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The Cleaning Industry Management Standard Guidebook



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Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

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The Standard itself was developed through a consensus-based effort involving industry experts, trade and professional associations, educational institutions, and other organizations. In accordance with a true consensus-based process, all views and objections have been considered, every attempt has been made to resolve those objections that have been raised, and, ultimately, the management elements contained therein have been agreed to by a substantial majority of those interested parties who elected to participate in the development process.

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Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	3
FORMAT	3
SCOPE, PURPOSE AND APPLICATION	4
Scope	4
Purpose	4
Application	4
DEFINITIONS	5
1. QUALITY SYSTEM	7
1.1. Definition of Cleaning Service Requirements	7
1.2. Quality Plan	8
2. SERVICE DELIVERY	12
2.1. Service Delivery Plan	12
2.2. Purchasing Procedures.....	18
3. HUMAN RESOURCES	21
3.1. Human Resource Policy.....	21
3.2. Hiring Practices.....	21
3.3. Site-Specific Orientation.....	23
3.4. Executive Development.....	23
3.5. Management Training.....	23
3.6. Cleaning Personnel Training	25
4. HEALTH, SAFETY AND, ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP	28
4.1. Regulatory Compliance	28
4.2. Organization Policy/Environmental Management System	37
5. MANAGEMENT COMMITMENT	44
5.1. Mission, Vision, Values:.....	44
5.2. Planning	44
5.3. Responsibility and Authority.....	45
5.4. Communication Plan	46
5.5. Risk Management	47
INDEX	48



Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

Introduction

ISSA's Cleaning Industry Management Standard is a general framework that is designed to assist cleaning organizations in developing quality, customer-centered organizations. Perhaps the most important characteristic of the Standard is the fact that it is non-prescriptive and based on universally accepted management principles that are the hallmarks of successful organizations. The Standard, therefore, does not require, recommend or otherwise endorse any particular process or product and allows individual organizations flexibility in choosing the most effective ways in which to meet their management requirements.

This document was created to help organizations and others understand the Cleaning Industry Management Standard and how to comply with its requirements. Each element of the Standard is explained in detail, information regarding what an organization needs to do to comply with each element is provided, and useful suggestions and compliance assistance resources are referenced. Ultimately, cleaning organizations that follow the guidance in this document can be fairly certain that they are in compliance with the Standard's performance requirements.

Organizations do, however, need to keep in mind that compliance with many elements of the Standard depends on the scale and scope of the organization's operations. Each facility is unique and each organization should be prepared to tailor its processes based on available resources and the customer's specific requirements.

Organizations that wish to be certified to the Standard will undergo a full assessment by an accredited assessor. The assessor will review the organization's operations to verify compliance with the Standard's performance requirements. This Guide serves as a helpful resource tool that assessors and organizations can use to understand what evidence they are likely to use to verify compliance and how they should obtain such evidence.

Format

Guidance is provided for each of the Standard's compliance elements. The guidance for each element of the Standard is broken down as follows:

1. *The Standard*: The text of the Standard
2. *Explanation*: An explanation of what the element means
3. *How to Comply*: A description of what an organization needs to do to be in compliance, what an accredited assessor should look for as evidence of compliance, and how an assessor should obtain such information
4. *Recommendation*: Useful suggestions and directions to resources that may provide assistance in compliance with the standard



Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

Scope, Purpose and Application

Scope

The ISSA Cleaning Industry Management Standard describes the procedures and principles to be considered in designing and implementing quality management programs for cleaning organizations. This Standard applies, without respect to the size of the organization, both to cleaning organizations that self-perform cleaning and to building service contractors.

Purpose

The purpose of this Standard is to set forth the policies, processes, procedures, and supporting documentation that guide cleaning organizations in establishing customer-centered organizations.

Because of the unique characteristics of the cleaning industry, it is impractical to prescribe policies, processes, and procedures that apply to every situation. In certain circumstances, minor deviation from portions of this Standard may be appropriate.

Application

This Standard was written for use by those directly involved in the cleaning industry, but may also have application for property owners/managers and other materially interested parties. Thus, it is applicable to in-house cleaning organizations, not-for-profit entities, and for-profit cleaning businesses, including building service contractors.

This Standard defines management, operational, performance system, process and performance measure requirements. Compliance with the Standard demonstrates that the organization is structured to deliver consistent, quality services. The Standard should be thought of as a framework to help cleaning organizations develop as customer-centered, quality organizations.

Certain provisions of the Standard pertaining to legal and/or regulatory requirements are specific to cleaning organizations operating within the United States. International organizations seeking to meet the requirements of this Standard shall comply with all parallel laws and/or regulations that apply in their specific jurisdictions.

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

Definitions

Throughout this document the terms “shall,” “should,” and “may” are used to distinguish between those processes, practices and elements that are mandatory, those that are strongly recommended although not required, and those that are suggested.

shall: when the term “shall” is used in this document, it is a mandatory requirement of the Standard. All elements that contain the term “shall” must be satisfied in order to achieve full compliance with the Standard.

- **Explanation:** Elements that use the term “shall” were deemed to be of such importance that each of them must be satisfied in order to achieve compliance with the Standard. All elements that use the term “shall” are mandatory.

should: when the term “should” is used in this document, it means that the practice or procedure is a recommended element of the Standard. Only a percentage of the elements containing the term “should” need be satisfied in order to achieve compliance with the Standard.

- **Explanation:** Elements that use the term “should” are not mandatory but are recommended. In order to achieve compliance with the Standard, 60% of the elements marked “should” within each of the five sections must be satisfied (if 85% of the elements marked “should” within each section are satisfied, the organization will be eligible for a “Certification with Honors” designation). Note that compliance is evaluated on a section-by-section basis and organizations must demonstrate compliance with a certain percentage per section.

may: when the term “may” is used in this document, it means that the practice or procedure is advised or suggested but is not a requirement of the Standard. Not satisfying these elements does not affect compliance with the Standard.

- **Explanation:** Elements that use the term “may” are optional. Compliance with such elements may enable an organization to earn Certification with Honors, even if the organization does not comply with 85% of the elements per section.

Other Definitions:

appropriate: fitting for a particular condition, application, business, occasion, or situation

cleaning: locating, identifying, containing, removing, and properly disposing of undesirable substances from surfaces or materials

cleaning personnel: *employees* who deliver *cleaning* services. They may often be referred to as janitors, custodians, cleaners, production staff, or housekeepers

customer: the person(s) or group that is the direct beneficiary of the cleaning services being rendered. As used within the Standard, customer refers to the individual or entity that contracts to have a service provided and/or to the receipt of services provided by an in-house operation

due diligence: proper care, attention or persistence in doing a thing; such a measure of prudence, activity, or assiduity, as is properly to be expected from, and ordinarily exercised by, a reasonable person under the particular facts and circumstances

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

element: an individual part of the standard. Each *section* of the standard is comprised of numerous elements.

employees: individuals who are hired to perform a job in exchange for compensation

industry-accepted: a methodology or technique that is commonly used by members of the trade

management: individuals who make decisions about how the *organization* is operated

materially interested parties: an individual or entity substantially and directly affected by the services provided

non-technical training: customer service, interpersonal skills, management, supervision, communication, and other non-cleaning task related training

organization: a group of people that provides cleaning services. It includes in-house cleaning organizations, not-for-profit companies, and for profit cleaning businesses such as building service contractors.

potentially infectious material: includes the following human body fluids: blood, semen, vaginal secretions, cerebrospinal fluid, synovial fluid, pleural fluid, pericardial fluid, peritoneal fluid, amniotic fluid, saliva in dental procedures, any body fluid that is visibly contaminated with blood, and all body fluids in situations where it is difficult or impossible to differentiate between body fluids

quality plan: a document that explains how the organization will achieve its quality objectives

reasonable: in accordance with sound thinking, within the bounds of common sense: prudent. It applies to that which is *appropriate* for a particular situation.

section: one of the five major subdivisions of the standard. Each section is comprised of numerous individual *elements*.

suitable: *appropriate* to a purpose, use or situation

standard of care: practices that are common to reasonably prudent members of the trade who are recognized in the industry as qualified and competent

technical training: cleaning task and skill training

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

1. Quality System

Quality is the cornerstone of a successful, customer-centered cleaning organization. But how does an organization develop itself and run its operations to assure customers that it is positioned to deliver quality services? The key is the implementation of a quality system -- a framework within which an organization can effectively run its operation.

Defining cleaning service requirements, implementing a Quality Plan, measuring performance, obtaining relevant feedback from the customer, and committing to continual improvement are all activities that should be engaged in by an organization that has implemented an effective quality system.

- ❖ **Assessor’s Note:** There is a total of 31 provisions contained in Section One, six of which are mandatory (“shall”). Organizations seeking certification must demonstrate compliance with all six mandatory provisions and at least 60% of those provisions that are included as recommended elements (should) of the Standard that are applicable. Those organizations that demonstrate compliance with at least 85% of the recommended elements are eligible for “Certification With Honors” classification. There are also seven elements in Section One that are optional (“may”).

1.1. Definition of Cleaning Service Requirements

1.1.1. There shall be a site-specific scope of work or performance outcome describing cleaning service requirements.

- **Explanation:** The scope of work or performance outcome defines the customer’s expectations for a specific facility. It is a written document detailing tasks and frequencies and/or containing a description of what clean looks like to the customer.
- **How to Comply:** A written scope or work performance outcome description for each facility shall be available for the assessor.
- **Recommendation:** A scope of work consists of tasks and frequencies for each area within a building. Frequencies should be stated in the number of times per year that the task will be performed. For example:

Service Frequency	Service Occasions per Year
Five Times per Week	260
Two Times per Week	104
Weekly	52
Bi-Weekly	26
Monthly	12
Quarterly	4
Yearly	1

If a performance outcome is used, it should provide sufficient specificity and clarity so as to enable the assessor to determine what the performance expectations are. APPA’s custodial staffing guidelines are an example of a performance outcome that satisfies the requirements of this element.

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

1.1.2.Changes to the service requirements shall be documented.

- **Explanation:** The use of space within a building can change. Likewise, the service requirements can change and/or space may come in and out of service. When there is a change, the scope of work must be modified to reflect the changes.
- **How to Comply:** A document evidencing the changes should be available to the assessor. The document may be a formal addendum to the scope of work or it may be as simple as keeping a confirming e-mail.
- **Recommendation:** This requirement is similar to a construction change order.

