



Public Health Council **TOOLKIT**

How to Create & Sustain a Public Health Council

ABOUT THE TOOLKIT

This toolkit was created through a partnership between the UCLA Labor Occupational Safety and Health Program (LOSH), the SoCal Coalition for Occupational Safety and Health (SoCal COSH), and the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LACDPH).

Information included in this document does not and is not intended to serve as legal advice. All resources and information are provided for educational and informational purposes only.



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INDEX

Index	4
Toolkit Purpose	6
Program History & Foundation	8
The COVID-19 Pandemic in LA County	8
Scope and Structure	9
Goals	10
Program Model	12
Model for Addressing Workplace Injuries & Illnesses	14
Anti-Retaliation Protections	15
Program Reach & Achievements	16
Lessons Learned	17
Resources and Sample Templates for Community Worker Organizations and PHCs	18
Steps for Forming a Public Health Council: Roles & Structure	19
First Meeting Sample Agenda	22
Sample Meeting Feedback Survey	25
Monthly CWO Meeting Annotated Agenda Template	26
QR Codes for CWO Outreach	27
Hazard/Risk Mapping Activity	28
Hazard Symbols Related to Workplace Health and Safety	29
Case Studies	30
Applying COVID-19 Controls to Your Sector	31
Warehouse COVID-19 Outbreak	32
Garment Factory COVID Outbreak	33
Restaurant COVID-19 Outbreak	34
Food Processing COVID-19 Outbreak	35
Grocery Store COVID-19 Outbreak	36
Where are you filing? Understanding Jurisdiction in LA County	38
Determining Where to File Workplace Health & safety Complaints in LA County	40
Important steps for filing a complaint	42
Federal Enforcement Agencies	42
US Department of Labor (DOL)	42
Federal Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA)	42
Wage & Hour Division (WHD)	42

INDEX *continued*

State Enforcement Agencies	43
California Department of Public Health (CDPH)	43
State of California Civil Rights Department	43
State of California Department of Industrial Relations (DIR)	43
State of California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal/OSHA)	43
Division of Workers' Compensation	44
Labor Commissioner's Office (LCO/DLSE)	44
Wage Claim Adjudication Unit	44
Garment Work & Garment Wage Claim Adjudication Unit	44
Bureau of Field Enforcement (BOFE)	44
Labor Enforcement Task Force Unit (LETf)	44
Public Works Unit	45
Retaliation Complaint Investigation Unit	45
Judgement Enforcement Unit	45
County Enforcement Agencies	46
LA County Department of Public Health (LACDPH)	46
Acute Communicable Disease Control Unit (ACDC)	46
Department of Environmental Health (EH)	47
LA County Department of Consumer & Business Affairs (DCBA)	48
LA Public Works (DPW)	48
LA County Fire Department	48
Report an Environmental Health Violation in LA County: A Guide for Certified Worker Organizers (CWOs)	49
City Enforcement Agencies & Resources	51
Civil & Human Rights and Equity Department	51
Public Health	51
Environmental Health	51
Air Quality	51
Fire	51
City of LA Department of Building and Safety (LADBS)	51
Other resources	51
LOSH Referral List	51
Contact Information and Video	52

PURPOSE OF THIS TOOLKIT

This toolkit was created to serve as a resource to workers in Los Angeles County who are experiencing unsafe or unlawful workplace conditions or practices. Included is a history of the program, its structure, and the organizations and partnerships that laid its foundation. Finally, a series of resources for workers is also included for those seeking to start their own Public Health Council (PHC) at their workplace, and for other health departments/agencies hoping to create more meaningful partnerships with community based organizations in their jurisdictions. We encourage you to download and utilize these resources in your efforts to support workers.

This toolkit aims to:

- 1** **Promote awareness** of LA County public health policy & workplace health and safety laws among LA County workers, including public health resources and guidance for filing complaints
- 2** **Provide insight** into the history of the Public Health Councils program and how to build collaborations across a diverse range of stakeholders
- 3** **Share resources** with workers and community worker organizations across LA County
- 4** **Emphasize the value of worker-led and community-based efforts** to address public health problems in diverse workplace settings



This toolkit is dedicated to the workers of Los Angeles County whose service, perseverance, and at times, great personal sacrifices, kept our communities going during an unprecedented public health crisis. We owe it to workers everywhere to secure healthy workplaces for all.



PROGRAM HISTORY & FOUNDATION

The COVID-19 Pandemic in LA County

Workers hold the most crucial roles in our economy and our day-to-day lives. In early 2020, workers were among the first to encounter Coronavirus (COVID-19) at their places of employment, working to support our economy and daily lives through peak infection rates. The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LACDPH) was one of the first US health departments to declare a local health emergency in response to COVID-19, along with measures to “slow the spread” among the general population and workers at high risk for COVID-19. While most people were required to stay home under local health orders¹, the workers deemed ‘essential’ continued their jobs, with many encountering unprecedented public health challenges at their workplaces.

As COVID-19 virology became better understood, LACDPH instituted COVID-19 Health Officer Orders (HOOs) & related protocols to establish best practices to control the spread of disease. These orders mandate employers’ responsibility to protect their workers, customers, and the general public from COVID-19. Additional sector-specific “Appendices” provided further safety requirements & best practices for specific industries and settings (for example, schools, grocery stores, warehouses, and others). In addition to issuing permits and enforcing rules at many types of businesses, the LA County Environmental Health Division investigates reports of HOOs violations and other workplace health and safety issues. Community members and organizations eager to help distribute resources and share information created a strong network of communication that maximized and amplified health messaging to workers and the general public. These networks were the inspiration and foundation for the Public Health Councils (PHC) program.

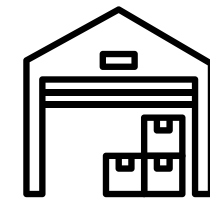
¹ See “Safer at Home” and “Targeted Safer at Home” health officer orders from 2020

Scope and Structure

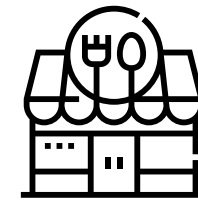
As the pandemic spread, community and worker advocate organizations throughout the County appealed to the Board of Supervisors to take action to protect workers. DPH mobilized according to orders from the Board, which also included creating a report detailing a plan to institute the PHC Program. This included an outline of the organization selection process, budget, and training needs. DPH also conducted an investigation of existing resources, holding listening sessions with essential workers and worker organizations advocating for safer workplace conditions.² At the direction of the Board of Supervisors, LACDPH launched the Public Health Councils in 2021. The PHC program functions via collaboration between

multiple entities to address health and safety issues in the workplace: the local health department (LACDPH), **Certified Worker Organizations** (CWOs) & workers themselves, a **fiscal intermediary** (Liberty Hill), and **two training & support organizations** (LOSH, COSH).

