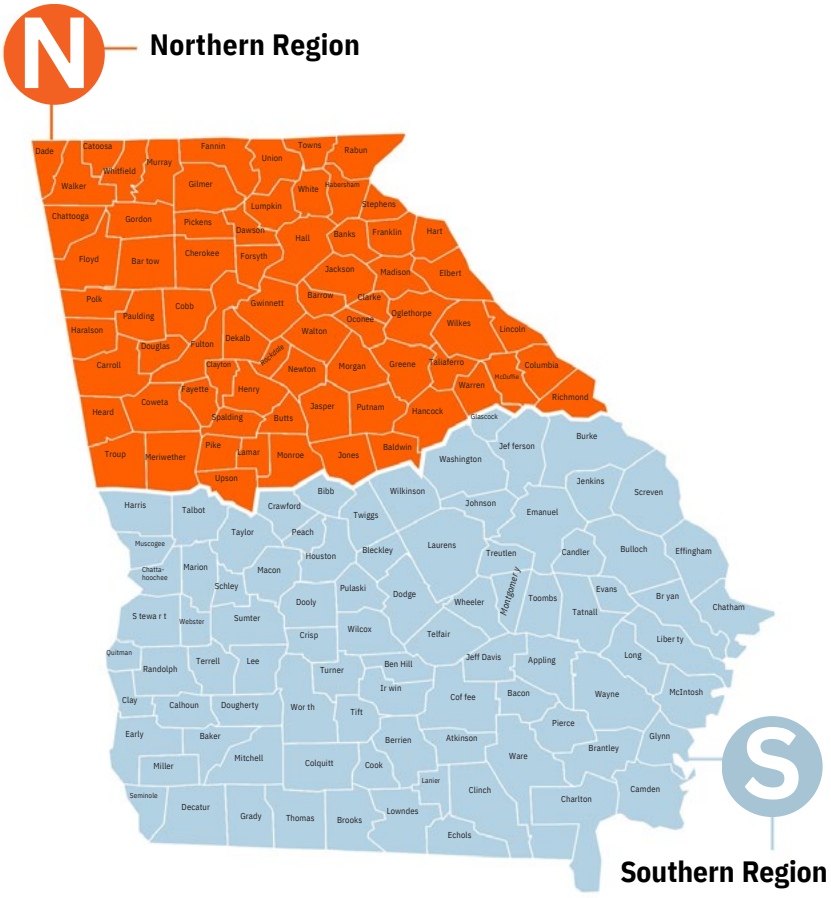
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