1.1.3.Cleaning service requirements should be consistent with the organization's stated mission and values.

- **Explanation:** Cleaning impacts an organization's customers, employees, and visitors. As such, the scope of work or performance outcome should reflect the organization's mission and values.
- **How to Comply:** The assessor will review the organization's mission and value statements to determine whether the cleaning requirements are consistent with the mission and values. Note that this section may not be applicable to building service contractors insofar as they are unable to control whether their customer has a mission or value statement. In that case, the assessor will treat this element as not applicable.

1.2. Quality Plan

1.2.1.The organization shall have a written Quality Plan. The Plan is a written process for determining whether cleaning service requirements are met and for identifying improvement opportunities. It commits the organization to attaining the level of service as defined by the customer and the organization in the scope of work or performance outcomes.

- **Explanation:** An organization's quality plan is the foundation of its quality program. The quality plan is a document that explains how the organization will achieve its quality objectives.
- **How to Comply:** The assessor will review the written quality plan to determine whether it is appropriate to the scale and scope of the organization. Specifically, the assessor will examine the document for evidence that it accurately describes the organization's quality policies, accountability, and implementation plan.
- **Recommendation:** Each organization's quality plan should reflect the organization's unique characteristics. There are numerous resources

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

available to assist an organization in creating their quality plan. A good place to start is the American Society for Quality (www.asq.org).

1.2.2. The organization should communicate the plan to materially interested parties.

- 1.2.2.1. Each customer may receive a copy of the plan.
- 1.2.2.2. Each person in the organization may receive a copy of the plan.
- 1.2.2.3. The plan may define roles and responsibilities of operational personnel.
- 1.2.2.4. Each person in the organization should receive documented training related to the plan.

➤ **Explanation:** In general, an organization is advised to communicate the quality plan to all interested parties, but such communication is not required. Bullet #4 underscores the role that training plays in communicating the plan to organization personnel.

➤ **How to Comply:** The assessor will establish general compliance with this element by asking those individuals who are substantially and directly affected by the services covered by the Quality Plan (i.e., customer representatives) whether they have received a copy. Compliance with the training element is demonstrated by providing training records or by interviewing employees. Please note that the first three bullet points are only applicable to those organizations who are seeking “Certification With Honors” designation.

1.2.3. Service quality measurement/metrics:

- 1.2.3.1. The organization shall measure and document its performance against the scope of work and performance outcome requirements.
- 1.2.3.2. The measurements should be taken at a frequency appropriate for scope of work and performance outcome requirements.
- 1.2.3.3. The factors being measured should be reasonable and suitable for scope of work and performance outcome requirements.

➤ **Explanation:** This is a performance-based standard. As such, performance measurement is essential. The frequency at which one’s performance is evaluated is largely a function of the customer’s expectations as reflected in the scope of work or performance outcome.

➤ **How to comply:** The organization should be prepared to show that its performance has been measured, how it was measured, and how the results compare to the scope of work or performance outcomes. The assessor should be able to review the metrics in whatever form the organization keeps them in. Whether on-line or hard copy, the assessor must be able to observe specific measurements.

➤ **Recommendation:** The measurement system does not need to be complex. The essence of this requirement is that the organization uses a verifiable measurement system to assess service performance.

- 1.2.3.4. The organization shall use one or more of the following measurement tools:
 - 1.2.3.4.1. Surveys

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

- Customers completing the surveys should submit them directly to appropriate representatives of the organization, rather than to the on-site supervisory personnel.
- Surveys should be reviewed with appropriate customer representatives.

1.2.3.4.2. Inspections

- Operational inspections by cleaning personnel should be performed as service is delivered.
- Site supervision should conduct site inspections.
- Management should conduct unannounced site inspections.
- Customers may participate in management-level inspections.

1.2.3.4.3. Complaints

- The organization should maintain a record of complaints.
- The organization should keep the source of complaints as confidential as possible.
- The organization should document what procedures have been implemented in response to a complaint to minimize the possibility of a reoccurrence.

1.2.3.4.4. Customer Evaluations

- Customers may perform self-evaluations of the site.
- Organizations may provide customers a checklist or form to guide self-evaluation.

➤ **Explanation:** The selection of a measurement tool is left to the discretion of the individual organization. The organization must select at least one of the listed tools and then fulfill that tool's requirements. Tools that are not used by the organization will not be considered by the assessor.

➤ **How to Comply:** The organization must actually use one or more of the listed measurement tools. It must demonstrate to the assessor that it meets the compliance requirements for whichever tool is selected by providing evidence that the tool(s) is used as required by this provision. For example, organizations that rely on surveys as their primary measurement tool should be prepared to provide an assessor with copies of completed surveys, and assessors should evaluate whether the surveys are being submitted directly to an appropriate representative of the organization and whether they are being reviewed with the customer.

❖ **Assessor's Note:** In determining whether an organization has complied with at least 60% of the recommended elements (should) in this section, the assessor should not include those provisions that apply to a measurement tool that is not utilized by the organization in the total calculation. The assessor should simply determine whether a measurement tool is being used as required by the Standard.

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

- **Recommendation:** The measurement system need not be complex. The essence of this requirement is that the organization uses a verifiable measurement system.

1.2.4. Feedback Cycle

- 1.2.4.1. The organization shall respond to both positive and negative customer feedback and inspection results and shall fully investigate complaints.
- 1.2.4.2. Organization management should meet with the designated customer representative to review survey and inspections results and to discuss complaints.
- 1.2.4.3. When corrective action has been taken, the organization should inform the customer representative and request feedback.

- **Explanation:** A feedback cycle is part of an organization's ongoing effort to improve service. This element recognizes the fact that regular and on-going communication is essential to meeting customer expectations.
- **How to Comply:** The organization must provide the assessor with examples of its response to customer feedback and inspection results. For example, the organization may demonstrate compliance by providing the assessor with e-mails, letters, or other customer correspondence as evidence of the organization's commitment to responding to customer feedback and complaints.

1.2.5. Evaluation of Progress and Continuous Improvement Plan

- 1.2.5.1. Appropriate levels of management should follow a documented process in reviewing performance results.
- 1.2.5.2. There should be a written corrective action plan that is consistent with the organization's policies and procedures.
- 1.2.5.3. There should be a written plan that describes how the organization will measure, report, and implement performance improvement.
- 1.2.5.4. Each customer representative may receive a copy of the plan.

- **Explanation:** Analyzing performance results and determining whether the organization is delivering the service that the customer expects is fundamental to the delivery of quality service. Note that 1.2.6.1, 1.2.6.2, and 1.2.6.3 are recommended elements of the Standard that apply to all organizations seeking certification. Item 1.2.6.4 applies only to organizations seeking to obtain a Certification With Honors designation.
- **How to Comply:** The organization will need to provide the assessor with a copy of its written plan for reviewing performance results, taking corrective action, and measuring, reporting, and implementing performance improvements. Such a plan should outline the procedure for performing such tasks. An assessor may also wish to interview a representative of organization management regarding performance review and improvement procedure and whether it is implemented.

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

2. Service Delivery

Having implemented a quality system, a cleaning organization also needs to institute processes and procedures that foster the effective delivery of services. Meeting the customer's requirements is the foundation of successful service organizations.

In order to ensure acceptable service delivery, an organization will need to implement a service delivery plan that outlines the organization's customer-related processes, including workloading, staffing, purchasing, and handling of unexpected events. Each organization will follow its own unique business processes, but such processes need to be structured to make certain that, at the end of the day, the customer's needs are being met and service is being provided as expected.

- ❖ **Assessor's Note:** There is a total of 22 provisions contained in Section Two, nine of which are mandatory ("shall"), although three of the nine mandatory provisions are only applicable to those organizations that employ contractors and/ or subcontractors. Organizations seeking certification should demonstrate compliance with all applicable mandatory provisions and at least 60% of those provisions that are included as recommended elements (should) of the Standard. Those organizations that demonstrate compliance with at least 85% of the recommended elements are eligible for "Certification With Honors" classification.

2.1. Service Delivery Plan

2.1.1. Workloading: There shall be an industry-accepted methodology for determining the number of labor hours needed to accomplish work requirements as specified in the scope of work or performance outcomes.

- **Explanation:** Workloading is the process that is used to estimate the total labor hours needed to complete a task (as outlined in the scope of work) or to achieve the expected service level. Failure to utilize an industry-accepted workloading methodology on a consistent basis often results in over or under staffing.
- **How to Comply:** The assessor should evaluate compliance by reviewing workloading documents and the organization's workloading methodology. The organization must demonstrate that for each area within a facility, it is able to apply production rates in a consistent and reasonable manner.
- **Recommendation:** The tools used to perform workloading can range from a simple calculator to a sophisticated computer program. The focus of this requirement is not on complexity but rather on effectiveness. Industry associations such as ISSA and APPA provide workloading tools and production rate information. In addition, many manufacturers, distributors, and cleaning consultants offer tools that will help satisfy the requirements of this element.

2.1.2. Bidding/Costing Process: There should be a system for estimating job costs that considers the following factors: costing of labor, materials, overhead, profit (if applicable), taxes, insurance, and miscellaneous costs.

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

- **Explanation:** Once an organization has used the workloading process to determine the number of labor hours needed to deliver the scope of work or performance outcome, the organization should be prepared to determine the total cost to perform the work. In determining the cost, the organization must consider all relevant factors, and estimates should be based on a reasonable and systematic analysis.
 - **How to Comply:** Organizations should be prepared to provide an assessor with its actual costing documents to demonstrate compliance. For example, the organization may provide the assessor with cost worksheets or printouts. An assessor may also wish to interview organization management to inquire about the bidding/costing process that is used.
 - **Recommendation:** Many manufacturers, distributors, and cleaning consultants offer tools that will help satisfy the requirements of this element.
- 2.1.3. Budgeting: Cost controls should exist and be used to ensure that work is completed within workloading, budgeting, and costing parameters.
- 2.1.3.1. The organization should have reporting systems, which provide accurate budgetary support for all aspects of the operation.
- **How to Comply:** An organization should supply the assessor with examples of the reports that are used to ensure that the organization operates within its budget. Some of the most commonly used reports include tracking labor costs, labor hours, supply costs, and equipment costs.
- 2.1.3.2. Management should be alerted when costs are not within acceptable parameters.
- **How to Comply:** The assessor will review reports to determine whether they indicate when items are over or under budget.
- 2.1.3.3. The organization should have a plan of action to make any necessary budgetary corrections.
- **How to Comply:** An organization complies with this element by having a plan, implementing it, and making sure that it is followed. The plan does not need to be in writing. The essential requirement is that the organization can demonstrate that action was taken when budgets were not met. Examples may include copies of memoranda or e-mails that show how the budgetary issue was addressed. An assessor may interview organization management to inquire about the organization's plan to address budgetary concerns.

