

Massachusetts Training and Documentation Requirements for Challenge Course & Climbing Wall Facilities

Line of Business: General Liability

Risk Control Strategy / Key Issues: To establish a program for training staff that operate, inspect and maintain climbing wall and challenge course facilities.

Introduction:

Effective September 1, 2007, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts established administrative provisions including license and permit issuance, fees, and inspections for business entities operating Climbing Wall Facilities. The code of regulations requires that staff and employees be trained to operate, inspect and maintain the facility and equipment.

Training

- A staff training plan must be maintained that identifies and addresses the minimum operational requirements of the Climbing Wall Facility.
- An employee performance evaluation system that evaluates employee performance periodically must be developed and implemented.
- The owner of the facility must ensure that all employees are qualified to operate the fixed artificial climbing structure according to the ACS manufacturer's instructions as described in the manufacturer's operating manual, climbing equipment manufacturers' instructions, commonly accepted climbing practices, and Climbing Wall Associations standards.

Records

- Records must be maintained for the life of the ACS, unless the ACS is transferred to a new owner.
- Copies of all manufacturer bulletins, technical notices, or manufacturer's recommendations, received by the owner, must be forwarded to the department of Public Safety within 30 days of receipt.
- The manufacturer's operating manual for all fixed artificial climbing structures must be kept by the owner of facility manger at a designated location and must be available to the DPS upon request.
- A record of all maintenance, inspections, and tests for all fixed artificial climbing structures must be documented and must be available to the DPS for the period of one year.
- The owner of the facility must provide a list of Climbing Wall Facility Staff and an attestation signed by the owner that the listed individuals have received the training documented in the Staff Training Plan. It is the owner's responsibility to notify the DPS within 14 days of the first day of employment of new Climbing Wall Facility Staff.
- A climbing wall Operating Manual must be maintained that addresses standards as adopted by the state regulation for the operation of the Climbing Wall Facility.
- The Climbing Wall Facility Manager or Climbing Wall Facility Staff must complete a Maintenance Repair Log each time maintenance has been completed, or a repair, is performed on the artificial climbing structure. Maintenance does not include route setting. The Maintenance Repair Log must be signed by the person performing the maintenance or repair. The Maintenance Log must include:
 - ✓ The date
 - ✓ The artificial climbing structure or component of the artificial climbing structure on which maintenance or repair was performed

- ✓ Description of any maintenance or repair performed
- ✓ The legible name and signature of the person who performed the maintenance or repair
- A Daily Equipment Inspection Log of the Climbing Wall Facility must be performed by the Climbing Wall Facility Staff each day before allowing patrons/students to use the facility/equipment. The daily inspection log must include:
 - ✓ The date of the inspection
 - ✓ The facility being inspected
 - ✓ A list of all structural components being checked, including but not limited to, a visual inspection of all ground anchors, belay anchors, and anchor points.
 - ✓ A list of all climbing equipment checked, including but not limited to, a visual inspection of climbing ropes, carabineers, belay devices, and harnesses
 - ✓ The legible name and signature of the person completing the log

Additional information on the specifics of the new regulations is available through the Massachusetts Department of Public Safety website located at www.mass.gov/dps. Information on the general standards, training and other information on challenge course recommended standards can be found by contacting the Association for Challenge Course Technology, www.ACCTinfo.org, or The Climbing Wall Association, <http://climbingwallindustry.org>.

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