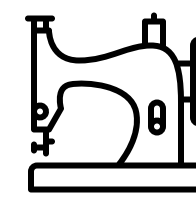
To determine where the PHC program could have the most impact, LACDPH analyzed COVID-19 worksite outbreak data to determine sectors with high incidence rates, low compliance with/violations of Health Officer Orders, and high numbers of complaints to the Department of Environmental Health. Based on this analysis and feedback from key partners, the program launched in five “heavily COVID-19-impacted” sectors:



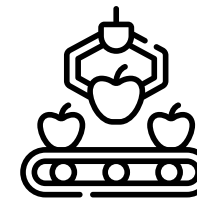
Warehousing & Storage



Restaurants



Apparel Manufacturing



Food Manufacturing



Grocery Stores & Supermarkets

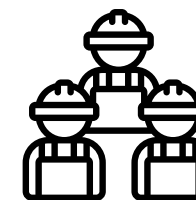
The program quickly took shape thanks to DPH’s existing relationships with local businesses and worker support organizations. Enabled by several years of expansion, the PHC program incorporated workers representing new additional sectors in November 2023:



Car Washes



Residential Care Facilities For The Elderly (RCFE)



Day Laborers



Household/ Domestic Workers



Nail Salons



Massage Workers

² For a UCLA Labor Center report about the economic & worker impacts of COVID-19, report about the economic & worker impacts of COVID-19, see Workers as Health Monitors in LA County.

Goal

The PHC program's primary goal is to protect and advocate for the safety of essential workers, many of whom live and work in under-resourced communities heavily impacted by COVID-19. During the pandemic, this included initiatives such as improving employer & worker compliance with sector-specific guidelines, improving communication with local health authorities, and providing public health education & outreach to workers.

To achieve these objectives, the PHC Program employs a collaborative approach, fostering new partnerships between workers, community organizations, and local/state public health authorities. These relationships provide workers with resources and faster response time from health officials, who in turn have connections to strong networks of workers. Workers are then empowered to share health messaging provided by officials, and can provide critical feedback about how to effectively reach diverse worker populations. Though State and Federal declarations of emergency have since ended, the PHC program continues to advocate for safer,

Ten Worker Organizations were selected to participate in the initial contract period and were certified by LACDPH. Nine went on to complete the first contract and continued as the first cohort of CWOs: **The Restaurant Opportunity Center of Los Angeles (ROC LA), Pilipino Worker Center (PWC), Thai Community Development Center (Thai CDC), Korean Immigrant Workers Alliance (KIWA), Gament Worker Center (GWC), Filipino Migrant Center (FMC), the Warehouse Worker Resource Center (WWRC), the Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE), and ICAZA Foundation.**

healthier workplaces for workers impacted by COVID-19, labor law violations, and other poor or unsafe working conditions.

Application Process and Partners

Once priority sectors were identified, partners at the nonprofit **Liberty Hill Foundation** published a request for proposals for qualified community organizations to apply to join. In particular, organizations that serve and advocate for low-wage workers, particularly those regularly affected by health, safety and labor law violations, were encouraged to apply. Experience and understanding of public and workplace health prevention was beneficial but not required. Priority consideration also applied to those with close and unique connections to workers and communities in affected areas & unrepresented industries, including organizations who provide culturally & linguistically appropriate services and resources. The first year contract included CWO payment of \$150,000 each to provide outreach, education, and technical assistance to workers and PHCs in applicable sector(s)³.

Selected CWOs were required to complete a PHC-certification training series co-hosted by LACDPH, LOSH, and COSH. Designed for those conducting outreach and community education, this training equipped PHC members with knowledge of COVID-19 Health Officer Orders, best practices to mitigate disease spread in the workplace, and worker outreach strategies. Workers who completed the series also received an LACDPH-issued Public Health Councils badge. Once certified, CWO began helping workers form & expand PHCs, educating them about their rights, and providing health and safety resources to use at work.

Using the collective power of CWO networks, the PHC Program repeatedly demonstrates its ability to tackle emergent public health issues. Once the COVID-19 vaccine was granted Emergency Use Authorization in 2021, the Program quickly utilized existing networks of workers via CWO partners to both administer the vaccine and distribute important health information to at-risk communities. When Mpox cases spiked in LA County in 2022, CWOs stepped in to deliver critical health education about the virus, focusing on transmission, prevention, and how to counter misinformation and stigma. Some partners expanded to tackle multiple industries or sectors based on their existing worker networks, while other organizations joined to reach new target populations. Additionally, CWOs encountered a range of health and safety concerns beyond COVID-19. The Program continues to serve the direct needs of Los Angeles workers facing occupational health hazards and workplace rights violations such as heat illness, workplace violence, infectious disease (COVID-19, MPox, flu, etc), wage theft, lack of access to public services, and more.



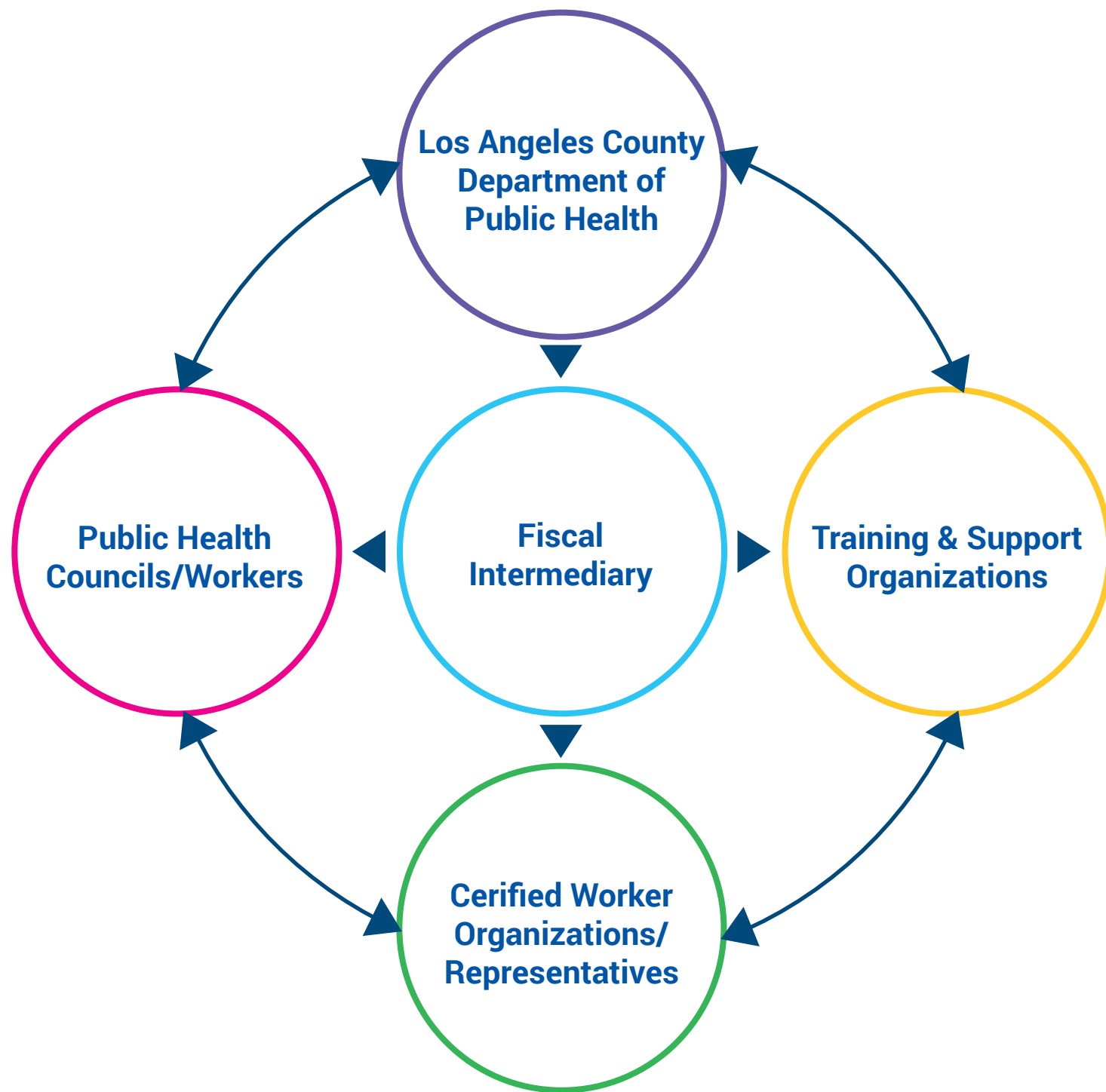
LACDPH provided small kits to certified workers to be given to workers during outreach. Each contained a KN95 mask, hand sanitizer, safety whistle, and a resource card for the Hollywood-Wilshire Wellness Community, which provides support with Mental Health, Substance Abuse, and Health & Wellness Services.
[Hollywood-Wilshire Wellness Community](#)

After obtaining permission from the manager to speak with staff on the clock, PHC Member Mercy Solorzano from LAANE conducts outreach with workers in the grocery sector.