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

- 2.1.3.4. Staffing Plan: Staffing levels shall be based on workloading and one or more of the following:
- 2.1.3.4.1. Budgeting
 - 2.1.3.4.2. Costing data
 - 2.1.3.4.3. Customer requests
 - 2.1.3.4.4. Industry benchmarks

➤ **Explanation:** Staffing should be based on more than a hunch. This element requires that staffing decisions be made in a manner that considers all relevant data and other necessary factors.

➤ **How to Comply:** Organizations should provide the assessor with evidence that substantiates the method used to determine staffing levels. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Budgeting: Provide copies of the workloading analysis.
- Costing data: Demonstrate that the charge-out rate determines the staffing level.
- Customer requests: Provide documentation of customer staffing requests or service agreements.
- Industry benchmarks: Demonstrate that staffing was based on an industry benchmark such as APPA's Custodial Staffing Guidelines.

- 2.1.4. Work Plan: Individual cleaning assignments should be set forth in written work plans.

➤ **Explanation:** By clearly defining each employee's individual work assignments, management encourages accountability, facilitates training, and improves service.

➤ **How to Comply:** The assessor will review written work assignments and observe the extent to which they are used by the cleaning staff. At a minimum, assignments should include a description of the service area and a list of tasks to be completed.

➤ **Recommendation:** Many manufacturers, distributors, and cleaning consultants have work assignment resources that will help satisfy the requirements of this element.

- 2.1.5. Work Instructions: Standardized task procedures should be used across the organization and such task procedures should be documented.

➤ **Explanation:** This element focuses on the organization's cleaning procedures. Organizations should standardize such procedures in order to improve consistency and service quality.

➤ **How to Comply:** The assessor will review written task procedures and personally observe the extent to which they are used by the cleaning staff.

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

If necessary, the assessor may also wish to ask cleaning staff to demonstrate cleaning procedures.

- **Recommendation:** Many manufacturers, distributors, and cleaning consultants have resources that will help satisfy the requirements of this element. Additional resources are available through ISSA, APPA, IEHA, and other trade associations.

2.1.6. Contingency Planning: The organization should have:

2.1.6.1. Contingency plan(s) to manage staffing shortages and service interruptions.

2.1.6.2. A process to obtain customer input and feedback when contingency plans are used.

- **Explanation:** Absenteeism, “no shows”, and scheduled time off can disrupt service. A staffing contingency plan deals with those events and enables an organization to maintain a consistent level of service despite staffing shortages and other service interruptions.
- **How to Comply:** The organization establishes compliance with this element by providing the assessor with a copy of its staffing contingency plan. The plan should indicate how the organization would overcome temporary staffing shortages. The assessor will review the plan and verify that it has been implemented.
- **Recommendation:** Staffing contingency plans will vary from site to site. For example, at larger sites, it may be feasible to have a substitute pool of workers, while at smaller locations staff may be asked to work additional hours or work assignments may be adjusted.

2.1.7. Special Requests: The organization shall have a plan to handle customer special requests.

- **Explanation:** Fulfilling a customer’s special requests is an essential part of every cleaning operation. Unfortunately, special requests can disrupt service by diverting resources from regularly scheduled work. This element was added to underscore the importance of advance planning to handle special requests in a way that maintains consistent service.
- **How to Comply:** The organization establishes compliance with this element by providing the assessor with examples of how it addresses special requests. The assessor will review the plans and verify that they have been implemented. An interview with organization management may be necessary to ensure compliance with this element.
- **Recommendation:** The way that an organization handles special requests will vary from site to site and is dependent upon available resources. The key is to have a plan and implement it.

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

- 2.1.8. Emergency Response: The organization shall have a plan to respond to emergency service needs.
- **Explanation:** Emergencies, such as broken pipes, water leaks, and other incidents that require an immediate clean-up, can have a devastating effect on service. The most effective way to mitigate the impact of an emergency is to devise an emergency response plan that outlines how the organization will respond to emergency situations. Note: This element pertains to building and service related emergencies as opposed to man-made or natural disasters.
 - **How to Comply:** The assessor will review examples of the organization's emergency response plans and verify that they have been implemented. The assessor may wish to conduct interviews with organization management to determine how the plans are implemented and whether a copy has been provided to the customer. The assessor should also verify that the plan is consistent with the customer's emergency response plan, should the customer have one.
 - **Recommendation:** An emergency response plan does not need to be complex. It should be tailored for the job site and may be as simple as providing the customer with an emergency contact number and providing sufficient resources to respond appropriately. BOMA has available an Emergency Planning Handbook that organizations may wish to review.
- 2.1.9. Disaster Planning: The organization should have a plan to prepare for and deal with natural or man-made disasters.
- **Explanation:** Disaster planning has become part of our culture. Since service organizations can be disproportionately impacted by a disaster, it is imperative that organizations plan accordingly.
 - **How to Comply:** Compliance with this element is established by providing the assessor with a copy of the organization's disaster response plan. The assessor will review the plan and verify that the organization is prepared to implement it.
 - **Recommendation:** There are numerous resources to assist an organization in developing a disaster response plan. One useful resource, which includes an easy-to-use template and checklists, is available at www.ready.gov
- 2.1.10. Invoicing/Charge-back Procedures: Invoicing/Charge-back procedures shall be documented.
- **Explanation:** The accuracy and timeliness of an organization's invoicing and/or charge-back procedure is often a reflection of the quality of service delivered. Thus, it is important that the procedure be uniformly applied.

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

- **How to Comply:** The organization must be able to demonstrate that its invoicing procedure is documented and consistently produces accurate output. For example, the organization may provide the assessor with a flow chart or written description of how invoices are created. The assessor will review the documented procedure and compare it to what actually occurs.

- **Recommendation:** Many financial software packages contain depictions of the invoice process. In larger organizations, the process may already be documented.

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

2.2. Purchasing Procedures

2.2.1. Product/Equipment Performance Evaluation: Supply and equipment performance evaluations shall be incorporated into the procurement process.

- **Explanation:** Simply stated, cleaning organizations need to make sure that they use products and equipment that work. Product selection, therefore, should include a careful evaluation of the product or equipment being considered to ensure that service delivery is not compromised. Ultimately, a procurement process that fails to include the evaluation of cleaning products and equipment runs the risk of negatively impacting service.
- **How to Comply:** An organization shall provide an assessor with examples of how product and equipment evaluations are conducted and included in the purchasing process. For example, a copy of a product evaluation or an e-mail referencing such evaluation could be used to meet this requirement.
- **Recommendation:** Many manufacturers, distributors, and cleaning consultants offer programs that will help satisfy the requirements of this element.

2.2.2. Standardization: The organization should use similar equipment and supplies in similar facility types.

- **Explanation:** Standardization of equipment and supplies is a widely accepted best practice.
- **How to Comply:** An organization can demonstrate compliance with this element by providing the assessor with an approved equipment and supply list. The assessors will then visit job site locations and determine whether the products and equipment used in the field are consistent with the provided lists.
- **Recommendation:** Many manufacturers, distributors, and cleaning consultants offer programs that will help satisfy the requirements of this element.

2.2.3. Inventory Control: Inventory management and supply control systems should be in place, in use, and appropriate for the organization.

- **Explanation:** Ensuring that sufficient resources are on-hand to complete work assignments is critically important to ensuring acceptable service delivery. Likewise, the need to efficiently manage inventory is always a concern for cleaning organizations. This element balances those two needs.
- **How to Comply:** The assessor will look for a process by which inventory is managed and supplies are ordered. Compliance could be demonstrated by order forms, inventory control sheets, or even through the use of

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

sophisticated software. An assessor shall focus his or her efforts on ensuring that the organization utilizes a system that works for the particular organization.

- **Recommendation:** Many manufacturers, distributors, and cleaning consultants offer tools that will help satisfy the requirements of this element.

2.2.4. Equipment Maintenance & Repair: The maintenance and repair of equipment should occur as the result of a planned process.

- **Explanation:** This element specifically pertains to vacuums over 28", carpet maintenance equipment, and floorcare equipment.

- **How to Comply:** In order to demonstrate compliance with this element, the organization must be able to show how it maintains equipment. Any of the following can be used as evidence of compliance: daily maintenance checklists, preventative maintenance service plans, or maintenance schedules.

- **Recommendation:** Many manufacturers, distributors, and cleaning consultants offer tools that will help satisfy the requirements of this element.

2.2.5. Contractor Management: To the extent that the organization employs contractors and/or subcontractors:

- 2.2.5.1. Their selection and management shall be set forth in a written plan.
- 2.2.5.2. There shall be evidence that the plan is implemented.
- 2.2.5.3. The plan shall require that subcontractors produce proof of insurance.

- **Explanation:** The use of contractors and/ or subcontractors can potentially expose an organization and its customers to unanticipated and unnecessary risk. This element endeavors to help organizations mitigate the risk.

- **How to Comply:** Compliance with this element is established by:
 1. The cleaning organization should present the assessor with a written plan that explains how the subcontractor was selected; and
 2. The assessor will review the documents to verify that:
 - a. The selected subcontractors meet selection criteria and,
 - b. The organization has obtained proof of insurance from the subcontractors as evidenced by certificates of insurance.

- **Recommendation:** An insurance carrier or risk management department may be able to offer assistance in meeting the requirements of this element.

- ❖ **Assessor's Note:** This element and its bulleted provisions are only applicable to those organizations that employ contractors and/ or subcontractors. In assessing compliance with this section and determining whether an organization complies with at least 60% of the recommended ("should") provisions, the assessor should not include these provisions in the calculation if they are not applicable.

