



OSHA **FACT** Sheet

OSHA Help for New Businesses

How can OSHA help new businesses?

Starting a new business can be challenging. OSHA can help by explaining the federal regulatory requirements concerning safety and health and help you create a safe and healthful workplace for your employees that conforms to federal law. States with OSHA-approved state plans have adopted standards equivalent to OSHA's. For additional information, visit us online at www.osha.gov.

What are your responsibilities as an employer?

Under the provisions of the *Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (OSH Act)*, as the employer, you must provide a workplace free from recognized hazards that are causing, or are likely to cause, death or serious physical harm to your employees regardless of the size of your business. You must comply with OSHA standards and regulations under the *OSH Act*. You must also be familiar with those OSHA standards and regulations that apply to your workplace and make copies of them available to employees upon request.

Are employers required to maintain records of injuries and illnesses?

Yes. Most businesses with 11 or more employees at any time during the calendar year must maintain records of occupational injuries and illnesses as they occur using OSHA Form 300, *Log of Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses*. Such recordkeeping is not required for employers in most retail trade, finance, insurance, real estate, and service industries.

Must employers display OSHA safety and health information in the workplace?

Yes. You must display OSHA's *Safe and Healthful Workplaces* poster (OSHA 3165 or the state equivalent) in a conspicuous location in your workplace where workers and prospective

employees can see it. This publication informs employees of their rights and responsibilities under the *OSH Act*.

Are employers required to communicate information about hazardous chemicals in the workplace to their employees?

Yes. Employers must inform their workers about the dangers of chemical hazards in their workplaces and train their employees regarding proper safeguards. This includes providing information on the hazards and identities of chemicals employees may be exposed to on the job and describing protective measures to prevent adverse effects. Chemical producers and importers must evaluate their products for chemical hazards and provide hazard information to customers.

Is your business subject to inspection?

All businesses covered by the *OSH Act* must comply with federal workplace safety and health standards, or comparable state standards, if the workplace is under the jurisdiction of a state agency administering an OSHA-approved safety and health plan. Every establishment covered by the *OSH Act* is subject to inspection by federal or state compliance safety and health officers who are chosen for their knowledge and experience in the occupational safety and health field. OSHA conducts workplace inspections of businesses in federal jurisdictions, and OSHA-approved state plans are responsible for conducting workplace inspections of businesses under state jurisdiction to enforce their own standards that are "at least as effective" as federal requirements.

What services are available from OSHA to help you?

OSHA's Area Office staffs provide advice, education, and assistance to business (particularly small employers), trade associations, local labor affiliates, and other stakeholders who request help with occupational safety and health

issues. They work with professional organizations, unions, and community groups concerning issues of safety and health in the workplace. In addition, OSHA offers the following services:

- **Consultation** - Employers who want on-site assistance in identifying and correcting hazards and in improving safety and health programs can get help from a free and confidential consultation service largely funded by OSHA and delivered by state consultation staffs.
- **Instruction** - Training courses in safety and health subjects are available to the private sector through the OSHA Training Institute in Des Plaines, IL, and at 12 education centers throughout the nation. For locations, visit OSHA's Office of Training and Education online at http://www.osha-slc.gov/fso/ote/training/edcenters/edcenter_contact.html.
- **Publications** - Various publications are on-line at www.osha.gov to help small businesses comply with OSHA requirements.

- **Partnership** - In a partnership, OSHA enters into an extended, voluntary, cooperative relationship with groups of employers, employees, and employee representatives to encourage, assist, and recognize their efforts to eliminate serious hazards and achieve a high level of worker safety and health.

How can I get more information?

You can find more information about help for new businesses, including the full text of OSHA's standards, on OSHA's website at www.osha.gov. OSHA's rules and standards are in *Title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)* Parts 1900-1910, 1915, 1917, 1918, 1926, and 1928.

To file a complaint by phone, report an emergency, or get OSHA advice, assistance, or products, contact your nearest OSHA office under the "U.S. Department of Labor" listing in your phone book, or call **(800) 321-OSHA (6742)**; teletypewriter (TTY) number is (877) 889-5627. To file a complaint online or obtain more information on OSHA federal and state programs, visit OSHA's website at www.osha.gov.

This is one in a series of informational fact sheets highlighting OSHA programs, policies, or standards. It does not impose any new compliance requirements or carry the force of legal opinion. For compliance requirements of OSHA standards or regulations, refer to *Title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations*. This information will be made available to sensory-impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 693-1999. See also OSHA's website at www.osha.gov.

