Cal/OSHA's COVID-19 Emergency Temporary Standards (ETS) In Garment Manufacturing

On November 30, 2020, the Cal/OSHA Standards Board approved emergency temporary standards to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace. California is now one of the few states with specific regulations to protect workers from COVID-19. The standards are currently in effect through October 2, 2021, and could be extended beyond that date. This fact sheet does not address all of the requirements of the ETS. Visit http://saferatwork.ca.gov for more information.

Am I covered by these standards?

Workers at garment manufacturing facilities with two or more workers on-site (or one worker on-site that has contact with other persons), are protected by these standards.

The ETS applies to all workers at garment manufacturing facilities, including full-time and part-time employees, temporary staff, and contractors. Cal/OSHA standards extend to workers regardless of immigration status.

What are employers required to do under these standards?

The standard requires all employers to take the following actions:

Establish a written COVID-19 Prevention Program.	Correct COVID-19 hazards in the workplace.	Train workers.	Encourage communicatin and reporting without fear of retaliation
The program must describe all measures employers are taking to prevent the spread of COVID-19 at the workplace. The plans must be accessible to all workers and their authorized representatives.	Hazard control methods must include a full range of feasible engineering controls (such as improved ventilation and filtration, use of barriers), administrative controls (such as physical distancing, staggering work schedules), and personal protective equipment (PPE).	Training must include how COVID-19 is transmitted, workplace policies and procedures to prevent COVID-19, the importance of face coverings and physical distancing, and information about federal, state, and local COVID-19-related benefits.	Workers should feel safe reporting COVID-19 hazards in the workplace, possible exposures, and test results (confidentiality maintained) for COVID-19 symptoms. Employers are prohibited from retaliating against workers for reporting hazards, injuries and illness.

What does this look like in my workplace? Garment manufacturing employers should:

Reduce the number of workers and visitors at the workplace. Stagger work shifts and breaks to prevent overcrowding.

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6 Feet Rearrange workstations so that workers are at least 6 feet apart in all directions and do not face one another.

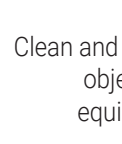Rearrange breakrooms, clock in/out stations, and other non-work areas to allow for physical distancing.

Use signs and floor markings to indicate where workers should be located or their direction and path of travel.

Provide face coverings to all workers and make sure they are worn over the nose and mouth. Employers must provide face coverings that are clean and undamaged.

Install cleanable solid partitions between workstations.

Increase the flow of air from the outdoors into the workplace unless doing so increases exposure to another hazard, such as wildfire smoke. Open windows and doors if possible. Use fans to draw outside air in.

Note: Make sure fans do not blow air directly from one person to another or across multiple workstations. This may only encourage disease spread.

Assign workers their own tools and equipment to reduce or prevent the sharing of handheld items. If items must be shared, disinfect them between each use.

Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects, such as doorknobs, elevator buttons, equipment, handrails, and bathroom surfaces.

Encourage and allow time for employee handwashing (20 seconds), and provide employees with an effective hand sanitizer. Hand sanitizer must not contain methyl alcohol.

Provide disposable gloves to workers who are handling garments and sharing tools or equipment. Never let workers share gloves or other personal protective equipment.

Adjust production speeds to allow workers to maintain physical distancing and follow other COVID-19 safety precautions.

Create a system to screen workers for symptoms before they come into work. Screenings should include asking workers if they are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms or have come in contact with someone with COVID-19.

What if there are COVID-19 cases in my workplace?

If there is a COVID-19 case at the workplace, employers must notify employees who may have been exposed, their authorized representatives, and any contractors who were present at the same workplace as the COVID-19 case, and offer testing at no cost to those employees. They must also investigate and correct conditions that may have contributed to the risk of COVID-19 exposure.

It is considered an outbreak if 3 or more workers test positive for COVID-19 in a 14-day period. Employers must test all employees who might have been exposed when the outbreak is identified. Testing must then continue at least once a week while the outbreak continues, and until there are no new COVID-19 cases detected in the workplace for a 14-day period. Workers who were not present in the window of the identified outbreak do not have to be tested. Employers must investigate and review conditions, policies, procedures, and controls that may have led to COVID-19 transmission when the outbreak is first identified, and implement changes as needed to prevent further spread. This review must be repeated then every thirty days while the outbreak continues.

If 20 or more workers test positive for COVID-19 in a 30-day period, employers must test all employees when the outbreak is identified, then at least twice a week while the outbreak continues, and until there are no new COVID-19 cases detected in the workplace for a 14-day period. In addition, employers must investigate workplace COVID-19 illnesses and correct conditions that may have led to COVID-19 transmission when the outbreak is first identified and while the outbreak continues. Employers must upgrade air filtration in buildings or structures with mechanical ventilation, and they must determine the need for a respiratory protection program or changes to an existing respiratory protection program. They must also consider whether to halt some or all operations at the workplace until COVID-19 hazards have been corrected.

» Local health department needs to be notified of any COVID-19 cases in the workplace.

» It is Important for employees to know that if they have, or may be suspected of having COVID-19, they should not come to work.

» Employers must maintain records of all COVID-19 cases, and report outbreaks and other serious illnesses to Cal/OSHA and the local health department, as required.

Where can I learn more about COVID-19 and how to stop the spread in my community?

Your local public health department has the most up-to-date information about how to protect yourelf and other in your community from Covid-19.

» **You can also find general information about COVID-19 on the CDC's website at: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html.**

» You can go to https://covidstraighttalk.org to answer questions about COVID-19 myths.

Where can I find more information about my rights to a safe and healthy workplace?

The Garment Worker Center (GWC) is a worker rights organization whose mission is to organize low-wage garment workers in Los Angeles in the fight for social and economic justice. You can contact them at (213)748-5866.

You can find more information about your rights on the Cal/OSHA Website at https://www.dir.ca.gov/covid/Stay-safe-at-work.html

» If you wish to report a violation of the ETS in your workplace, you may file a complaint with Cal/OSHA online or by telephone to the Cal/OSHA district office closest to your workplace: https://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/Complaint.htm.

» If you have been exposed to COVID-19 and need support getting sick leave from your employer, call 833-LCO-INFO (833-526-4636).

For additional resources visit the UCLA LOSH page by clicking or scanning the QR Code or, checking out one of these social media sites:

UCLA
Labor Occupational Safety & Health Program

@uclacovid19, @preventcovid19, your local department of public health will also have an Instagram

Covid-19 Prevention Network: https://www.facebook.com/PreventCOVID19, UCLA Covid-19: https://www.facebook.com/UCLACOVID19English