2.2.6. Financial Controls: The organization should have appropriate financial controls over the procurement process including:

2.2.6.1. Supply and equipment requisition

- **How to Comply:** Organizations should produce requisition or order forms. The assessor will verify that they are being used by reviewing purchase records.

2.2.6.2. Approved vendor list

- **How to Comply:** Organizations should produce a list of approved vendors. A list may be created manually or may be available through the organization's procurement software. The assessor will validate the list by reviewing purchasing records.

2.2.6.3. Order placement

- **How to Comply:** The organization should define who is authorized to place orders. The policy can be fairly broad. For example, the policy may indicate that the site manager or team leader may place orders with approved vendors. It could also be quite narrow. For example, the policy may state that only Purchasing is authorized to place orders. Regardless of the policy, the assessor will confirm that it is followed by reviewing orders.

2.2.6.4. Receiving inventory

- **How to Comply:** The organization needs to demonstrate to the assessor that the receipt of merchandise is handled in a consistent manner across the organization. For example, the organization may require that all received merchandise be matched to an existing order.

2.2.6.5. Accounts payable

- **How to Comply:** The assessor will review the organization's accounts payable records to determine whether the organization (1) pays invoices on a predetermined schedule (of the organization's choosing), (2) ensures the accuracy and authenticity of paid invoices, and (3) processes accounts payable paperwork with a minimum of handling and expense.

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

3. Human Resources

It has been said that a cleaning organization's most important asset is its people. A cleaning organization will only operate in an efficient and professional manner if its employees are well-trained, customer-focused, and dedicated to delivering a quality service. Therefore, an organization must ensure that it efficiently and effectively manages its "human capital" in a way that enhances organizational performance. From hiring to training to the actual delivery of service, an organization's human resources, including both management and cleaning personnel, must be prepared to uphold the organization's commitment to quality.

- ❖ **Assessor's Note:** There is a total of 15 provisions contained in Section Three, six of which are mandatory ("shall"). Organizations seeking certification should demonstrate compliance with all six mandatory provisions and at least 60% of those provisions that are included as recommended elements (should) of the Standard. Those organizations that demonstrate compliance with at least 85% of the recommended elements are eligible for "Certification With Honors" classification.

3.1. Human Resource Policy: There shall be a written human resource policy.

- **Explanation:** A human resource policy is required because a successful organization relies on the collective efforts of a diverse workforce. The organization must, therefore, establish guidelines that govern the formulation and administration of the policy. Ultimately, an organization's human resource policy should act as a central reference tool in the management of employee relations policies.
- **How to Comply:** The organization establishes compliance with this section by presenting an assessor with its written human resource policy. An assessor may also wish to interview organization management to determine how the policy was developed and how it is implemented.
- **Recommendation:** The organization's Human Resource Department and legal counsel are primary resources. The Society for Resource Management's website (http://www.shrm.org/hrtools/policies_published) contains example policies that may be customized by an individual organization.

3.2. Hiring Practices

3.2.1. Recruitment: There should be a written plan for recruiting employees and a means of monitoring the plan's effectiveness.

- **Explanation:** Recruiting the right people is of paramount importance to the continued success of an organization, and an organization's recruitment policy can help ensure that the best people are recruited. The organization's human resource policy and recruiting plan should also help the organization abide by applicable laws and regulations.
- **How to Comply:** The organization must have a written plan that specifies the tools that are used in recruitment. For example, an organization might

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

use advertising, referral bonuses, job fairs, walk-in candidates, and/or billboards. The organization should indicate which methods are used and under which circumstances. The assessor will look for a coherent recruitment strategy and may interview management to discuss the organization's recruitment strategy.

- **Recommendation:** An organization's Human Resource Department and legal counsel are primary resources. The Society for Resource Management's website (http://www.shrm.org/hrtools/policies_published) contains example policies that may be customized by an individual organization.

3.2.2. Selection: There shall be a written procedure for selecting qualified employees.

- **Explanation:** Developing a clear employee-selection policy is important to ensure that the organization hires the best persons available.
- **How to Comply:** The assessor will review the organization's employee selection policy and relevant employment records. The policy may include information on the following:
 - Number of interviews to be conducted
 - Who is responsible for interviewing
 - Verification of application information
 - The conducting of background investigations
 - Drug testing
 - Reference checks

The above list is not meant to be exhaustive but rather to provide an example of the types of issues that should be addressed in the policy.

- **Recommendation:** An organization's Human Resource Department and legal counsel are primary resources. The Society for Resource Management's website (http://www.shrm.org/hrtools/policies_published) contains example policies that may be customized.

3.2.3. Retention: There should be a program in place to encourage and to measure employee retention.

- **Explanation:** Retaining employees and developing a stable work force can improve service and foster quality performance.
- **How to Comply:** The organization should be prepared to describe how it calculates employee turnover and retention and should provide retention and turnover records to the assessor. The assessor shall then review the tools, techniques, and programs that are used by the organization to retain employees. For example, if the organization uses incentives, a description of the program should be provided to the assessor and examples of its use should be evaluated. The assessor may also wish to interview organization management to discuss the organization's employee retention efforts to verify that tools are being implemented.

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

- **Recommendation:** An organization's Human Resource Department and legal counsel are primary resources. The Society for Resource Management's website (http://www.shrm.org/hrtools/policies_published) contains example policies.

3.3. Site-Specific Orientation

- 3.3.1. Each employee shall participate in a site-specific orientation program.
- 3.3.2. There should be written documentation that an orientation program occurred.

- **Explanation:** Each facility is different and comes with its own challenges that employees need to be aware of. Organizations that service multiple buildings or locations need to include site-specific issues such as safety, access, emergencies, and other unique requirements in the organization's general employee orientation program.

- **How to Comply:** This element does not necessarily require that an organization create separate policies for every location that it serves. To establish compliance with this element, it is sufficient for the orientation to reference site-specific requirements. The assessor will verify compliance by reviewing training records and interviewing staff members.

3.4. Executive Development: There should be an executive development program or a continuing executive education program.

- **Explanation:** Leadership in a rapidly changing environment requires a diverse and evolving skill set. The organization's leadership should be encouraged to continually acquire new skills and hone existing ones.
- **How to Comply:** This element applies specifically to presidents, vice-presidents, directors, and other upper management personnel of an organization. Executive development can take many forms including, but not limited to, attendance at trade shows, seminars, college and university courses, and industry specific training. The assessor verifies compliance by reviewing documentation of the executive's activities or conducting interviews with the executive to discuss the executive's ongoing educational activities. For example, certificates of completion would substantiate seminar attendance. A certification, such as one issued by IFMA or IEHA, would also satisfy the requirements of this element.
- **Recommendation:** Industry associations such as ISSA, IEHA, IFMA, BOMA, and APPA provide executive education programs that help fulfil this requirement.

3.5. Management Training

- 3.5.1. Technical: There should be a written curriculum for technical training of management and documentation that personnel have been trained.

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

- **Explanation:** Technical training refers to procedural training of cleaning techniques and processes (i.e., how to clean). An organization must document that the training has occurred.
- **How to Comply:** An organization should provide the assessor with access to the following:
 - The technical training curriculum.
 - Training materials. For example, handout materials, a video tape, DVD, or other materials used in the training.
 - Documentation that the training occurred. For example, training sign-in sheets.

The assessor will evaluate the items and may choose to randomly interview program participants.

- **Recommendation:** Industry associations such as ISSA, IEHA, and APPA have a vast array of training resources. For example, IEHA's certification could be used to demonstrate compliance with this element. In addition, many manufacturers, distributors, and cleaning consultants offer tools that will help satisfy the requirements of this element.

3.5.2. Leadership: There should be a written curriculum for leadership training of management and documentation that personnel have been trained.

- **Explanation:** A key characteristic of a successful organization is the presence of effective leadership. Organizations, therefore, should be committed to providing effective leadership training (synonymous with management training). It includes any topic that is not included as part of the technical training. An organization must document that the training has occurred.
- **How to Comply:** An organization should provide the assessor with access to the following:
 - The leadership training curriculum.
 - Training materials. For example, handout materials, a video tape, DVD, or other materials used in the training.
 - Documentation that the training occurred. For example, training sign-in sheets.

The assessor will evaluate the items and may choose to randomly interview program participants.

- **Recommendation:** Industry associations such as ISSA, IEHA, IFMA, and APPA have a vast array of leadership training resources, including certification programs. In addition, many manufacturers, distributors, and cleaning consultants offer tools that will help satisfy the requirements of this element.

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

3.6. Cleaning Personnel Training

3.6.1. Technical: There shall be a written curriculum for technical training of cleaning personnel and documentation that personnel have been trained.

- **Explanation:** Technical training refers to procedural training of cleaning techniques and processes (i.e.: how to clean). An organization must document that the training has occurred.

- **How to Comply:** An organization should provide the assessor with access to the following:
 - The technical training curriculum.
 - Training materials. For example, handout materials, a video tape, DVD, or other materials used in the training.
 - Documentation that the training occurred. For example, training sign-in sheets.

The assessor will evaluate the items and may choose to randomly interview program participants.

- **Recommendation:** Industry associations such as ISSA, IEHA, IICRC, and APPA have a vast array of training resources. In addition, many manufacturers, distributors, and cleaning consultants offer tools that will help satisfy the requirements of this element.

3.6.2. Customer Service Training: There should be a written curriculum for customer service training of cleaning personnel and documentation that personnel have been trained.

- **Explanation:** A quality cleaning organization is always focused on meeting the needs of the customer. It is, therefore, important to train cleaning personnel in customer service techniques. Customer service training includes, among other things, defining company-wide customer service standards, strategies for effective communication, and effective problem resolution. An organization must document that the training has occurred.

- **How to Comply:** An organization should provide the assessor with access to the following:
 - The technical training curriculum.
 - Training materials. For example, handout materials, a video tape, DVD, or other materials used in the training.
 - Documentation that the training occurred. For example, training sign-in sheets.

The assessor will evaluate the items and may choose to randomly interview program participants.

- **Recommendation:** Industry associations such as ISSA, IEHA, and APPA have a vast array of training resources. In addition, many manufacturers,

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

distributors, and cleaning consultants offer tools that will help satisfy the requirements of this element.

