



LEHR MIDDLEBROOKS
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OSHA FINALLY ISSUES COVID-19 GUIDANCE FOR HEALTHCARE EMPLOYERS

As much of the country is emerging out from under COVID precautions, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has finally issued its emergency rule for health care employers. The rule is mandatory for employers in the healthcare sector and takes effect immediately although provides grace periods for some requirements.

Under the emergency rule, healthcare sector employers must:

- Develop a COVID-19 plan and designate a COVID-19 safety coordinator;
- Conduct a workplace specific COVID-19 hazard assessment;
- Provide appropriate personal protective equipment (including masks and respirators);
- Screen patients and visitors for COVID-19 symptoms;
- Maintain social distancing protocols;
- Install physical barriers in non-patient care areas;
- Conduct cleaning and disinfection in accordance with applicable CDC guidance;
- Maximize effectiveness of ventilation systems;
- Screen employees before each shift for symptoms;
- Notify employees and co-workers of potential exposure events
- Immediately remove exposed employees from the workplace with continued pay and benefits (up to \$1,400 per week);
- Provide employees paid time off to be vaccinated;
- Provide paid time off for employees to recover from vaccine side effects;
- Maintain certain recordkeeping requirements, including a separate COVID-19 log.

Note that the emergency rule spans more than 900 pages and has significantly more detail than summarized above. Many of the specific rules have exceptions or variations for employers with 10 or fewer employees and workplaces whose workers are fully vaccinated.

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