³ For more information about the application process, see Liberty Hill's [PHC Program page](#).

PROGRAM MODEL



The above graphic details the Public Health Councils program model and role of each organization. Each organization and their role in creating and supporting the program is detailed below. Additionally, a Model for Addressing Workplace Complaints based on the structure of the program is outlined in a flowchart as an example of how a workplace issue may be addressed using a PHC structure.

Community Worker Organizations (CWOs): Certified Worker Organizations (CWOs) are contracted and DPH-certified to provide outreach, engagement, education and technical assistance to workers in target sectors. CWOs may serve an intermediary between LACDPH and workers, and help prepare reports and documentation for complaints. CWOs & representatives also meet with Training & Support Organizations to assist workers in forming PHCs and help identify workplace hazards and remedies. CWOs also provide feedback to Training and Support Organizations about workers' interests and needs from the program, as well as key insight into systemic issues affecting workers in LA County.

Public Health Councils (PHCs): PHCs are formed by groups of workers at their worksite. Workers convene regular meetings of the PHC with workers on their own time and discuss business compliance with HOOs and addressing potential non-compliance. Workers may also be trained to monitor compliance with County Health Officer Orders in their sector or at their workplace.

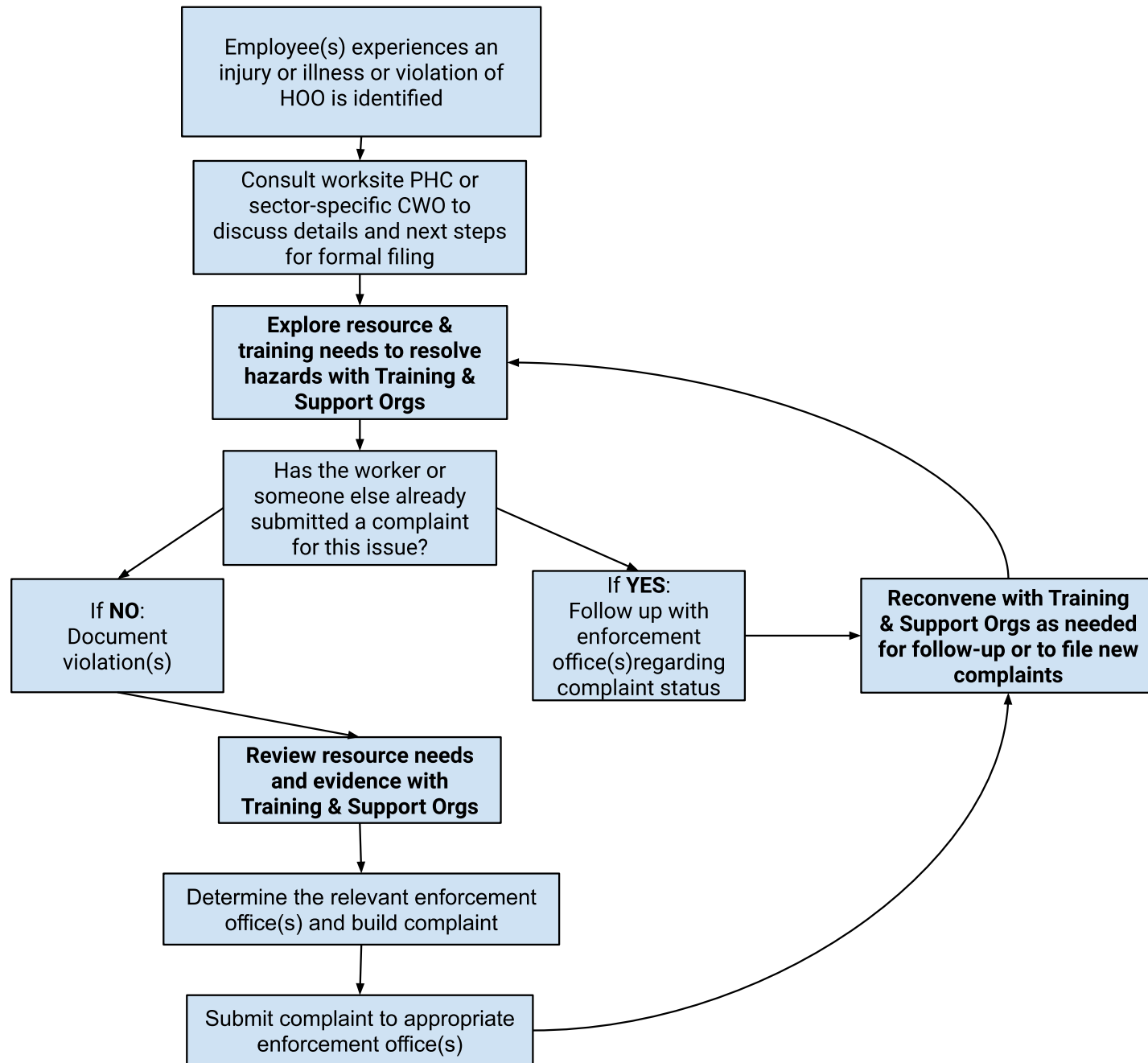
Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LACDPH): In addition to funding the program, DPH's primary role within the PHC program is to work with CWOs and PHCs to address reports of non-compliance with HOOs or other health & safety policies. Additionally, DPH co-organizes and hosts events with Training & Support Organizations, such as interactive workshops and guest speakers. DPH provides CWO leaders & workers with a certificate and badge upon completion of training.

UCLA Labor Occupational Safety and Health Program (LOSH): As an academic-affiliated worker education and support program, LOSH assists with regular PHC programming, conducting new hire & other trainings, and creating accessible, multilingual resources for workers. LOSH also provides technical assistance to CWOs, including assisting with filing complaints and finding local resources.

Southern California Coalition for Occupational Safety & Health (SoCal COSH): SoCalCOSH's specializations in occupational health & safety and workplace organizing help support PHC & CWO activities. This includes supporting CWOs through ongoing 1:1 technical assistance, targeted topic trainings, and facilitating peer-to-peer learning among PHC members. SoCal COSH also facilitates relationship-building between CWOs, DPH, and relevant enforcement agencies to create a more effective response to frontline workers' needs.

Liberty Hill: As a fiscal intermediary, Liberty Hill is responsible for distributing funds to organizations participating in the PHC program that they receive from Public Health. Additionally, Liberty Hill assists with compiling quarterly report information from PHCs and CWOs, and providing guiding feedback about the direction and needs for the program.