3.6.3. Personal Development: There should be a written training curriculum for non-technical skills of cleaning personnel and documentation that personnel have been trained.

- **Explanation:** It is not enough to train cleaning personnel in cleaning procedures, technical skills, and customer service. An organization should also train its employees in social interaction and personal development. Personal development training includes programs aimed at improving behavioral skills in dealing with oneself and others. An organization must document that the training has occurred.
- **How to Comply:** An organization should provide the assessor with access to the following:
 - The technical training curriculum.
 - Training materials. For example, handout materials, a video tape, DVD, or other materials used in the training.
 - Documentation that the training occurred. For example, training sign-in sheets.
- **Recommendation:** Industry associations such as ISSA, IEHA, and APPA have a vast array of training resources. In addition, many manufacturers, distributors, and cleaning consultants offer tools that will help satisfy the requirements of this element.

3.7. Training Format and Language: All management and cleaning personnel training shall be offered in a format and/or language that is easily understood by the trainee.

- **Explanation:** Communication is the key to effective learning. Training should be designed and provided in a manner that is easily understood by the trainees. In ensuring the training is provided in a format that is easily understood, an organization should take into account language, literacy and potential barriers.
- **How to Comply:** This element focuses on the effectiveness of training. The assessor will interview randomly selected training participants and evaluate how well the training was understood. The organization may also wish to provide the assessor with training materials to show that they are offered in a format and language that are easily understood by the trainees.

3.8. Security: The organization should have a written curriculum for training all personnel in security of the site owner's and customer's property.

- **Explanation:** Security is becoming more and more important in today's society, and cleaning organizations are being asked to take a more active role in ensuring that a customer's facility remains secure on an ever increasing basis. Organizations that service multiple buildings or locations, therefore, need to

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

augment their general orientation program to include site-specific security requirements and document that such training has occurred.

- **How to Comply:** This element does not necessarily require that an organization create separate training policies for every location that it serves. To establish compliance with this element, it is sufficient for the orientation to reference site-specific requirements. The assessor will verify compliance by reviewing training records and interviewing staff members.

3.9. Timekeeping/Payroll: The organization shall have a documented timekeeping and payroll system.

- **How to Comply:** An organization must be able to provide a succinct overview of how it tracks an employee's time and issues accurate payment. For example, the organization may present a flow chart to depict the process. The assessor will review the documentation and ensure that it is consistent with the organization's timekeeping records and payroll practices.
- **Recommendation:** An organization's payroll department or accounting firm may be able to provide the resources to comply with this element.

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

4. Health, Safety and, Environmental Stewardship

Quality cleaning and maintenance services are safe, healthy, and sustainable. They also should positively impact the built environment. This section addresses the processes, systems, and documentation, as they relate to an organization's commitment to health, safety, and environmental stewardship.

Because the majority of this section requires an organization to meet existing legal and regulatory obligations, compliance with most of the provisions is mandatory. Certain provisions, however, are specific to organizations operating within the United States and, therefore, international organizations seeking to meet the requirements of this section should comply with all parallel laws and/ or regulations that apply in their specific jurisdictions.

- ❖ **Assessor's Note:** There are a total of 35 provisions contained in Section Four, 25 of which are mandatory (shall), although one of the mandatory provisions is only applicable to building service contractors, and six provisions are only applicable to those organizations that conclude that exposure to blood or other potentially infectious material is reasonably foreseeable. Organizations seeking certification should demonstrate compliance with all applicable mandatory provisions and at least 60% of those provisions that are included as recommended elements (should) of the Standard. Those organizations that demonstrate compliance with at least 85% of the recommended elements are eligible for "Certification With Honors" classification. There are also two elements in Section Four that are optional ("may").

4.1. Regulatory Compliance

4.1.1. Employers shall comply with all pertinent provisions of the federal OSHA Hazard Communication Standard¹ and all comparable state requirements.

- **Explanation:** The federal OSHA Hazard Communication Standard is codified at 29 CFR 1910.1200 and, in general, seeks to prevent the occurrence of work-related injuries and illnesses through the effective communication of hazard information. Such information is communicated through the use of container labels, safety data sheets (SDS), and employee training.

4.1.1.1. Employers shall develop, implement, and maintain a written hazard communication program.

- **Explanation:** All workplaces where employees are exposed to hazardous chemical products must have a written hazard communication plan that describes how the OSHA Hazard Communication Standard will be implemented. The written program must reflect the particulars of an organization's general work operations.

For example, the written plan must include information on container labeling, material safety data sheets, and employee training; and it should list the chemicals present at the workplace, indicate who is to be responsible for various aspects of the

¹ 29 CFR 1910.1200

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

program at the facility, and indicate how written materials will be made available to employees.

- **How to Comply:** An organization must be prepared to present its written hazard communication plan to an assessor. The plan must be up-to-date and include all pertinent information. Further, the assessor should look for evidence that the plan has been implemented by verifying that hazard communication activities are carried out in a manner that is consistent with the plan. To accomplish such a goal, an assessor should interview key employees and assess compliance with the plan's individual provisions (Note: much of the evidence that will be needed to verify that the plan is being implemented will be required in assessing other elements in this section – i.e., the plan should require the labeling of chemical containers. Review of such containers is required in assessing compliance with the labeling element of this section).
- **Recommendation:** ISSA has available a sample written hazard communication plan that may be customized and used to demonstrate compliance with this element. The plan is available at <http://www.issa.com/legislative/SampleWrittenHazcomprogram.doc>.

4.1.1.2. Safety Data Sheets (SDS) shall be readily available for all hazardous chemical products. Each SDS shall match the current formulation of the corresponding chemical product.²

- **Explanation:** Safety data sheets represent the primary source of hazard information and must be up-to-date and readily accessible to workers. They should contain all pertinent physical and health hazard information, exposure limits, precautions for safe handling and use, and applicable control measures including personal protective equipment use requirements.

OSHA defines “readily accessible” to mean that employees must have immediate access at all times during their work shift, but it provides organizations with flexibility on how they maintain their SDSs. OSHA has officially noted that maintaining SDSs electronically (i.e.: computers, CD-ROMs, the Internet) is acceptable as long as there are no barriers to access and employees are adequately trained.

- **How to Comply:** Organizations should be prepared to show their material safety data sheets to an assessor. All SDSs must be up-to-date and readily accessible. Assessors should also interview workers to ensure that they know where SDSs are located, how to

² 29 CFR 1910.1200 (g)(1) and (g)(8)

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

access them, and what type of information is included. Assessors should also review the date of preparation of SDSs to ensure that they are current and compare SDSs to product labels to ensure consistency.

4.1.1.3. There shall be a Chemical Inventory that contains an accurate and complete list of all chemicals on site.³

- **Explanation:** The written hazard communication program is required to contain an accurate and complete list of chemicals known to be present on site. Chemicals included on the list should be identified consistent with their SDS. The list may be compiled for the workplace as a whole or for individual work areas.
- **How to Comply:** Assessors should ask to see the Chemical Inventory and should review the chemicals that are present on site to insure the inventory's accuracy and completeness. Checking closets, carts and other storage areas may be necessary to accomplish this task.

4.1.1.4. Employees who handle chemicals shall be trained on the use and hazards of those chemicals.⁴

- **Explanation:** Effective employee training is crucial. Employers are required to provide employees with information and training regarding the chemicals that they will use. Training must be provided prior to exposure to a hazardous chemical and whenever a new hazard is introduced into the work place.

Employee training shall include at least (1) methods that may be used to detect the presence of a hazardous chemical in the work area; (2) the physical and health hazards of the chemicals; (3) measures that can be taken to protect oneself from hazards, including specific procedures the organization has implemented to protect employees from exposure; and (4) the specific details of the required hazard communication program developed by the organization.

- **How to Comply:** Assessors should review training logs to ensure that all necessary employees have been trained. Assessors should also ask to see training materials to ensure that the training covers all relevant hazard communication issues (i.e., materials may include the written hazard communication plan and other written curriculum). Finally, assessors should interview employees to ask whether they have been trained and to inquire about their training experience. Employees, at a minimum, should exhibit a general

³ 29 CFR 1910.1200 (e)(1)(i)

⁴ 29 CFR 1910.1200 (h)(1)

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

understanding of the hazards associated with the chemicals with which they work and know where to obtain additional information.

- **Recommendation:** ISSA has available a sample employee hazard communication training program that may be customized and used to provide the required training. The sample employee training program is available at <http://www.issa.com/osha/topics.jsp?cat=240> (scroll down to the bottom of the page).

4.1.1.5. All chemical containers shall be labeled as required.⁵

- **Explanation:** Product labeling is an effective method to communicate hazard information. Intended to be an immediate visual reminder of the hazards presented by a chemical product, labels are required to include the identity of the product, all appropriate physical and health hazard warnings, and the name and address of a responsible party.

Portable containers into which hazardous chemicals are transferred must also be labeled with the identity of the chemical product and all appropriate hazard warnings, unless the transfer of the chemical is “intended only for the use of the employee who performs the transfer.”

- **How to Comply:** Assessors shall visit janitor closets and review product labels, including those affixed to portable containers, to ensure that they contain all required information. The required information must be prominently displayed, in English and legible.

4.1.1.6. Chemicals shall be used in a safe and proper manner and in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions.

- **Explanation:** Cleaning chemicals can be hazardous, especially if used in a manner that is inconsistent with the manufacturer’s instructions. All employees who will handle and use potentially hazardous chemicals shall be trained in their safe and proper use.
- **How to Comply:** Assessors need to personally observe employees using chemicals to ensure that chemicals are being used in a manner that is safe and consistent with the manufacturer’s instructions. Assessors may wish to interview employees to gauge whether they are familiar with the manufacturer’s instructions and

⁵ 29 CFR 1910.1200 (f)(1)(i)

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

follow up by asking employees to demonstrate the use of chemicals. A review of training curriculum may also provide evidence that employees have been trained in the safe and proper use of chemicals.

