

Developing a Voluntary Protection Programs (VPP) Letter of Intent

OSHA requires federal worksites to notify the Designated Agency Safety and Health Official (DASHO) prior to applying for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) VPP. While you can set up your letter of intent to file a VPP application anyway you like, the tips provided in this handout may be useful in helping to draft your own letter, with an example provided at the end.

If you are a federal worksite applying for OSHA VPP Star recognition, you must prepare and submit a letter of intent to your DASHO prior to submitting your application. Be sure to include a copy of this letter along with your OSHA VPP application.

IDENTIFY YOUR DASHO AND THEIR CONTACT INFORMATION.

Each Department of Defense (DoD) Service and Agency has a DASHO. The DASHO is higher in the chain of command and is appointed to manage and administer occupational safety and health policies within your Service or Agency. Reach out to your SMCX contact if you do not know your DASHO's contact information.

CLEARLY STATE YOUR SITE'S INTENTIONS.

Clearly state your site's intentions to help the DASHO understand why they are receiving the letter. Identify your site name, location, and the goal to submit your OSHA VPP application. If you have a specific timeframe planned to submit your application, you should state it in your letter so the DASHO can anticipate when this will occur. You can also allow your base to submit the letter for you, which shows commitment from everyone at your location, and not just within your organization.

IDENTIFY IF OTHER ORGANIZATIONS AT YOUR BASE HAVE APPLIED FOR OSHA VPP.

Implementing OSHA VPP criteria is a milestone for any organization. Let your DASHO know if you are the first, second, or even tenth organization at your base to apply for OSHA VPP recognition. This helps the DASHO understand your base's safety culture.

DESCRIBE THE COMPOSITION OF YOUR WORKSITE.

DASHOs may want to know the size and composition of your organization. Describe the number of government civilians, military personnel, contractors, and volunteers at your organization.

DESCRIBE YOUR ORGANIZATION'S INJURY AND ILLNESS RATES.

OSHA requires organizations to have injury and illness incidence rates (e.g., total case incidence and days away, restricted, and transferred) below the industry average to apply for OSHA VPP recognition. Provide your rates in your letter to show the DASHO your site meets these qualifications.

INCLUDE CONTACT INFORMATION.

Inform the DASHO of whom to contact if there are questions regarding your intentions to submit an OSHA VPP application. Generally, this is a person designated to head VPP implementation efforts at an organization (e.g., VPP Coordinator, VPP Program Manager). Be sure to list both an email and phone number.

SIGN THE LETTER OF INTENT.

Your senior leader must sign the letter to acknowledge your site's intentions of applying for OSHA VPP recognition and inviting OSHA to your worksite to conduct a safety management system evaluation. While your senior leader is required to sign this letter, consider having your base leadership and site union representative also sign your letter to show commitment from all on-site groups.

SUBMIT THE LETTER OF INTENT TO YOUR DASHO.

Either submit your letter to your DASHO electronically or through the mail— you may want to contact them first to identify their preference. You can also reach out to your SMCX contact if you need help submitting your letter. Many times, the SMCX knows who to copy on your email communications to ensure you notify all proper communication lines in the chain of command, outside of the DASHO.

INCLUDE A COPY OF YOUR INTENT LETTER WITH YOUR OSHA VPP APPLICATION.

When you are ready to submit your OSHA VPP application, attach a copy of your letter of intent to your application. This is not only a VPP requirement, but shows you notified the appropriate personnel within your organization and Service or Agency of these intentions.

For additional information on the SMCX's services, please visit the SMCX-hosted website at: <https://www.smscx.org/>.



The image shows Concurrent Technologies Corporation President and CEO, Ed Sheehan, Jr., participating in a VPP signing event.

Letter of Intent to File a VPP Application Template

FROM: *Organization Name*
Address
City, State Zip

TO: *DASHO Name*
DASHO Title
Address
City, State Zip

SUBJECT: Intent to File a Voluntary Protection Programs (VPP) Application to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Region *Number*

1. On behalf of the *Organization Name*, *Base Name* will be submitting an application to OSHA Region *Number* in the *near future*.
2. The *Organization Name* is the *number* organization to submit an OSHA VPP application at *Base Name* and request an OSHA on-site safety management system evaluation.
3. The *Organization Name* has an organization composed of *number* civilians, *number* military, *number* contractors, and *number* volunteers.
4. Our injury and illness incidence rates are *below/equal to/above* the industry average for the past three calendar years.
5. Please refer any questions to the *VPP Coordinator Job Title*, *VPP Coordinator Name*, at *(XXX) XXX-XXXX* or *email*.

Senior Leader Name (for organization)
Senior Leader Title
Rank, Service

Date

Senior Leader Name (for base)
Senior Leader Title
Rank, Service

Date

Union Representative Name (for organization)
Union Representative Title

Date