



## NEWS RELEASE

Release Number: 2021-124

Date: December 17, 2021

### Occupational Safety and Health Standards Board Votes to Adopt Revised COVID-19 Prevention Emergency Temporary Standards

**Sacramento**—The Occupational Safety and Health Standards Board yesterday adopted revisions to the COVID-19 Prevention Emergency Temporary Standards to include the latest recommendations from the California Department of Public Health. The revisions will take effect on January 14, 2022.

The revisions include the following:

- **Investigating and responding to COVID-19 cases in the workplace:** Employers must continue to properly notify employees, employee representatives and any other workers at a worksite of possible COVID-19 exposures within one business day. This section was updated to give employers more clear instructions on how to notify workers who were at the same worksite as the COVID-19 case during the high-risk exposure period.
- **Face Coverings:** The definition was updated to include more detail on the different types of acceptable face coverings.
- **Testing and Exclusion:** The following revisions make the ETS consistent with current CDPH recommendations:
  - Employers are now required to make COVID-19 testing available at no cost and during paid time to employees who were fully vaccinated before the “close contact” with a COVID-19 case occurred, even if they are asymptomatic.
  - During outbreaks and major outbreaks, employers must now make weekly testing (outbreaks) or twice-weekly testing (major outbreaks) available to asymptomatic fully vaccinated employees in the exposed group.
  - Employees who have recently recovered from COVID-19 and those who are fully vaccinated are not required to be excluded from the workplace after “close contact” but must wear a face covering and maintain six feet of physical distancing for 14 calendar days following the last date of contact.
- **Return to Work Criteria:** The period of time before an employee can return to work after close contact or COVID-19 infection has been revised to be consistent with current CDPH guidelines. These time frames will automatically update if CDPH updates their guidelines pursuant to the Governor’s executive order (N-84-20).

Important requirements remain unchanged in the COVID-19 Prevention Emergency Temporary Standards. Employers must continue to maintain an effective COVID-19 Prevention Program that includes identifying and evaluating employee exposures to COVID-19 health hazards, training employees on how to prevent hazards and implementing procedures to correct unsafe conditions. Employers should still allow adequate time for handwashing and cleaning frequently touched surfaces and objects.

Cal/OSHA is updating its resources to assist employers with understanding their obligations required by the revised emergency standards. The COVID-19 [webpage](#) contains an [updated fact sheet](#) which describes revisions to the emergency temporary standards. When the revised emergency temporary standards become effective, Cal/OSHA will publish updated FAQs. Cal/OSHA's model [COVID-19 Prevention Program in English](#) and [Spanish](#) is a helpful resource for employers to develop and maintain an effective written program.

The [Occupational Safety and Health Standards Board](#), a seven-member body appointed by the Governor, is the standards-setting agency within the Cal/OSHA program. The Standards Board's objective is to adopt reasonable and enforceable standards at least as effective as federal standards. The Standards Board also has the responsibility to grant or deny applications for permanent variances from adopted standards and respond to petitions for new or revised standards.

The California Division of Occupational Safety and Health, or [Cal/OSHA](#), is the division within the Department of Industrial Relations that helps protect California's workers from health and safety hazards on the job in almost every workplace. [Cal/OSHA's Consultation Services Branch](#) provides free and voluntary assistance to employers to improve their health and safety programs. Employers should call (800) 963-9424 for assistance from Cal/OSHA Consultation Services.

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**Employers with Questions on Requirements May Contact:** [InfoCons@dir.ca.gov](mailto:InfoCons@dir.ca.gov), or call your [local Cal/OSHA Consultation Office](#)

**Stakeholders Who Wish to Comment on the Rulemaking Process May Contact:**  
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The [California Department of Industrial Relations](#), established in 1927, protects and improves the health, safety, and economic well-being of over 18 million wage earners, and helps their employers comply with state labor laws. DIR is housed within the [Labor & Workforce Development Agency](#)