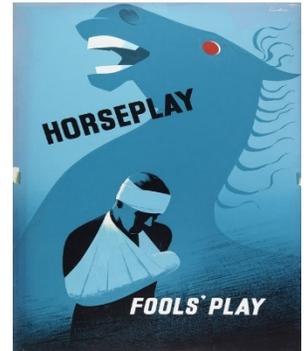


**SUPERVISOR INSTRUCTIONS:**

- Use toolbox trainings to encourage safety/environmental discussions during monthly meetings with employees.
- Campus Services' employees should maintain the employee sign-in sheet in their department's safety/environmental compliance binder as a record of training. All other groups should maintain a record of training in accordance with their Division's training procedures.

**H**orseplay is rough or boisterous play or pranks that occur at the workplace. Horseplay can be activities such as joking that includes physical contact, playing around, racing, grabbing, foolish vehicle operation, social pressure to participate in unsafe acts, harassment and unauthorized contests. There is probably at least one on every job - the practical joker - the smart aleck who likes to make a bid for laughs and attention by playing jokes on fellow workers. Playing jokes and having fun with your coworkers may break up the day and make work more interesting, but it can lead to serious injuries and sometimes be deadly.



Each year there are hundreds of injuries in the United States from pulling pranks at work. In some states horseplay that results in injury can result in criminal prosecution. The courts have held that these injuries are not the result of an accident but are deliberate acts. Workplace horseplay incidents may lead to serious injuries at work, divide the workplace and prevent employees from getting their jobs done. Often workplace horseplay incidents go unnoticed or are ignored as harmless fun. However, making horseplay a part of your workday may jeopardize your health and the future of your business. It's management's responsibility to ensure all employees have access to a safe, respectful and harassment free place to work.

***Practical Jokes/Horseplay Injuries***

An employer is not required to pay for an injury to a party engaging in horseplay or practical joking during working hours. However, an injury suffered by an innocent employee due to the horseplay of a fellow employee is usually covered.

***Preventing Horseplay***

- Don't play into horseplay. Don't initiate it. Don't get pressured into participating in it.
- Educate employees on Workplace Safety.
- Reinforce Emory's Standards of Conduct Policy. <http://policies.emory.edu/4.62>.
- Avoid being distracted at work.
- If you see someone behaving in an unprofessional or unsafe way at work, report it to a supervisor.
- Follow instructions and obey the safety rules designed for your protection.

***Employee Responsibility***

- Do not engage or participate in any type of unsafe behavior or acts.
- Follow all regulations and work rules to ensure the safety of individuals or other employees.

## SAFETY/ENVIRONMENTAL TOOLBOX TALKS – HORSEPLAY

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- Ensure protective equipment is used properly and operating machinery is in good repair and does not present a hazard to employees.

### ***Supervisors and Management Responsibility***

- Provide a safe and healthy work environment for all employees.
- Take all precautions necessary to protect the safety and health of employees.
- Ensure that employees understand and follow company operating practices and safety procedures.

### ***Dangers of Horseplay***

Did you know fooling around with air hoses has caused many cases of ruptured eardrums and ruptured bowels?

- A blast of air under 40 pounds per square inch (psi) of pressure from 4 inches away can rupture bowels or eardrums and cause brain damage.
- As little as 12 psi can pop an eyeball from its socket.
- Air can enter the navel, even through a layer of clothing, and inflate and rupture the intestines.
- If directed at the mouth, compressed air can rupture the lungs.

### ***Emory Standards of Conduct***

At Emory Horseplay is considered inappropriate behavior and could lead to disciplinary action up to and including an unpaid suspension or termination of employment without prior warning, at the sole discretion of Emory. You can view Emory's current Standards of Conduct at:

<http://policies.emory.edu/4.62>.

Horseplay that results in injury could result in civil action and/or criminal prosecution. Court rulings have held that these injuries are not the result of an accident but a deliberate act. Workplace injuries related to "horseplay" activities have been very costly, dangerous and sometimes fatal.

### ***Horseplay Affects the Workplace***

- When practical jokes are common in the workplace, it's hard to pay attention to your job because you're always on the lookout for the next joke.
- Horseplay is a safety hazard that can quickly get out of hand and lead to injury or death.
- If someone else gets hurt as a result of your horseplay or joke, you may be liable for damages and you'll risk losing your job.
- Even if a practical joke isn't dangerous in itself, it can result in humiliation, embarrassment, anger, hurt feelings, distrust and even a desire for revenge.

### ***Questions for Discussion***

1. What do you do if you see an employee engaging in horseplay or any other kinds of unsafe acts?
2. Did you know that if you get hurt as a result of horseplay, you are not eligible for workers' compensation benefits?
3. Does anyone have any suggestions that could prevent horseplay in the workplace?
4. Did you know that if the practical joker who causes an injury or death as a result of your horseplay or joke, can result in civil action and/or criminal prosecution?