
OSHA'S BRAND NEW GUIDELINES FOR REOPENING

On June 18, 2020, OSHA issued its Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19, a 32-page downloadable booklet (link below). This supplements the guidance issued by the U.S. Department of Labor and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The guidance describes how a COVID-19 outbreak could affect workplaces and identifies steps all employers can take to reduce workers' risk of exposure. For instance, it directs employers to develop an infectious disease preparedness and response plan and implement basic infection prevention measures by promoting handwashing, providing hand sanitizer, encouraging workers to stay home if they are sick, allowing employees to work remotely, exploring flexible work hours to increase physical distancing, discouraging shared office equipment (i.e. phones, desks, other tools), and maintaining routine cleaning and disinfecting of the work environment. The agency says employers should develop policies and procedures for identification and isolation of sick workers and develop, implement and communicate about workplace flexibilities and protections.

The guidance also describes more specific workplace controls: engineering controls, administrative controls, safe work practices (a type of administrative control), and personal protective gear. It then classifies worker exposure risk based on industry and need for close contact with people known or suspected to be infected with COVID-19. *Very high* or *high* risk workers include health care workers, medical transport workers, and morgue workers; *medium* risk workers have frequent and/or close contact with people who may be infected, for instance workers who may have contact with the general public in places where there is ongoing community transmission; and *lower* risk workers do not have contact with people who may be infected nor frequent close contact with the general public. The agency identifies what workplace controls are needed based on workers' level of risk. For instance, high efficiency air filters, physical barriers and PPE are necessary for *very high*, *high*, and *medium risk* jobs, but not for *lower* risk jobs.

The guidance also identifies OSHA assistance, services, and programs to assist employers and provides contact information for OSHA regional offices. A copy of the booklet can be found here. www.donnelygross.com/covid-19-resources/

We continue to closely monitor the situation and update this information to provide the latest workplace and legal developments related to Covid19. We expect your questions and our answers will change as the situation develops. For answers to your specific questions and for the newest developments, please visit our website at www.donnelygross.com/covid-19-resources/ and contact us at Donnelly + Gross at 352-374-4001 or directly by email:

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We are here to support you.