MODEL FOR ADDRESSING HEALTH OFFICER ORDER VIOLATIONS



ANTI-RETRALIATION PROTECTIONS

In 2020, LA County passed an anti-retaliation ordinance prohibiting retaliation for reporting public health violations. Los Angeles County Code 11.01.010 applies to any employee who performs any work within the geographic boundaries of the County of Los Angeles (except for cities with their own Health Officer). The adoption of this ordinance came as a result of tireless advocacy on the part of workers advocating for their rights to report unsafe working conditions, and ultimately instilled confidence in workers about the utility and efficacy of PHCs.

This ordinance expressly forbids employer retaliation against any worker for:

- Reporting or discussing about the employer’s or other worker’s perceived noncompliance with an HOO
- Belonging to or forming a Public Health Council
- Informing any worker of their rights under this ordinance
- Exercising any right provided under the Ordinance

When the COVID-19 “State of Emergency” ended in March 2023, the Anti-Retaliation Ordinance was modified to protect PHCs without the use of now retired Health Officer Orders. The City of Los Angeles adopted the updated Anti-Retaliation Ordinance November 13th, 2024 and incorporated it into the Los Angeles Municipal Code. At the time of this toolkit’s publication, **this ordinance is legally enforceable in unincorporated areas of LA County and cities that have adopted Title 11 in its entirety. The Los Angeles County Department of Consumer and Business Affairs (DCBA) is the agency responsible for enforcement of the anti-retaliation ordinance.**

What is Retaliation?

Retaliation is any change or adverse action taken or changed against a worker.

Examples of retaliation may include:

- Termination
- Demotion
- Pay reduction and/or reduction of hours
- Involuntary change of shift time
- Involuntary change of workplace responsibilities and/or job tasks

⁴ <https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/147290.pdf>

⁵ https://library.municode.com/ca/los_angeles_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT11HESA

PROGRAM REACH & ACHIEVEMENTS

Since its inception in 2021 to December 2023, the Public Health Councils program empowered workers and protected communities through an array of initiatives:

- **101** PHCs formed since program's inception
- **Reached over 47,000 workers** with general COVID-19 and Health Officer Order information
- **Over 1,900** employers engaged in communication around COVID-19
- **81 Health Officer Order and Sanitation complaints** submitted to Environmental Health
- **Over 400,000** test kits distributed
- **Over 600,000** masks distributed
- **92 mobile vaccine clinics** held at worksites
- **Over 1,400 workers vaccinated** at worksite mobile vaccine clinics

AWARDS

- [2022 National Association of Counties \(NaCo\) Achievement Award Winner](#)
- 2022 NACCHO Model Practice Award Winner
- 2022 LA County Productivity & Quality Traditional Plaque Award Winner
- [2022 Poster, Public Health Councils: Supporting Frontline Workers in Confronting Workplace COVID-19 Hazards in Los Angeles County.](#)
- [2023 Roundtable, Public Health Councils: Reducing COVID-19 Among Low-Wage Workers](#)

Patrick-Mudd, L. (2023, November 13). [Public Health Councils: Reducing COVID-19 Among Low-Wage Workers.](#) [Roundtable]. APHA, Atlanta, GA, USA.

Riley, K. & Belsler, C. (2022, November 6). [Public Health Councils: Supporting Frontline Workers in Confronting Workplace COVID-19 Hazards in Los Angeles County.](#) [Poster]. APHA, Boston, MA, USA.



PHC Members Jen Benitez and Romeo Hebron from the Filipino Migrant Center (FMC) conduct outreach to workers at a local jobsite

**REACHED
OVER 45K
WORKERS**



Workers (from left: Delia Guzman, Kevin Torres, and Brenda Soto) at the WWRC conduct a tabling event for workers with free masks, hand sanitizer, and information about COVID-19.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Pre-existing, strong, collaborative partnerships among worker centers, labor partners, and local health authorities prove invaluable to address emergent public health issues, and can help quickly pivot efforts when needed
- Community-based organizations play a vital role in empowering workers to submit EH complaints in their workplaces by providing workers with language assistance, cultural understanding, and knowledge of the complaint process
- Vaccine clinics and other COVID-19 outreach efforts at and around workplace sites prove to be effective ways to build relationships among employers, workers, and local health department(s) in-person
- Program certification and ongoing training allowed worker center staff to gain skills that tailor their initial and ongoing interactions with workers, prioritizing topics that resonate with the workers' concerns
- Through the certification process and programming, worker centers gain skills to tailor their initial and ongoing interactions with workers, prioritizing topics that resonate with the workers' concerns
- Community Based Organizations help bridge gaps between service providers and key members of target populations for public health intervention by bolstering trust and legitimacy of local health officials and health messaging
- Protecting workers from retaliation and establishing mechanisms to address retaliation among employers is essential
- The PHC structure empowers workers to coordinate with one another, providing peer-to-peer education, engaging with employers, and taking action against unsafe or illegal workplace practices



RESOURCES & SAMPLE TEMPLATES FOR WORKERS & PUBLIC HEALTH COUNCILS

The following are materials designed to be utilized during PHC meetings, complaint filing processes, and with workers themselves during outreach and education efforts. These materials may be helpful for conducting meetings with CWOs, providing opportunities for feedback, and engaging new workers in their PHCs.

All activities are available for free to download for use in outreach or PHC meetings.

Resource list:

- **Steps for Forming a Public Health Council:** Details the options for official formation of a PHC and outlines the role of each organization
- **Examples of Workplace Hazards:** Information about types of hazards workers may encounter and examples of each
- **First Meeting Sample Agenda & Facilitator Guide:** Detailed agenda and facilitator guide with suggested activities and content for your first PHC meeting
- **COVID-19 Case studies:** A series of COVID-19 related case studies and corresponding illustrations. These were designed to address problems related to COVID-19 transmission in the workplace, but may be modified to apply broadly to other infectious disease or health & safety concerns at the workplace. The introductory page, "Applying COVID-19 Controls to Your Sector", provides some examples of how to encourage conversation around preventing the spread of COVID-19 at work. Sector examples include:
 - Warehouse
 - Garment
 - Restaurant
 - Food Processing
 - Grocery Store/Supermarket
- **Sample Meeting Feedback Survey:** Sample survey to be provided to participants after a meeting, training, or informational session
- **Monthly CWO Meeting Annotated Agenda:** Agenda outline to help organize monthly meetings of PHCs
- **QR Codes for CWO Outreach:** How-to guide and example of utilizing QR codes to reach workers
- **Hazard/Risk Mapping Activity:** Interactive activity to conduct with workers to engage them in thinking about how their work may impact their health

FREE RESOURCES

All templates and activities are freely available for download and for use in outreach or PHC meetings.

STEPS FOR FORMING A PUBLIC HEALTH COUNCIL: ROLES & STRUCTURE

Original credit to Sara Beth Harrell & Gabino Abarca, Cipriano Belser, Alice Berner, & Ben Reynoso



Public Health Council (PHC) formation options
PHCs can form voluntarily at a worksite on their own time, and include workers from different departments in the facility. Options for forming PHCs include:

- Community Worker Organizations connect with workers in prioritized sectors
- Worker is referred by DPH to a CWO working in their sector
- Workers can directly contact a participating CWO in their sector

Certified Worker Organizations' (CWOs) Role
Speak to employees in prioritized sectors about COVID-19, MPox, and workplace public health concerns.

