

## PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR SAFETY

The Short Line Safety Institute has adopted the U.S. Department of Transportation Safety Council's definition of a Strong Safety Culture, defined as "the shared values, actions, and behaviors that demonstrate a commitment to safety over competing goals and demands." A strong safety culture contains 10 core elements (<https://www.shortlinesafety.org/about/strong-safety-culture/>).

### Element 6: "Employees Feel Personally Responsible for Safety"

*Employees who feel personally responsible for safety take more ownership in following safety procedures and are also more likely to speak up when they see other employees behaving in an unsafe manner. Personal responsibility empowers employees and helps the entire organization identify and correct risks proactively.*

Below are a few steps employees can take to become leaders in safety at their railroads.



#### Employees should:

- Always conduct yourself professionally while remaining mindful of your own safety and the safety of others.
- Know and follow all your employer's health and safety rules such as safe work practices and standard operating procedures.
- Be familiar with the FRA safety requirements that regulate the rail industry. Know the emergency and evacuation procedures and the location of emergency equipment on your jobsite. Preparation before an emergency occurs leads to clear thinking and immediate action that can save lives.
- Attend all safety training that your employer offers and ensure personal understanding by asking questions and participating in associated discussions.
- Serve as a good role model to co-workers for safe work practices and behavior.
- Always wear the appropriate PPE required for your job tasks.
- Talk with your supervisor about safety. If you have an idea or suggestion to create a safer work environment, speak up!
- Report all accidents and near misses immediately to your supervisor. Lessons learned and communicated from these reports can lead to a safer workplace.



**In any industry, when the responsibility for safety in the workplace is shared from the top down and the bottom up, everyone wins!**