

Introduction to Occupational Safety and Health

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Website link: <https://labor.alaska.gov/lss/oshhome.htm>

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Agenda

Purpose:

- Provide union members with introductory information about OSHA

Topics:

1. Explain why **OSHA is important** to workers
2. Explain **worker rights** under OSHA
3. Discuss **employer responsibilities** under OSHA
4. Discuss the **use of OSHA standards**
5. Explain how OSHA inspections and visits are conducted
6. Locate and use helpful worker **safety and health resources**



Workplace injuries and illnesses

5,070

Workers were killed
on the job.

Nearly 14
workers die every
day (average)

733

Fatalities due to
violent acts.

OSHA Makes a Difference

- Worker deaths in America are down—on average, from about 38 worker deaths a day in 1970 to 14 a day in 2024.
- Worker injuries and illnesses are down—from 109 incidents per 1000 workers in 1972 to 23 per 1000 in 2024.



Why is OSHA important to you?



Injuries and Fatalities – 2024 (released Feb 2026)

- Of 5070 fatalities
 - Transportation -- 1937
 - Slips/Trips/Falls -- 844
 - Contact with Objects/Equipment – 756
 - Violent Acts -- 733
 - Harmful Substances -- 687
 - Fire and Explosions – 93
 - Unclassified -- 20
- In 2024, U.S. employers reported approximately 2.5 million nonfatal workplace injuries and illnesses.

History of OSHA

- ❑ OSHA stands for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, an agency of the U.S. Department of Labor
- ❑ OSHA's responsibility is to improve **worker safety and health** protection
 - ▶ On December 29, 1970, President Nixon signed the OSH Act
 - ▶ This Act created OSHA, the agency, which formally came into being on April 28, 1971
 - ▶ **Alaska Occupational Safety and Health (AKOSH) is an OSHA-approved State Plan** covering most private sector workers and all state and local government workers.
 - ▶ Additional standards may apply



OSHA's Mission

- ❑ The mission of OSHA is to assure safe and healthful working conditions for working men and women by setting and enforcing standards and by providing training, outreach, education and assistance.
- ❑ Some of the things OSHA does to carry out its mission are:
 - ❑ Developing job **safety and health standards** and enforcing them through worksite inspections
 - ❑ Providing **training programs** to increase knowledge about occupational safety and health

What Rights Do Workers Have Under OSHA?

- A safe and healthful workplace
- Know about hazardous chemicals
- Report injury to employer
- Complain or request hazard correction from employer
- Training
- Hazard exposure and medical records
- File a complaint with OSHA
- Participate in an OSHA inspection
- Be free from retaliation for exercising safety and health rights



Complaints or Request for Corrections

- ❑ Workers may bring up safety and health concerns in the workplace to their employers **without fear of discharge or discrimination**
- ❑ **OSHA rules protect workers** who raise concerns to their employer or OSHA about unsafe or unhealthful conditions in the workplace

File a Complaint with OSHA

- ❑ Workers may file a **confidential complaint** with OSHA if they believe a violation of a safety or health standard, or an imminent danger situation, exists in the workplace
- ❑ Workers may request that their **name not be revealed** to the employer
- ❑ If a worker files a complaint, they have the right to **find out OSHA's action** on the complaint and request a review if an inspection is not made

Note:
Often the best and fastest way to get a hazard corrected is to notify your supervisor or employer.

Filing an OSHA Complaint

- ❑ File a complaint
 - ❑ OSHA's website <https://www.osha.gov/workers/file-complaint>
 - ❑ Call AKOSH at (800) 770-4940,
 - ❑ Imminent serious injury or death are given the highest priority.
- ❑ Who can file the complaint?
 - ❑ Workers can file a complaint
 - ❑ A worker representative can file a complaint
- ❑ Telephone or visit local regional or area offices to discuss your concerns
- ❑ Complete the form – be specific and include appropriate details
- ❑ OSHA determines if an inspection is necessary
- ❑ Workers do not have to reveal their name

Be Free from Retaliation

- ❑ Workers have the **right to be free from retaliation for exercising safety and health rights**
- ❑ Workers have a right to seek safety and health on the job without fear of punishment
- ❑ This right is spelled out in Section 11(c) of the OSH Act
- ❑ **Workers have 30 days to contact OSHA** if they feel they have been punished for exercising their safety and health rights
- ❑ Whistleblower complaint information
<https://www.osha.gov/whistleblower/WBComplaint>