4.1.2. Chemicals should be stored according to their classification.

4.1.2.1. There shall be a spill containment plan and documented employee training.

- **Explanation:** A chemical spill can be one of the most frightening accidents that a cleaning organization may face. As such, it requires immediate attention and an efficient emergency response effort. Organizations should be prepared for chemical spills by training employees regarding what to do in case of a spill and by instructing those individuals who will be responsible for responding to a spill on the procedures to be followed.
- **How to Comply:** Assessors should review the organization's spill containment plan and ask key management personnel to explain its contents. Further, assessors should review training logs to ensure that all necessary employees have been trained, as well as training materials to ensure that the training covers all relevant spill containment issues and procedures. Finally, assessors may wish to ask key employees about spill containment procedures.

4.1.2.2. There shall be a waste disposal and recycling plan and documented employee training.

- **Explanation:** Cleaning organizations must have a plan concerning how waste is to be handled and what is to be recycled. All employees who will be responsible for waste handling and disposal and recycling must be trained. Building service contractor organizations may deviate from their organizational plan to meet the specific requirements of the facility.
- **How to Comply:** Assessors should review the organization's waste disposal and recycling plan, if available. Assessors should further investigate the area where waste disposal and recycling services are performed to ensure that the proper equipment is available and that the plan is being followed. Should an organization deviate from the plan in order to meet the requirements of the facility customer, management personnel should fully explain the circumstances to the assessor.

Assessors should also review training logs to ensure that all necessary employees have been trained, as well as training

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

materials to ensure that the training covers all relevant waste disposal and recycling procedures.

- 4.1.3. There shall be documentation that describes the organization's selection and use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). The employer shall comply with all applicable OSHA and state requirements for PPE.⁶

- **Explanation:** OSHA requires that appropriate personal protective equipment is "provided, used, and maintained in a sanitary and reliable condition whenever it is necessary..." to protect workers from hazards. In general, under OSHA law, employers are required to determine whether workplace hazards trigger the need for PPE (and document their workplace assessment in a "written certification"), ensure that appropriate PPE is selected and used, provide training to employees who use PPE, and, in many cases, pay for the equipment.

Employers must also make sure that PPE is suitable for protection from identified hazards, is properly fitted, and is not defective or damaged in any way.

Types of PPE that may be necessary in the cleaning industry include eye and face protection, head protection, foot protection, hand protection, and respiratory protection.

- **How to Comply:** Assessors should review the organization's documented "certification" that a full workplace hazard assessment has been performed and other documentation that explains the selection and use of PPE. Assessors should look at PPE that is being used to ensure that it is not in disrepair and witness PPE being used on the job (if practical). Assessors will also wish to review training logs to ensure that all necessary employees have been trained on the use of PPE. Finally, Assessors may wish to interview employees and ask them to demonstrate the use of PPE.

- 4.1.4. If cleaning personnel are required to clean blood or other potentially infectious material spills, the organization shall comply with the OSHA Bloodborne Pathogen Standard⁷ or applicable state requirements.

- **Explanation:** The federal Bloodborne Pathogens Standard requires that employers take steps to minimize or eliminate the risk of exposure to bloodborne pathogens and other potentially infectious material if exposure to such material is reasonably foreseeable.

OSHA generally does not consider maintenance personnel and janitorial staff employed in non-health care facilities to have a foreseeable exposure to bloodborne pathogens. Further, OSHA does NOT consider janitorial employees to be exposed to blood or OPIM when emptying waste containers that may contain discarded sanitary napkins or feminine hygiene products

⁶ 29 CFR 1910 Subpart I

⁷ 29 CFR 1910.1030

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

designed to absorb menstrual flow. In addition, OSHA does not consider exposure to feces, nasal secretions, sputum, sweat, tears, urine, vomit, or saliva to be regulated under the Bloodborne Pathogens Standard.

Despite the general rule that such products and bodily fluids/ secretions do not qualify as regulated waste under the Bloodborne Pathogens Standard, employers are reminded that, ultimately, it is the employer's responsibility to determine which job classifications and specific tasks may involve potential exposure and to take all necessary action to protect employees from such exposure.

➤ **How to Comply:** Assessors must discuss with organization management whether exposure is reasonably foreseeable. If management claims that exposure is not foreseeable, a written statement shall be signed by a representative of the organization and submitted to the assessor.

❖ **Assessor's Note:** This element and its bulleted provisions are only applicable to those organizations who engage in activities that may result in reasonably foreseeable exposure to blood or other potentially infectious material. In assessing compliance with this section and determining whether an organization complies with at least 60% of the recommended ("should") provisions, the assessor should not include these provisions in the calculation if they are not applicable.

Provisions that must be complied with include, but are not limited to, the following:

4.1.4.1. The organization shall establish a written Exposure Control Plan that is reviewed and updated annually⁸.

➤ **Explanation:** If exposure is reasonably foreseeable, organizations are required to draft and adopt an Exposure Control Plan. Such plan should include a summary of possible exposure scenarios, a listing of methods that should be used to minimize the risk of exposure (i.e., the use of PPE and the adoption of specific housekeeping procedures), and a procedure for the evaluation of the circumstances surrounding an exposure that does occur. An Exposure Control Plan should be reviewed and updated annually.

➤ **How to Comply:** Assessors should review the Exposure Control Plan and verify that it includes all required information. Assessors should discuss with organization management when the plan was last reviewed and updated and may interview employees about their familiarity with the plan.

➤ **Recommendation:** ISSA and OSHA have available a sample written Exposure Control Plan that may be customized by an organization and used to demonstrate compliance with this element. The plan is available at: <http://www.osha.gov/Publications/osh3186.pdf>.

⁸ 29 CFR 1030(c)(1)

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

- 4.1.4.2. Employees shall be trained annually on the hazards of cleaning blood and/or other potentially infectious material, and proper use of PPE.⁹

Explanation: Employees who may potentially become exposed to bloodborne pathogens and other material are required to be trained on an annual basis. The training program shall include an explanation of the organization's Exposure Control Plan, a description of methods that can prevent or reduce exposure, and information on procedures to be followed should an exposure occur. An employee must receive initial training prior to being placed in a position where exposure may occur and on an annual basis thereafter.

- **How to Comply:** Assessors should review training logs to determine whether all relevant employees have been trained. A review of the training materials should also be conducted to ensure that the training has covered all necessary issues concerning exposure to potentially infectious material. Finally, an assessor may wish to interview employees to inquire about the training process, including whether training was offered in a format and language that the employee can understand, and to ensure that they understand the hazards.

- 4.1.4.3. A written procedure for cleaning blood spills shall be implemented.¹⁰

- **Explanation:** It is not enough to simply list various methods designed to minimize the risk of exposure. Organizations are also required to implement such methods – including a written procedure for cleaning blood spills. The procedure should include decontamination with an “appropriate disinfectant.”
- **How to Comply:** Assessors shall review the written procedure for cleaning blood spills and verify that it is understood and is followed. Since it is not likely that an assessor will have an opportunity to witness the cleanup of an actual blood spill, the assessor shall interview employees to ensure that they understand the procedure and utilize it when necessary.
Assessors shall also review whether the organization has available an “appropriate disinfectant” to perform the necessary decontamination by verifying EPA Registration on the product label (evidenced by the listing of an EPA registration number and establishment number).

- 4.1.4.4. Employees shall be offered the Hepatitis B vaccine.¹¹

⁹ 29 CFR 1910.1030(g)(2)

¹⁰ 29 CFR 1910.1030(d)(4)

¹¹ 29 CFR 1910.1030(f)(2)

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

- **Explanation:** Employers are required to make available a Hepatitis B vaccination after an employee has undergone training and within 10 working days of being assigned to a position where exposure is foreseeable. The Hepatitis vaccination must be made available at no cost to the employee.
- **How to Comply:** Assessors shall ask employees whether they have been offered a Hepatitis B vaccination. Organizations may also wish to demonstrate compliance by showing the assessor any documentation regarding their vaccination program, including an offer to provide and declination forms from employees who have elected not to receive the vaccine.

4.1.4.5. Employees shall be trained on handling found sharps.¹²

- **Explanation:** Should an employee find a needle or other sharp, he/she needs to know what to do with it. Needles and sharps shall not be bent or recapped unless no other alternative is feasible and, if practical, shall be disposed of in an appropriate container until reprocessed.
- **How to Comply:** An assessor shall review training logs and training materials to ensure that all relevant employees have been trained on procedures to follow when handling sharps. The assessor may also wish to interview employees to verify that they understand what to do should they find a needle.

4.1.5. A qualified person shall inspect the workplace as often as necessary to identify defective equipment or unsafe working conditions.

- **Explanation:** Worker safety is crucial for everyone involved in the cleaning industry and, ultimately, each organization is responsible for making sure that the workplace is as safe as possible. To protect safety in the workplace, it is important for an organization to make sure that equipment does not present an unreasonable safety hazard and that overall conditions are not such that workers face unacceptable risks.

An organization shall, therefore, have a “qualified” individual conduct a comprehensive inspection of the workplace for hazards as often as necessary. A “qualified” individual is someone who has demonstrated knowledge of safety in the workplace and the organization’s operations. Although each organization must determine how often an inspection should be performed based on the organization’s unique circumstances, it is recommended to conduct such an inspection at least on monthly basis.

- **How to Comply:** In that it is extremely unlikely that the assessor will be able to witness the “qualified” representative actually conducting the inspection,

¹² 29 CFR 1910.1030 (d)(2)(vii) and (viii)

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

assessors should, if possible, engage in a discussion with the qualified individual about the inspection procedure and his or her qualifications. Otherwise, a discussion with the organization's management should be conducted. If inspection records are maintained, assessors should review them to verify that safety inspections are occurring and at a reasonable frequency.

- 4.1.6. Employers shall comply with all other applicable OSHA and/or state employee safety and health regulations.

- **Explanation:** The aforementioned OSHA Standards on Hazard Communication, PPE and Bloodborne Pathogens are not the only federal safety and health regulations that cleaning organizations need to be concerned about. There are numerous additional regulations that may apply to a particular situation.

Further, cleaning organizations also have to ensure compliance with any and all state laws and regulations that exist. For example, New York City, New Jersey and Pennsylvania all have adopted their own hazard communication requirements that differ from what is required by federal OSHA. In California, Proposition 65 contains labeling requirements that cleaning organizations may need to be concerned about.

