

LEGAL UPDATE

OSHA Updates Guidance for Mitigating and Preventing the Spread of COVID-19 in the Workplace

On June 10, 2021, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) updated its [guidance](#) on mitigating and preventing the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace. The guidance now focuses on protections for unvaccinated and otherwise at-risk employees. OSHA's update to the guidance reflects the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [guidance](#) for fully vaccinated people. This guidance emphasizes industries noted for prolonged close-contacts like meat processing, manufacturing, seafood, grocery and high-volume retail.

The original guidance issued on Jan. 29, 2021, provided requirements employers should take to implement a workplace COVID-19 prevention program and did not include information about the COVID-19 vaccine.

Updated Guidance

OSHA provides that most employers no longer need to take steps to protect their workers from COVID-19 exposure in any workplace—or well-defined portions of a workplace—where **all employees** are **fully vaccinated**. The new guidance updates the roles of employers and workers in responding to COVID-19 for those that are at-risk or unvaccinated.

The guidance also provides an appendix with measures for high-risk workplaces with mixed-vaccination status workers. It provides that employers take additional steps for high-risk situations due to the following factors: close contact, duration of contact, type of contact and other distinctive factors.

Employer Next Steps

Employers should continue to take steps to protect at-risk or unvaccinated workers in their workplace. Employers can do this by implementing multilayered interventions to protect these workers and mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

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Important Information

- OSHA provides this guidance for employers as recommendations to use in protecting unvaccinated or otherwise at-risk workers.
- Employers and workers should use this guidance to determine any appropriate control measures to implement.

The Mitigation and Preventing the Spread of COVID-19 in the Workplace guidance now focuses on protections for unvaccinated and at-risk employees.



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