Employer Responsibilities Under OSHA

- Provide a **workplace free from recognized hazards** and **comply with OSHA** standards
- Provide **training** required by OSHA standards
- Keep **records** of injuries and illnesses
- Provide **medical exams when required** by OSHA standards and provide workers access to their exposure and medical records
- Not discriminate** against workers who exercise their rights under the Act (Section 11(c))
- Post** OSHA citations and hazard correction notices
- Provide and pay for most PPE**

Employer Responsibilities *(cont.)*

REPORTING AND RECORDING CHECKLIST

Employers must:

- ✓ Report each worker death to OSHA
- ✓ Report each work-related hospitalization, amputation, or loss of an eye
- ✓ Maintain injury & illness records
- ✓ Inform workers how to report an injury or illness to the employer
- ✓ Make records available to workers
- ✓ Allow OSHA access to records
- ✓ Post annual summary of injuries & illnesses

Information about Injuries/Illnesses

- ❑ OSHA's Recordkeeping rule requires most employers with more than 10 workers to keep a log of injuries and illnesses
- ❑ Workers have the right to report an injury* and review current log
- ❑ Workers also have the right to view the annually posted summary of the injuries and illnesses (OSHA 300A)



***It is against the OSHA law to retaliate or discriminate against a worker for reporting an injury or illness**

Examine Exposure & Medical Records

- ❑ 1910.1020: right to examine & copy records
- ❑ Examples of toxic substances and harmful physical agents are:
 - ❑ Metals and dusts, such as, lead, cadmium, and silica
 - ❑ Biological agents, such as bacteria, viruses, and fungi
 - ❑ Physical stress, such as noise, heat, cold, vibration, repetitive motion, and ionizing and non-ionizing radiation

Training

- ❑ Workers have a right to get training from employers on a variety of health and safety hazards and standards that employers must follow
 - ▶ Some required training covers topics such as, chemical hazards, equipment hazards, noise, confined spaces, fall hazards in construction, personal protective equipment, along with a variety of other subjects
 - ▶ Training must be in a **language and vocabulary workers can understand**



Know about Hazardous Chemicals

- ❑ Employers must have a written, complete hazard communication program that includes information on:
 - ▶ Container labeling,
 - ▶ Safety Data Sheets (SDSs), and
 - ▶ Worker training.
 - ▶ The training must include the physical and health hazards of the chemicals and how workers can protect themselves

Suggestion: Add Physical Agent Data Sheets (PADS) to a section of the SDS book and include in employee training programs.



The Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) requires chemical manufacturers, distributors, or importers to provide Safety Data Sheets (SDSs) (formerly known as Material Safety Data Sheets or MSDSs) to communicate the hazards of hazardous chemical products. As of June 1, 2015, the HCS will require new SDSs to be in a uniform format.

What are OSHA Standards?

OSHA standards are:

- ❑ Rules that describe the methods employers must use to protect employees from hazards
- ❑ Designed to protect workers from a wide range of hazards

Four Groups of OSHA Standards

General Industry*

Construction

Maritime

Agriculture

**General Industry is the set that applies to the largest number of workers and worksites*

Where there are no specific standards, employers must comply with the General Duty Clause of the OSH Act.

OSHA Standards *(cont.)*

These standards also:

- ❑ Limit the amount of hazardous chemicals, substances, or noise that workers can be exposed to
- ❑ Require the use of certain safe work practices and equipment
- ❑ Require employers to monitor certain hazards and keep records of workplace injuries and illnesses

OSHA's Most Frequently cited standards

- ❑ **Fall Protection, general requirements** ([29 CFR 1926.501](#)) [[related safety resources](#)]
- ❑ **Hazard Communication, general industry** ([29 CFR 1910.1200](#)) [[related safety resources](#)]
- ❑ **Ladders, construction** ([29 CFR 1926.1053](#)) [[related safety resources](#)]
- ❑ **Respiratory Protection, general industry** ([29 CFR 1910.134](#)) [[related safety resources](#)]
- ❑ **Control of Hazardous Energy (lockout/tagout), general industry** ([29 CFR 1910.147](#)) [[related safety resources](#)]
- ❑ **Powered Industrial Trucks, general industry** ([29 CFR 1910.178](#)) [[related safety resources](#)]
- ❑ **Fall Protection Training, construction** ([29 CFR 1926.503](#)) [[related safety resources](#)]
- ❑ **Scaffolding, construction** ([29 CFR 1926.451](#)) [[related safety resources](#)]
- ❑ **Eye and Face Protection, construction** ([29 CFR 1926.102](#)) [[related safety resources](#)]
- ❑ **Machine Guarding, general industry** ([29 CFR 1910.212](#)) [[related safety resources](#)]

Source: OSHA Website: https://www.osha.gov/ords/imis/citedstandard.naics?p_esize=&p_state=FEFederal&p_naics=623312, accessed 4/28/25.