- **How to Comply:** Organizations should be prepared to discuss all OSHA and state safety and health citations that have been issued in the previous three years. Assessors should be assured that an organization does not have any unresolved OSHA citations and may ask a representative of the organization to sign a written statement that there are no outstanding or unresolved citations.
Assessors certainly should not witness any violations during an assessment, and all interviews, reviews and discussions should present an overall impression of a commitment to worker safety.

4.2. Organization Policy/Environmental Management System

- 4.2.1. The organization shall have an environmental policy.

- **Explanation:** Cleaning organizations have an unavoidable and direct impact on the natural environment. That said, it is the responsibility of each organization to protect the environment to the greatest extent possible and each organization must have a written environmental policy that recognizes the effects of its activities on the environment and commits the organization to conducting its business in an eco-friendly manner.
- **How to Comply:** Assessors should ask to see the organization's written environmental policy.

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

- **Recommendation:** Many manufacturers, distributors and cleaning consultants may be able to assist you in the creation of an environmental policy.
- 4.2.1.1. There should be a written statement of the organization’s commitment to environmental ethics.
- **Explanation:** An organization’s environmental policy should include a general statement of the organization’s commitment to environmental ethics. The statement can be as simple as “ABC Cleaning Organization is committed to providing services that have the least possible impact on the natural environment.”
 - **How to Comply:** In reviewing the organization’s environmental policy, assessors should look to ensure that it includes a statement of the organization’s commitment to environmental ethics.
- 4.2.1.2. The policy should be appropriate to the nature, scale and environmental impact of the organization’s services.
- **Explanation:** While every cleaning organization is likely to affect the natural environment in some way, the impact depends on a number of factors, including the nature and scale of the organization’s services. For example, a cleaning organization that removes graffiti from the exterior of buildings will impact the environment differently from a cleaning organization whose primary service is general interior surface cleaning. The organization’s environmental policy should be customized to consider the specific environmental impacts that are caused by the organization’s unique services.
 - **How to Comply:** The assessor needs to review the organization’s environmental policy to ensure that it is reasonable, relevant, and applicable to the organization’s specific services.
- 4.2.1.3. The policy should have a commitment to continual improvement.
- **Explanation:** A cleaning organization needs to continue improving on its environmental performance, and its environmental policy should express a commitment to continual improvement. Whether improvement means the use of chemical products with a preferred environmental and health profile or a reduction in the use of paper goods, the policy should express a commitment to looking for new ways to mitigate an organization’s impact on the environment.

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

- **How to Comply:** The assessor needs to review the organization's environmental policy to ensure that it includes a statement of the organization's commitment to continual improvement in safeguarding the environment. The assessor may also interview management to discuss what improvements have been made in the recent past to verify that the organization is truly committed to improvement.

4.2.1.4. The policy should have a commitment to pollution prevention.

- **Explanation:** A reduction in the amount of waste generated by a cleaning organization is an extremely important goal. Further, an organization needs to conduct its activities in a manner that minimizes the possibility of spills and other releases to as great an extent as possible. As such, an organization's environmental policy should include a statement committing the organization to pollution prevention. The statement may be as simple as "ABC Cleaning Organization is committed to pollution prevention and a reduction in the generation of waste."
- **How to Comply:** The assessor should review the environmental policy to ensure that it includes a statement of the organization's commitment to pollution prevention. The assessor may also wish to interview management to determine the steps that the organization is taking to reduce the amount of waste that is generated and to minimize the possibility that a spill or release may occur.

4.2.1.5. The environmental objectives and goals as stated in the policy should be reviewed at least once every twenty-four months.

- **Explanation:** An environmental policy is not a document that can be drafted and then simply placed on a shelf where it sits untouched for years. The environmental movement is largely still in its infancy, and we learn more and more about how our services impact the environment every day. Further, great advancements are being made in the development of products and methods that help protect the environment. It is, therefore, necessary to review an environmental policy at least every two years.
- **How to Comply:** An assessor should interview management and discuss how often the policy is reviewed and updated. Management should talk about changes that have been made to the policy in the last two years. The actual policy may also be dated and should be no more than two years old.

4.2.1.6. The policy shall be implemented and maintained.

- **Explanation:** It is not enough to simply draft an environmental policy. Rather, a cleaning organization needs to actually follow through and perform its services in a manner that is consistent with the policy. For example, if the policy mandates that the organization will use

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

environmentally friendly equipment, then such equipment shall actually be used on the job.

- **How to Comply:** The assessor should witness services being performed to the greatest extent possible to assure that they are being performed in a manner that is consistent with the organization's environmental policy. The assessor may also need to investigate what equipment and chemical products are available and being used to ensure consistency with the policy. In conducting an assessment, the assessor should not observe any activity being performed which is inconsistent with a commitment to protecting the environment.

The assessor should also interview management and cleaning personnel to determine as to the manner in which services are performed.

4.2.1.7. The policy should be communicated to all employees.

- **Explanation:** A cleaning organization's employees are the individuals who are ultimately responsible for seeing that the environmental policy is actually implemented in the workplace. It is important, therefore, to make sure that all employees are aware of the environmental policy, understand what it requires, and are prepared to put it into action.
- **How to Comply:** The assessor should interview cleaning personnel to ensure that employees are aware of the policy and understand what it requires. If the environmental policy is included as part of an employee training program, management may show training logs and materials to demonstrate that it has been communicated.

4.2.1.8. The policy may be available to the public.

- **Explanation:** Organizations may elect to make their environmental policy available to the public at their own discretion.
- **How to Comply:** The assessor may interview management to discuss how the organization makes the environmental policy available to the public.

4.2.2. Capability to Meet Customer Environmental and Safety Requirements

4.2.2.1. The customer may define its environmental and safety expectations for the site.

- **Explanation:** The ISSA Cleaning Industry Management Standard does not require the use of environmentally preferable products or services. Rather, the Standard expects a cleaning organization to meet the expectations and requirements of its customers, regardless of whether the customer requests the use of traditional products or those with a preferred environmental and health profile. Ultimately, the customer will define the environmental and

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

safety requirements and it is the organization's responsibility to meet such requirements

- **How to Comply:** The assessor shall review randomly selected customer files, including customer evaluations, surveys and other measurement tools, to determine whether the organization is meeting the customer's expectations and requirements. Such documentation shall not indicate an unwillingness or inability to meet all reasonable customer requirements. The assessor may also wish to interview organization management to discuss how the organization ensures that they will be able to meet a customer's environmental and safety requirements.

4.2.2.2. At outsourced sites, the contractor shall have a written plan for how they will comply with customer requirements.

- **Explanation:** A building service contractor organization needs to have a written plan that outlines how they will ensure that they are capable of meeting a customer's requirements. The plan should include a statement expressing the organization's commitment to meeting a customer's requirements.
- **How to Comply:** The assessor should review the building service contractor organization's written plan for how they will comply with customer requirements.
 - ❖ **Assessor's Note:** The element contained in provision 4.2(b), bullet # 2 is only applicable to building service contractors. In assessing compliance with this section, the assessor should remember that in-house service providers are not required to comply with this element.

4.2.3. Workplace Safety and Health Program

4.2.3.1. The organization shall have a workplace safety and health policy.

- **Explanation:** Protecting the safety and health of workers is of paramount importance. Cleaning organizations, therefore, must have a written workplace safety and health policy. Such a policy should express a commitment to workplace health and safety, outline methods to be implemented to promote employee health and safety, and commit the organization to taking all reasonable steps to prevent injuries, not only to workers, but to visitors and members of the public.

An organization's workplace safety and health policy may include statements outlining safe work practices, safe driving, and how equipment and chemicals are to be used and maintained to promote workplace safety.

- **How to Comply:** The assessor should review the organization's safety and health policy to ensure that it is reasonable and thorough.

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

- **Recommendation:** Many manufacturers, distributors and cleaning consultants may be able to assist in the creation of a workplace safety and health policy.

4.2.3.2. Management and employees shall receive documented training in safe work practices.

- **Explanation:** Ultimately, it is up to cleaning management and personnel to ensure that safe work practices are followed. The first necessary step is to ensure that all appropriate persons are fully trained and that such training is documented. The training should include details of the organization's workplace safety and health policy, information on how a safe work environment can be maintained, and an explanation of how equipment and products shall be used to protect worker safety. Training in safe work practices should be repeated as often as necessary or at least on a biannually.

- **How to Comply:** The assessor shall review training logs and the materials that are used as part of the organization's safe work practices training program to ensure that all relevant employees have received the necessary training. Training on safe work practices will likely be part of the general employee training program as required in section 3.6 (a) (Cleaning Personnel Training: Technical) of this Standard.

4.2.3.3. Management and employees shall be trained in how to investigate and report near-miss accidents and incidents.

- **Explanation:** Near-miss accidents and incidents, while certainly undesirable, offer a tremendous learning opportunity for a cleaning organization and its employees. Employees, therefore, should be trained in how to investigate and report their occurrence so the organization can take all necessary action to prevent such incidents from happening again. The training should include information on how to recognize near-miss incidents and accidents, how to determine the potential cause and to whom relevant information should be reported.

- **How to Comply:** The assessor should review training logs and the materials that are used to conduct the training to ensure that all relevant employees have received the necessary training. Training on how to investigate and report near-miss incidents and accidents will likely be part of the general employee training program as required in this Standard.

4.2.3.4. Management shall review the program at least once every twenty-four months.

- **Explanation:** A cleaning organization's safety and health program and policy needs to be reviewed and updated (if necessary) at least every two years. In conducting an evaluation of the program, an organization should review its safety performance over the preceding two years and consider where workplace safety needs to be improved and ways to achieve such improvement.

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

- **How to Comply:** An assessor should interview organization management and discuss how often the policy is reviewed and updated. Management should talk about changes that have been made to the policy in the last two years. The actual policy may also be dated and should be no more than two years old.
- 4.2.3.5. There should be a written program that tracks all workplace injuries and illnesses and demonstrates what actions have been implemented to minimize a recurrence of the injuries.
- **Explanation:** OSHA requires most private sector employers, including all cleaning organizations with more than ten employees, to prepare and maintain records of work-related injuries and illnesses. Specifically, employers are required to record each injury, illness and fatality that (a) is work related; (b) is a “new case;” and (c) meets certain general or specific recording criteria. Employers who are subject to the OSHA injury and illness record keeping requirements must create a report for each injury/ illness, keep a general log of injuries and illnesses that occur over the course of a year, and post an injury/ illness summary on an annual basis.

