

TEN SAFETY PRACTICES FOR SUPPLY TEAMS

The Fremont Supply Chain unit-based team, at Northern California’s Fremont Medical Center, is eliminating workplace injuries by building safety into everyday work processes. Here’s how.

- 1 Sort deliveries directly onto carts staged for delivery instead of onto the floor. The goal is to touch each box no more than once. This reduces trip hazards, and unnecessary bending and lifting.
- 2 Employ a collapsible conveyor to reduce the number of times a box is touched and to avoid the bending and lifting involved in lifting off the floor. (This and other recommended equipment is available for purchase programwide.)
- 3 Use the Pallet Content List (PCL) instead of the Purchase Order (PO) to identify and verify deliveries. This reduces handling and enables workers to focus on each pallet rather than hunting for items through multiple pallets. In some cases, items on full pallets don’t need to be touched at all if they are being delivered to a single department.
- 4 Replace standard desks and chairs with ergonomic counter-high tables and stools for receivers to safely process deliveries from a standing position.
- 5 Purchase anti-fatigue mats to relieve tired feet and help diminish back pain from standing most of the day.
- 6 Paint the edge of the loading dock bright yellow to ensure workers are aware of the four-foot drop.
- 7 Adjust the racks in the storeroom so heavier products are kept closer to the ground for easier lifting.
- 8 Rearrange sorting bins in the mailroom to improve workflow and reduce clutter.
- 9 Install convex mirrors in strategic locations, like hallway intersections, throughout the facility, to keep delivery workers from crashing into members and fellow hospital employees.
- 10 Engage all team members in discussions to identify potential workplace hazards; when concerns are raised, listen and respond.