- Inform workers about their rights to:
- Join a PHC, provide peer-to-peer education to their coworkers
- Discuss workplace laws and rights around COVID-19 and other health and safety issues, including Cal/OSHA standard and other local/state/federal protections
- Read and participate in the creation of protocols in the workplace designed to respond to/address these issues
- Provide ongoing assistance and training to PHCs
- Liaise with Public Health on behalf of PHCs and workers
- Attend all DPH meetings & trainings

PHCs' Role

- **Workers** in the PHC will:
 - Promote **peer-to-peer education, sharing information** about COVID-19 and other public health policy and protocols that they have learned from the CWOs.
 - Convene **brief, regular meetings off-the-clock**, unless the manager grants permission to meet during business hours.
 - Discuss **plans and strategies** to improve employer adherence to COVID-19 protocols, health and safety requirements, and other related public health and safety law & policy that apply to workers at local, state, or federal levels.
 - If possible, share concerns about health and safety issues at the workplace with management. If not possible, PHC can develop a plan for contacting DPH or other relevant officials/offices.

STEPS FOR FORMING A PUBLIC HEALTH COUNCIL: ROLES & STRUCTURE *continued*

Original credit to Sara Beth Harrell & Gabino Abarca; Cipriano Belser, Alice Berner, & Ben Reynoso

- **PHC's role in inspection process**
 - Include information about hours of operation and best times that violations can be observed during investigations in complaints, including location details and any issues an inspector may want to know before arrival.
 - Propose site-specific problems that employers have failed to remedy and help identify solutions.
 - Provide dates that employees reported symptoms and when a potential COVID-19 outbreak might have started in complaints, as well as details relevant to other health and safety issues.
- Supporting employers with education and resources to improve workplace health and safety
- Support state and federal policies and county initiatives that support workers.

Role of Training and Support Orgs (LOSH/ COSH)

- Host Orgs are responsible for:
 - Creating interactive monthly programming for CWOs, including but not limited to invited experts and peer organizations, updates about policy and legislation, education about workers' rights and legal protections, and other regular educational content
 - Assisting CWOs in filing complaints or resolving workplace issues via resource referral or direct support filing complaints
 - Establishing new relationships and two-way communication with local service providers, public service departments, and community members to expand and spread awareness of the PHC program.

DPH's Role

- Educate and certify workers on best practices in public health to prevent COVID-19 transmission
- Provide on-going training and education on COVID-19 and other public health topics
- Provide resources and support with filing complaints based on complaint type(s) and urgency
- Setting up mobile vaccine clinics at worksites and providing on-site COVID-19 education to workers

STEPS FOR FORMING A PUBLIC HEALTH COUNCIL: ROLES & STRUCTURE *continued*

Original credit to Sara Beth Harrell & Gabino Abarca; Cipriano Belser, Alice Berner, & Ben Reynoso

CWO DO'S AND DON'TS

DO'S	DON'TS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet regularly with PHCs off-site • Keep meetings brief • Listen to workers' concerns and needs • Help identify possible COVID-19 and/or health and safety violations occurring in the workplace • Explore possible solutions to health and safety issues identified at the workplace • Conduct ongoing technical assistance & training • Support PHCs in determining how and when to approach employers with their concerns • Conduct ongoing technical assistance & training • Support PHCs in making complaints to Public Health if addressing issues with employers is not feasible • Collaborate with other resources or experts to better serve needs of workers • Support workers in filing retaliation complaints as needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet at the workplace without prior permission • Ignore workers' time limitations or limits on their level of involvement • Conduct trainings or spread information you are unsure of • Instigate conflict with employers without offering solutions or collaboration • Overpromise or make promises about solutions you are not able to follow through with or have no control over • Misrepresent yourself or represent yourself to employers as a bargaining agent, or representative of all workers • Enter a workplace without permission • Misuse your certification or credentials • Tell workers how they should resolve their issues

FIRST MEETING SAMPLE AGENDA

Public Health Council Meeting #1 - Sample Simplified Agenda

Time: 60 minutes

Training Delivery: In-person / virtual

Purpose:

To establish a relationship between the Certified Worker Organization and the Public Health Council

Objectives:

- Provide an overview of the Public Health Councils Program
- Identify possible modes of transmission in the worksite
- Provide next steps for creating the structures of the PHC (Selecting who's on the PHC, discussing frequency of meetings, etc.)
- Shared responsibility

I. Welcome & Introductions - 15 min.

- Certified Worker Organization: Introduction of their organization - 2 min.
- Introductions: Name, Job Title, Pronouns - 5 min.
- Group Discussion: What is on your mind related to COVID-19? What are you experiencing at work? - 8 min.

II. Understanding COVID-19 & Public Health - 25 min.

- COVID-19 Transmission - 5 min.
- Example of Coronavirus Outbreaks [two options: 1) Workers share about an outbreak at their worksite; 2) CWO share the industry-specific case study] - 5 min.
- Identifying Possible Modes of Transmission - 15 min.

III. LA County Health Officer Orders & Protections - 10 min.

- What are Health Officer Orders (HOOs), what they cover, and how they're enforced
- Retaliation Protections

IV. Overview of Public Health Council Program - 5 min.

V. Closing / Next Steps - 5 min.

- Next Meeting - set the date/time
- Questions

[Optional Assignment]

Identify 1-2 coworkers to bring to the next PHC meeting

Public Health Council Meeting #1 - Sample Detailed Agenda/Facilitator's Guide

Time: 60 minutes

Training Delivery: In-person / virtual

Purpose:

To establish a relationship between the Certified Worker Organization and the Public Health Council

Objectives:

- Provide an overview of the Public Health Councils Program
- Identify possible modes of transmission in the worksite
- Provide next steps for creating the structures of the PHC (Selecting who's on the PHC, discussing frequency of meetings, etc.)
- Shared responsibility

Process:

I. Welcome & Introductions - 15 min.

- Certified Worker Organization: Introduction of their organization - 2 min.
- Introductions: Name, Job Title, Pronouns - 5 min.
- Group Discussion: What is on your mind related to COVID-19? What are you experiencing at work? - 8 min.

II. Understanding COVID-19 & Public Health - 25 min.

- COVID-19 Transmission - 5 min.
 - Routes of Entry: Eyes, Nose, Mouth, Lungs
 - Incubation Period: After someone is exposed to the virus, it can take 2-15 days for symptoms to develop
 - If someone has been infected with the virus they are likely able to transmit it to others 2 days before symptoms appear to 10 days after symptoms appear
 - Asymptomatic Transmission: Despite being infected with the virus, some individuals do not present symptoms, can still infect others
- Example of Coronavirus Outbreaks [two options: 1) Workers share about an outbreak at their worksite; 2) CWO share the industry-specific case study] - 5 min.
- Identifying Possible Modes of Transmission - 15 min.
 - Have participants identify possible factors that contributed to the outbreak; "what do you think caused the outbreak?" [facilitator charts responses]
 - Are there job tasks and situations surrounding your worksite that may encourage increased risk or spread of the virus? [allow participants to share before you offer examples, facilitator charts responses]
 - Examples of Job Tasks: Standing in close proximity or no barriers between individuals, fast paced work environment
 - Examples of Situations Surrounding the Worksite: Arrival, clocking in/out, break areas, bathroom accommodations, lunchtime activities, employer failing to provide personal protective equipment, etc.
 - Examples of Harmful Interpersonal Dynamics: History of retaliation, no transparency about positive cases, no public postings about County HOOs