Even those organizations that are not required to prepare and maintain records under the law, should do so in order to better understand where workplace safety can be improved and what steps can be taken to avoid injuries and illnesses in the future.

- **How to Comply:** The assessor should ask to review the organization’s injury and illness reports, logs and summaries. Further, if the organization has a written program on how to deal with workplace injuries and illnesses, it should be presented for review. The assessor will also wish to interview management to determine what steps have been taken in response to injuries and illnesses that have occurred in order to prevent their reoccurrence.

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

5. Management Commitment

Effective management and the implementation of appropriate management systems is key to ensuring the delivery of quality service that meets the customer's expectations. An organization needs to have either a clearly defined vision for the future or an understanding of its mission, should actively plan for the future, and should be prepared for times of organizational change. A well-managed organization should also have well-defined organizational roles and responsibilities and an effective communication plan. Finally, an organization should ensure that it is in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations and has secured all necessary insurance and licensing.

- ❖ **Assessor's Note:** There are a total of nine provisions contained in Section Five, seven of which are mandatory ("shall"). Organizations seeking certification should demonstrate compliance with all seven mandatory provisions and at least 60% of those provisions that are included as recommended elements (should) of the Standard. Those organizations that demonstrate compliance with at least 85% of the recommended elements are eligible for "Certification With Honors" classification.

5.1. Mission, Vision, Values: The organization shall document at least one of the following:

- 5.1.1. A written vision for its future.
- 5.1.2. A clearly written mission statement.

- **Explanation:** Organizations are given the option of having a vision statement and/or a mission statement. Flexibility is given to accommodate differences in meaning associated with the terms "vision" and "mission". The essence of this element is to ensure that organizations have some sort of statement that guides employees in making critical decisions that affect the direction of the organization.
- **How to Comply:** Compliance with this element requires providing the assessor with a copy of the organization's vision and/ or mission statement.

5.2. Planning: The organization should have plans to address two of the following three areas:

- **Explanation:** Planning for the future helps breed success and this element recognizes that organizations have different planning needs. In order to comply with this element, therefore, an organization need only have two of the following three types of plans: strategic plan, business continuity plan, and training plan.

5.2.1. Strategic Plan: There may be a strategic plan that is used as a guide to meet future goals.

- **Explanation:** Strategic Planning can be thought of as the road map that guides an organization from where it currently is to where it would like to be over a period of time (typically a five to ten-year period). Strategic plans often include:
 1. The organization's mission statement
 2. A description of the organization's long-term goals and objectives.

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

3. An action plan that enables the organization to attain its goals and objectives.

- **How to Comply:** Compliance with this element requires providing the assessor with a copy of the organization's strategic plan.
- **Recommendation:** The Small Business Administration (www.sba.gov) offers free resources to assist in the strategic planning process.

5.2.2. Business Continuity Plan/Succession Planning: There may be a plan for the continuation of daily business if a change in management occurs.

- **Explanation:** Changes in management can prevent an organization from fulfilling its service commitments. While business continuity/succession planning should apply to all levels of the organization, this element requires that the organization identify successors for all managers that have responsibility for ten or more people.
- **How to Comply:** Compliance with this element requires providing the assessor with a copy of the organization's business continuity/ succession plan. The plan should identify how a management position will be staffed if the person who currently holds the position is unable to fulfill the position's responsibilities. For example, an organization's plan might list all of the positions that have responsibility for ten or more people and describe how the position will be covered until a successor is selected. Note that it is unnecessary to describe the selection process because appropriate selection procedures are required in Section Three of this Standard.

5.2.3. Training Plan: The organization may have a detailed training plan that covers all aspects of an operation to ensure that all policies and procedures are understood and adhered to.

- **Explanation:** This element requires policy and procedure training that typically takes place at the time of hire or shortly thereafter. It often is conducted as part of the organization's general on-going training program. Note: The training required under this element is not the same as the training required of cleaning personnel and management in Section Three of this Standard.
- **How to Comply:** To comply with this element the organization should provide the assessor with the training curriculum listing topics covered and documentation that the training occurred (i.e., policy acknowledgments and training logs). The assessor will evaluate the records and may choose to randomly interview employees to verify that the training took place.

5.3. Responsibility and Authority

5.3.1. Organizational Chart: There shall be a clearly defined organizational chart that is accurate, up-to-date, and easy to follow.

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

- **Explanation:** Clearly defining responsibilities within an organization promotes communication and problem resolution.
- **How to Comply:** Organizations should provide the assessor with a current copy of the organization chart. The assessor will then evaluate whether the chart is accurate by comparing the actual reporting process with the one depicted in the organizational chart.
- **Recommendation:** A wide variety of resources is available to assist an organization in creating an organization chart. While such resources can be very helpful, it is not necessary that they be used. A hand drawn chart is sufficient to establish compliance with this element.

5.3.2. Job Descriptions: There should be accurate and up-to-date job descriptions for every position within the organization.

- **Explanation:** Job positions provide clarity by informing, communicating, and aligning performance. A job description should contain a list of responsibilities and functions that are required in a particular job. Job descriptions will vary in complexity based on an organization's needs.
- **How to Comply:** Organizations should provide the assessor with a job description for each position included on the organization chart.
- **Recommendation:** Industry associations such as ISSA, IEHA, IFMA, and APPA have a vast array of resources that may be helpful. In addition, many manufacturers, distributors, and cleaning consultants offer tools that will help satisfy the requirements of this element. There are also numerous resources available outside of the cleaning industry.

5.4. Communication Plan

5.4.1. The organization shall have clear procedures for effective communication among all levels of the organization.

- **Explanation:** As an organization grows, inter-organizational communication becomes increasingly important yet more difficult to manage. This element requires that the organization define the primary method of communication within the organization for:
 - quality control
 - service delivery
 - human resource issues
 - procurement
 - general administrative matters
- **How to Comply:** To comply with this section, the organization should be able to provide the assessor with a description of its communication practices. For example, the organization may require that all human resource matters be communicated in writing. The assessor will then verify that the procedures are being followed. It is likely necessary for the assessor

Cleaning Industry Management Standard Certification Guide

to interview organization management to best understand the organization's communication procedures.

- 5.4.2. The organization shall have procedures for communication and feedback to customers.
- **Explanation:** Regular and on-going customer communication is essential to building relationships and improving service.
 - **How to Comply:** The organization should demonstrate to the assessor that it has developed and maintains a process for continuous customer communication. For example, the organization could define the frequencies at which customer visits take place. The assessor will then verify that the procedures are being followed.

5.5. Risk Management

- 5.5.1. The organization shall affirm that it is in compliance with all applicable local, state, provincial, and federal safety laws and regulations.
- **How to Comply:** This element requires that the organization provide the assessor with a statement, signed by an officer of the organization, that affirms that the organization believes itself to be in compliance with all applicable local, state, provincial, and federal safety laws and regulations.
- 5.5.2. The organization shall produce proof of appropriate insurance.
- **How to Comply:** The organization shall provide the assessor with certificates of insurance or copies of insurance policies as evidence that the organization maintains appropriate coverage given the scale and scope of the organization's operations.
 - **Recommendation:** The organization's insurance carrier, agent, or risk management department should be of assistance in complying with this element.
- 5.5.3. The organization shall produce proof of proper licensing.
- **How to Comply:** The organization complies with this element by providing the assessor with copies of any licenses that are required to operate the business. For example, an organization that offers pest management services may be required to maintain a license.

Index

A

appropriate, i, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 17, 18, 30, 31, 34, 36, 40, 42, 43, 45

B

budgeting, 13, 14

C

cleaning, i, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 43, 44
cleaning personnel, 5, 10, 20, 24, 25, 32, 38, 40, 43
cleaning service requirements, 7, 8
communication plan, 27, 28, 29, 42, 44
complaints, 10, 11
contingency planning, 15
continuous improvement plan, 11
contractor management, 18
corrective action plan, 11
customer, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 20, 24, 25, 26, 31, 38, 39, 42, 45
customer evaluations, 10, 39

D

definitions, 5
disaster planning, 16
due diligence, 5

E

element, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 32, 33, 39, 42, 43, 44, 45
emergency response, 15, 16, 30
employee orientation, 22
employees, 5, 8, 9, 20, 21, 22, 25, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 38, 40, 41, 42, 43
environmental management system, 36
environmental policy, 36, 37, 38
executive development, 23

F

financial controls, 18

H

hazard communication standard (osha)
chemical inventory, 28, 29
material safety data sheets, 27, 28
written hazard communication program, 27, 29
hiring, 20
human resources, 20

I

industry-accepted, 6, 12
inspections, 10, 35
insurance, i, 12, 18, 42, 45
introduction, 3
inventory control, 17

J

job descriptions, 44

L

licensing, 42, 45

M

management, i, 3, 4, 6, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 31, 32, 33, 35, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45
management commitment, 42
materially interested parties, 4, 6, 9
may, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 42, 43, 44, 45

N

non-technical training, 6

O

organization, i, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45
organizational chart, 43, 44

P

personal protective equipment, 28, 31
potentially infectious material, 6, 27, 32, 33
purchasing, 12, 17, 19
purpose, i, 3, 4, 6

Q

quality plan, 6, 7, 8, 9
quality system, 7, 12

R

reasonable, i, 5, 6, 9, 12, 13, 35, 36, 39
regulatory compliance, 27
risk management, 18, 45

S

safety and health program and policy, 40
scope, 3, 7, 8, 9, 12, 45
scope of work, 7, 8, 9, 12
section, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 18, 20, 27, 28, 32, 39, 40,
42, 43, 44
security, 26
service delivery, 12, 17, 44

service delivery plan, 12
shall, i, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21,
22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35,
36, 38, 39, 40, 42, 43, 44, 45
should, i, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16,
17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29,
30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42,
43, 44, 45
special requests, 15
staffing plan, 13
standard of care, 6
strategic plan, 42, 43
suitable, 6, 9, 31
surveys, 9, 10, 39

T

technical training, 6, 23, 24, 25
training, 6, 9, 14, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30,
31, 32, 33, 34, 38, 40, 42, 43
non-technical training, 6
technical training, 6, 23, 24, 25
training plan, 42, 43

W

workloading, 12, 13, 14