How are AKOSH Enforcement Inspections or AKOSH Visits Conducted?

- ❑ The OSH Act authorizes OSHA compliance safety and health officers (CSHOs) (and AKOSH Enforcement) to conduct workplace inspections at reasonable times
 - ❑ OSHA and AKOSH Enforcement conduct inspections without advance notice, except in rare circumstances.
 - ❑ In fact, anyone who tells an employer about an OSHA inspection in advance can receive fines and a jail term
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- ❑ AKOSH Consultation and Training (**AKOSH C&T**) will **schedule a visit** at a **time mutually agreed upon** by the employer and the Consultant.

Different Types of OSHA Inspections

- ❑ Imminent danger
- ❑ Fatality or hospitalizations
- ❑ Worker complaints/referrals
- ❑ Targeted inspections—Local Emphasis Program (LEP), National Emphasis Program (NEP), particular hazards or industries
- ❑ Follow-up Inspections
- ❑ Inquiry

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- ❑ AKOSH C&T performs **VISITS**



Inspection Opportunities

- ❑ Employee representative can accompany OSHA inspector
- ❑ Workers can talk to the inspector privately
- ❑ Workers may point out hazards, describe injuries, illnesses or near misses that resulted from those hazards and describe any concern you have about a safety or health issue
- ❑ Workers can find out about inspection results, abatement measures and may object to dates set for violation to be corrected

Citations and Penalties

Part 2: Violations Occurring On or After February 1, 2025

This part shall be used to assess penalties for violations occurring on or after February 1, 2025, where penalties are being assessed before February 1, 2025.

Table S-1: Statutory Maximum and Minimum Penalties

Set by AS 18.60.095 and further defined under 8 AAC 61.140

Violation Type	Maximum	Minimum
Willful	\$165,514 per violation	\$11,823 per violation
Repeat	\$165,514 per violation	\$11,823 per violation
Serious	\$16,550 per violation	\$1,221* per violation
Other than serious	\$16,550 per violation	\$0 per violation
Failure to abate	\$16,550 per day unabated beyond the abatement date**	N/A
Posting requirements	\$16,550 per violation	\$0

*For a repeated other-than-serious violation that otherwise would have no initial penalty, a GBP penalty of \$472 shall be proposed for the first repeated violation, \$1,182 for the second repeated violation, and \$2,364 for a third repetition.

**Generally limited to 30 days maximum

Source: AKOSH Website

https://labor.alaska.gov/lss/program_directives/PD_24-01.pdf

Safety and Health Resources

Within the Workplace/Worksite

- Employer or supervisor, co-workers and union representatives
- Safety Data Sheet (SDS) for information on chemicals
- Labels and warning signs
- Employee orientation manuals or other training materials
- Work tasks and procedures instruction

Safety and Health Resources

Outside the Workplace/Worksite

- ❑ OSHA website: <http://www.osha.gov> and OSHA offices (you can call or write)
- ❑ **Alaska Occupational Safety and Health Consultation and Training (AKOSH C&T)**
 - ❑ Assistance Visits
 - ❑ Compliance Assistance
- ❑ National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) – OSHA’s sister agency
- ❑ OSHA Training Institute Education Centers
- ❑ Doctors, nurses, other health care providers
- ❑ Public libraries
- ❑ Other local, community-based resources



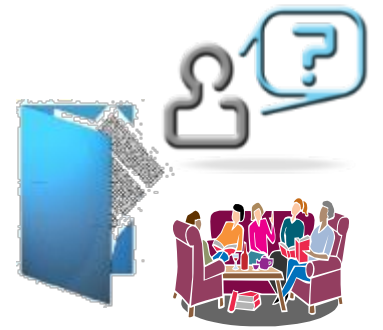
OSHA Safety and Health Resources

Source: OSHA website, Recommended Practices for Safety and Health Programs.

<https://www.osha.gov/safety-management/hazard-identification>



Session Summary



- ❑ The importance of OSHA, including the history of safety and health regulation leading to the creation of OSHA and OSHA's mission;
- ❑ Worker rights under OSHA;
- ❑ Employer responsibilities;
- ❑ OSHA standards;
- ❑ OSHA inspections; and
- ❑ Safety and health resources, including how to file a complaint.

Questions and Comments