III. LA County Health Officer Orders & Protections - 10 min.

- What are Health Officer Orders (HOOs), what they cover, and how they're enforced
- Industry Specific Health Officer Order
 - Review the industry HOO
 - What job tasks can you point to that are in conflict with the HOO? [return to what was previously mentioned re: job tasks & situations]
- Retaliation Protections
 - What is retaliation and examples (change of hours/shift, termination, change in treatment by manager/boss)
 - What to do if you encounter retaliation / rights & protections

IV. Overview of Public Health Council Program - 5 min.

- Provide an overview of the purpose & goals of the program [will discuss in detail in following meeting(s); provide 2 page overview of the program]
 - Purpose / Role of Public Health Councils
 - Public Health Councils are made-up of you and your co-workers to be the eyes and ears in your worksite to ensure employers are following County HOOs, and control measures are in place to keep workers and the public safe
 - Goals [provide brief overview of below, to be discussed in following sessions]
 - Work closely with your Certified Worker Organization to
 - Understand the risks and transmission of COVID-19
 - Asses possible risk-factors in the workplace that contribute to transmission of COVID-19 (and therefore put you and your co-workers at risk)
 - Identify control measures that can help prevent COVID-19 exposure and spread
 - Report non-compliance to the LA County DPH if employers do not implement control measures
 - Identify co-workers who will serve on the Public Health Council
 - Continue to ensure your worksite is following health protocols throughout the pandemic

V. Closing / Next Steps - 5 min.

- [Recap of meeting discussion, and provide vision for this program]: Workplaces are the primary mode of COVID-19 transmission; keeping workplaces safe, keeps everyone safe; Individual and collective responsibility for improving public health and safety for our families and communities
- Next Meeting - set the date/time
- The next meeting(s) will address the following:
 - Identify volunteers for the PHC
 - Workplace hazard mapping activity
 - Identify control measures (i.e. current job tasks or procedures that contribute to COVID-19 transmission)
- Questions

[Optional Assignment]

Identify 1-2 coworkers to bring to the next PHC meeting

SAMPLE MEETING FEEDBACK SURVEY

Surveys may be customized by event or to elicit specific feedback about specific aspects of events or to solicit new ideas from participants about content or activities that would be useful to attendees.

You may opt to utilize a survey platform such as Google Forms or Qualtrix to easily compile, record, and later analyze survey responses & feedback.

Recommendations:

- Keep it short (5 questions or less)
- Allow for anonymous replies (do not require a log-in on google forms or allow for anonymous responses)
- Available in English & Spanish or other languages as necessary
- Due to flexible nature of meetings, ensure there is an "N/A" option for questions folks may have missed if they were late
- Set aside 5-10 minutes in-session to allow for completion of surveys, this will increase rates of completion
- Send survey out in follow-up email for those who did not get a chance to complete it in-session
- Allow for open-ended questions for suggestions and comments

Sample Questions

1. How helpful was the information from the panel discussion?

- 3 - Helpful
- 2 - Somewhat Helpful
- 1 - Not Helpful
- Not Applicable - I missed this section

2. Additional comments or suggestions

Open-ended/Long answer text

3. How helpful was the small group discussion activity?

- 3 - Helpful
- 2 - Somewhat Helpful
- 1 - Not Helpful
- Not Applicable - I missed this section

4. Additional comments or suggestions

Open-ended/Long answer text

5. What additional topics or trainings would you like to see in future meetings?

Open-ended/Long answer text

MONTHLY CWO MEETING ANNOTATED AGENDA TEMPLATE

Public Health Councils Monthly Meeting of CBOs Annotated Agenda Month Day Year, Time-Time (Time Zone)

Agenda:

11:30 - 11:40 am	Welcome and Intro (Assigned Speaker)
11:40 - 11:45 am	Announcements (Assigned Speaker)
11:45 - 11:50 am	Updates on _____ (Assigned Speaker)
11:50 - 11:55 am	Upcoming training announcement (Assigned Speaker)
11:55 - 12 pm	New process updates (Assigned Speaker)
12:00 - 12:30 pm	Interactive presentation with invited speaker (Moderator)
12:30 - 1:00 pm	Large Group Discussion (Lead Facilitator)
1:00 - 1:20 pm	Small Group Discussion (Individual Group Facilitators decided in advance)
1:15-1:20 pm	Evaluation (Allow for time in-session to complete)
1:20-1:25 pm	Partner Updates (allow for partners to share any updates)
1:25-1:30 pm	Close out

QR CODES FOR CWO OUTREACH

A QR code, short for Quick Response code, is a scannable grid of black & white pixels that stores data readable by a digital device. This discreet, accessible tool is convenient for sharing a website, link to a poster or event. You may want to utilize design elements, colors, artwork, catch phrases or other eye-catching styles to encourage people to scan. Many websites will generate QR codes for free, for example: <https://www.qr-code-generator.com/>



For example, this poster targeted workers in the restaurant industry, inviting workers to join the Restaurant Opportunities Center of Los Angeles (ROC-LA). The code links to their website which gives an overview of ROC-LA's services, Know Your Rights information, and details about organizing your workplace.

QR CODE DO'S AND DON'TS

DO'S

- Put QR codes in areas where you know workers visit, with appropriate permission(s). Create posters or stickers that include your QR code.
Posting areas may include: local bulletin boards, magazines/publications, resource/community centers, or other locations familiar to you and your target population
- Include essential information for workers in your QR link that uses simple wording, is easy to read, and is in a language that most workers will understand
- Be up front with who you are and what resources, information, or support you can provide
- Encourage follow up by inviting workers to an event they may be interested in or to the worker center itself (if available). Consider offering services or resources like childcare, food, skills, or other incentives.

DON'TS

- Deface property, obstruct windows, road, or street signage, or cover other postings with QR codes
- Include sensitive information or private membership information you do not want public in your QR codes/links
- Misrepresent yourself or make promises you cannot follow through on
- Be too pushy about inviting people to events. Know that everyone has capacity limits and will participate to the extent they are both interested and able.

HAZARD/RISK MAPPING ACTIVITY

(Adapted from the Labor Safety and Health Training Project, George Meany Center-National Labor College, July 2004)

A hazard/risk map is a drawing of a workplace or a part of a workplace on which workers identify the hazards and unsafe and unhealthy conditions that may be causing workers' symptoms, injuries, illnesses, and stresses. This activity is also a good introduction to the hierarchy of controls, and can be used to discuss workplace hazards like COVID-19. Examples of workplace hazard symbols are on the next page, which you can represent with colors to make the activity easier.

Purpose: To help workers 1) identify potential workplace COVID-19 hazards or other health & safety concerns, 2) identify the impact of COVID-19 or other hazards on their body, and 3) consider ways to minimize COVID-19 exposures to or effects on the body.

