

LEGAL UPDATE

OSHA Issues New Prevention Guidance on COVID-19 in the Workplace

On Jan. 29, 2021, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) issued [guidance](#) on mitigating and preventing the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace. The guidance is intended to inform employers and workers in settings outside of health care of the risks of being exposed to or contracting COVID-19 at work. This guidance is meant to help employers and workers determine appropriate COVID-19 control measures for the workplace.

Guidance Purpose

OSHA released this guidance to help employers plan their COVID-19 prevention and mitigation procedures. With this guidance, OSHA is suggesting that employers should implement COVID-19 prevention programs. According to OSHA, the most effective programs engage workers and their union or representatives in the program's development. The guidance covers the following:

- ☑ Hazard assessments;
- ☑ Measures to limit the spread of COVID-19 (roles of employers and workers and training on COVID-19);
- ☑ Isolation or separation measures of infected workers from the workplace (physical distancing, installing barriers or staying home);
- ☑ Use of personal protective equipment; and
- ☑ Improvements in ventilation, hygiene and sanitation measures.

OSHA will continue to update the guidance over time as new developments arise. OSHA intends to include additional situation- and [industry-specific](#) guidance in the future.

Next Steps

Employers should review this new guidance carefully and implement any new recommendations as applicable. In addition, employers should continue to monitor the OSHA [website](#) for any changes in COVID-19 best practices and standards.

Important Highlights

- The guidance contains recommendations, but also includes the mandatory safety and health standards that have already been established.
- The recommendations are advisory in nature, informational in content and are intended to assist employers in providing a safe and healthy workplace.

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