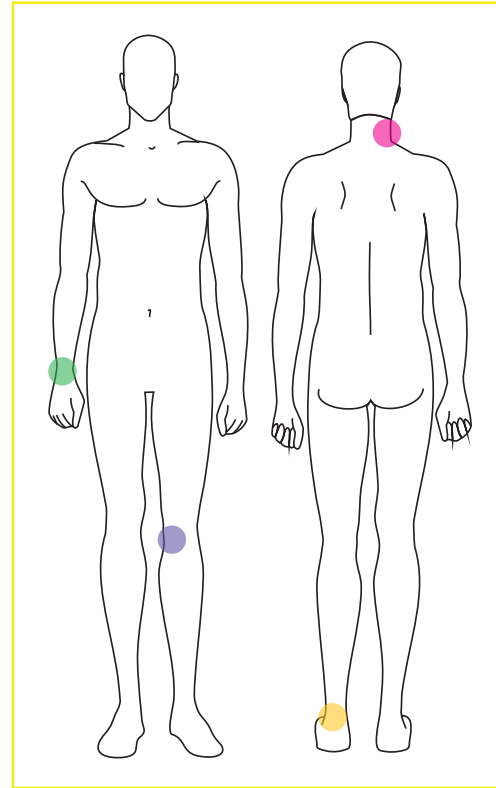
Materials: Stickers/markers of seven different colors (or stickers of hazard types), wall chart/paper with body drawn on it, tape, color code for activity (see Hazards page)

Objectives:

- Identify potential hazards in the workplace
- Describe an occupational illness or injury and identify the source/cause
- Discuss ways to mitigate workplace hazards and protect oneself from injury at work

Instructions:

1. If in a large group with different types of jobs, ask workers to break into small groups of 5-6 people. If in a small group of workers with similar jobs, you can do this as one group.
2. In small groups or a larger group, ask a volunteer to explain/demonstrate their job to the audience.
3. Have one participant draw a floor-plan or map of the workplace or department or section noting the following:
 - a. Different areas or sections
 - b. Major pieces of machinery and equipment
 - c. Major steps of the work process (work flow)
4. Discuss where to place color-coded stickers based on where exposure to COVID-19 or other injuries/illnesses or stress workers may occur. Identify the hazards or lack of infection control measures causing those problems on this map. Ask groups, one at a time, to summarize the range of hazards identified on their maps.
5. Ask groups, one at a time, to summarize the range of hazards identified on their maps.
6. After each group has explained their map, ask them:
 - a. What are the main health and safety concerns?
 - b. Where are people most often testing positive or being impacted by hazards?
 - c. Where have there been changes in the work process (in how the job is done?)
 - d. What infection control measures are in place?
 - e. What are the concerns that affect the most people on the worksite?



HAZARD SYMBOLS RELATED TO WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY

Below are some examples of workplace health and safety hazards organized by type of hazard including COVID-19. Symbols shown are just examples of what may indicate a particular hazard is present. Always consult your workplace's Safety Data Sheets or emergency response program(s) for more information about a particular safety hazard. For the purposes of the Hazard/Risk Mapping Activity, you can print these symbols or pick a color to represent each type of hazard.



Biological Hazards: Blood, mold, fungus, infectious diseases and viruses (like Tuberculosis, Hepatitis B, HIV/AIDS, COVID-19, RSV, Influenza)



Ergonomic Hazards (hazards that result in back or repetitive strain injuries): Lifting heavy boxes, keyboarding, standing all day, vibration, awkward postures



Stressors/Work Design Hazards: Understaffing, excessive workload, fast work pace, long hours, shift work, production quotas, violent customers/clients/patients, harassment and abuse



Chemical Hazards: Solvents, lead, asbestos, silica, latex, formaldehyde, cleaning chemicals, metal dust, diesel fumes, copier or printer fumes



Physical Hazards: Noise, vibration, radiation, poor lighting, indoor pollution or lack of ventilation, extreme temperatures



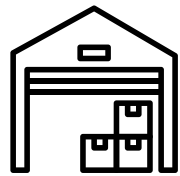
Safety Hazards: Unsafe equipment, violent clients/patients, electrical hazards, slippery floors, unguarded machines, fall hazards, confined spaces, lack of training

CASE STUDIES

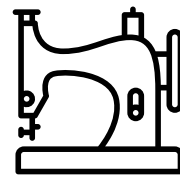
The following case studies are designed to be interactive activities for workers in various industries. Each one utilizes real-life examples of issues workers in PHCs have faced and resolved at workplaces. You may use these case studies as a way to identify workplace hazards/safety concerns, discuss how to report and/or resolve them, and how a public health council can help make workplaces safer and healthier. You may also create your own examples in other industries to discuss with workers.

The first document, “Applying COVID-19 Controls to Your Sector”, can be used with the case studies as a way to discuss COVID-19 in the workplace. Each case study is accompanied with a series of graphics depicting a workplace in that sector. These may be utilized as a virtual or in-person activity, and participants can be asked to circle or point out problem areas, potential routes/modes for transmission of COVID-19, and/or health and safety hazards at the workplace. “Hidden dynamics” that may not be seen in the photos or by just looking at a workplace may also be discussed. These activities can be modified to fit your industry or to address specific health & safety concerns at work.

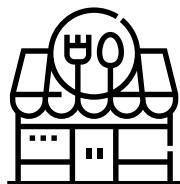
While these activities were designed when sector-specific Health Officer Orders were in effect, they may be useful as exercises to think through best practices for infection control, or how particular strategies to prevent infection might play out practically in the workplace.



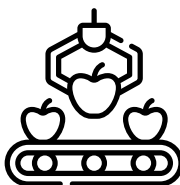
Warehouse COVID-19 Outbreak



Garment Factory COVID Outbreak



Restaurant COVID-19 Outbreak



Food Processing COVID-19 Outbreak



Grocery Store COVID-19 Outbreak

APPLYING COVID-19 CONTROLS TO YOUR SECTOR

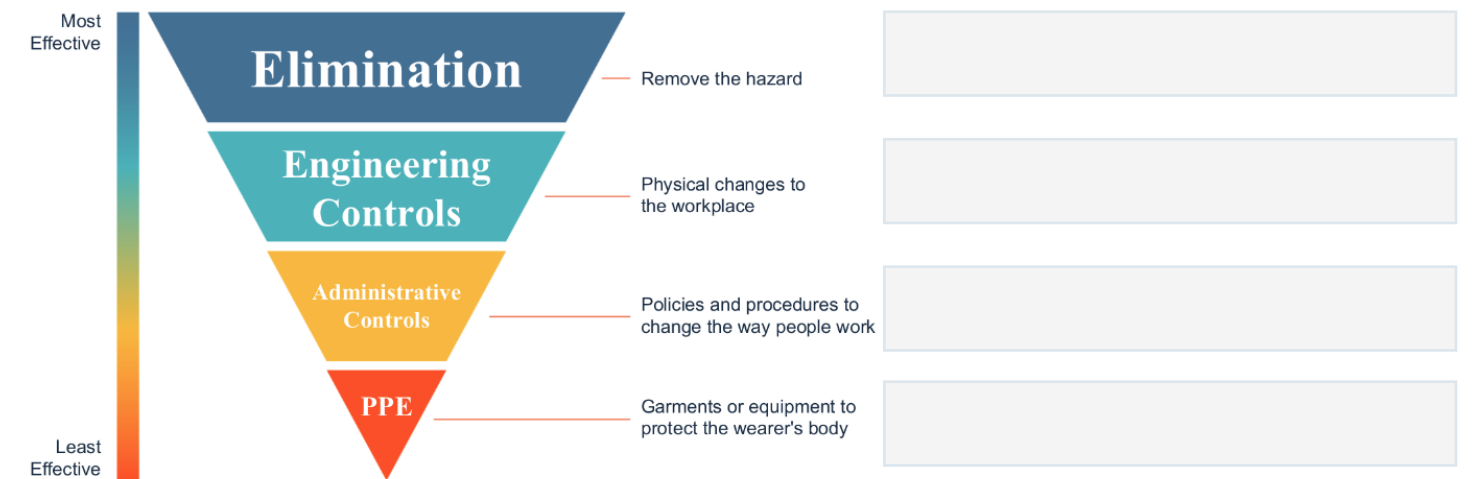
OBJECTIVE: Use case studies to apply the hierarchy of controls to your sector to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the case study for your industry as a group and answer the questions below.

1. What job tasks, dynamics, and other factors contributed to transmission of COVID-19 at this worksite?

2. How can we apply the hierarchy of controls to recommend changes in the workplace to prevent future or continue spread of the virus? Fill in your responses next to appropriate control.

Hierarchy of Controls



3. Ask participants to circle or point out potential modes of transmission at this workplace in each case study/by sector. Additionally, you may ask participants about “hidden dynamics” at the workplace that may not be visible in the illustration. Examples may include:
 - Ventilation or access to fresh air
 - Pace of work, pressure to work quickly
 - Norms & attitudes about masking or other PPE
 - Management’s practices about informing workers of positive cases
 - Access to vaccinations, resources, or COVID-19 information

WAREHOUSE COVID-19 OUTBREAK



Diana works as an associate at a warehouse in Los Angeles County. The company is an online retailer with warehouses across the country, selling billions of dollars in merchandise every year. The warehouse where Diana works employs over 400 pickers, stowers, and delivery drivers working around the clock across three shifts, 7 days a week. About half of the employees are directly hired by the company, and the other half are employed as contractors through a number of temporary agencies.

From the outside, the warehouse seems like a well-oiled machine: Trucks deliver crates of merchandise to the warehouse. Stowers and pickers transport goods inside the warehouse and distribute them to meticulously organized aisles and shelves. Pickers respond to online orders and package items in boxes to be sent out for delivery. Everyone is timed, and those who can't keep up with the fast-paced work typically are written up.

When the first few people at Diana's job tested positive for COVID-19, the company didn't notify anyone; Diana knew there had been positive cases only because she'd heard about it from her coworkers in the break room. Finally, after 2 weeks and another 15 positive tests among workers the company started sending out text messages notifying employees when an employee tested positive, but they did not identify the worker or indicate what shift or department they worked in. Diana and her coworkers felt uneasy about going to work. The company did not train workers on COVID-19 precautions, workers had to buy their own masks and gloves, and Diana rarely saw surfaces and commonly used equipment being cleaned.

Diana is unsure exactly how many people have tested positive, but she estimates it to be around 50. She no longer feels comfortable staying quiet and believes that if she does not do or say something at her workplace, she and more of her coworkers will get sick.

GARMENT FACTORY COVID-19 OUTBREAK



Alicia works in a Los Angeles garment factory that manufactures, designs, and distributes clothing. The company includes three factories that operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, with multiple shifts, each with more than 100 workers. Because of the pandemic, the company received government contracts to produce personal protective equipment and as a result, expanded their workforce from about 450 to 2,000 workers, including temporary hires.

In the early stages of the pandemic, Alicia noticed that drivers and vendors constantly went in and out of the factory, some without masks. Management also didn't wear masks. She and her coworkers were placed in small groups without social distancing, with only cardboard as a barrier between their workstations. The machine operators felt having some form of barrier was good for them, but they weren't sure if cardboard was enough. Management did not provide personal protective equipment, like hand sanitizer at workstations, and they

failed to disinfect machinery or commonly used equipment. Alicia didn't feel comfortable taking breaks in the lunch room because the company had not established any social distancing protocols. She dreaded going to the restroom as they were even dirtier than usual. Most of the time, there was no hand soap, and workers had to constantly remind management to restock toilet paper.

In late June, Alicia heard that some of her coworkers who cut and trim garments were getting sick and not coming back to work. Management did not inform workers of any COVID-19 cases or disinfect the worksite. Alicia is very scared to continue going to work and worries that if she does not speak up or take action, more people will get sick.

RESTAURANT COVID-19 OUTBREAK



Alex works the graveyard shift from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. at a restaurant, along with five other workers, prepping food for the following day. They are responsible for making burritos by cooking over 600 eggs and preparing different toppings and condiments, with one person in charge of cleaning the grill. Near the end of the shift, Alex and his coworkers open the restaurant to distribute the burritos to drivers who deliver the prepared burritos to cafes and shops throughout the city. By 8 a.m., management and five workers on the day shift arrive to open the restaurant by 8:30 a.m. for pickup and delivery service.

Alex likes his work but has been feeling uneasy for the last couple of months. Since COVID-19 broke out, management has provided soap in the bathroom and gloves, but they have not provided worker training on virus prevention, hand sanitizer, or masks and have not increased disinfecting and cleaning in common areas and on high-touch surfaces.

One day, Alex heard one of the managers joking about how COVID-19 was “just a cold” and was not a serious issue. After hearing this, Alex did not feel comfortable speaking up about his concerns. Management implemented social distancing with customers, but with coworkers ignored this practice. Alex felt upset that management was failing to implement or enforce workplace policies and practices to protect the staff’s health.

One evening while he was looking at the employer’s app to check his work schedule, he received a message from management that one of their graveyard shift coworkers tested positive for COVID-19. The next morning at the shift change, all of the workers went to get tested. Their employer told the workers that the manager and assistant manager had cleaned the entire restaurant after the graveyard shift ended at 7 a.m. and before opening the restaurant at 8:30 a.m. However, Alex and his coworkers did not feel comfortable or satisfied with their employer’s response.

About a week later, Alex was alarmed to hear that another graveyard shift coworker, Nancy, had tested positive. Alex only knew about Nancy’s positive test because she had told him personally. He was enraged that management had not notified workers about this second case or taken any measures to ensure their protection. When Nancy told the manager about her symptoms, he told her she still had to show up to work. A week after Nancy tested positive, another worker in the same shift also tested positive. Again, management did not inform the workers about the positive case nor thoroughly clean the restaurant. This third case prompted Alex and his coworkers to think about what they should do to protect themselves at work, but they don’t know what steps to take next.

FOOD PROCESSING COVID-19 OUTBREAK



Amanda has worked at a meat processing plant for the past 10 years, in one of 10 industrial plants in Los Angeles. At her plant, there are over 1,000 workers who process thousands of pigs per day to make various other meat products. Amanda has experience doing several job tasks at her plant, including stunning animals prior to slaughter, trimming head meat, severing or removing parts of heads or skulls, and removing bones and cutting meat into standard cuts in preparation for marketing. There are more than 50 tasks at a meatpacking plant, and Amanda is one of the only workers who has the knowledge to perform multiple tasks. Workers typically stick to one job task in one department.

Near the start of the pandemic, Amanda and her coworkers became concerned when they noticed their employer had not taken strict measures to ensure their safety. Management did not change the speed of the production line, workers were not placed 6 feet apart, and their workstations were rarely sanitized. To make things worse, workers were offered only one mask per week. Management told them that

they had plenty of hand sanitizer around their workstations, so they shouldn’t complain.

At the beginning of May, Amanda was notified by a coworker that over 100 workers—a quarter of the workers in one department—tested positive for COVID-19. Amanda had heard that three workers had tested positive just a week before and was angry that the company had not taken precautions to prevent further spread. She wanted to speak up before things got any more out of hand, but she was afraid of facing retaliation from her employer; it was not uncommon for management to fire workers or change their hours when they spoke up.

Amanda and her coworkers had seen in the news that food processing plant employers claimed they were feeding the country during these difficult times and could not afford to slow down. Who would listen to her and her coworkers? Amanda had no idea where to start.

GROCERY STORE COVID-19 OUTBREAK



Donna is a cashier at Nickel-Mart, a large grocery store chain in Southern California. For the past 7 years, Donna has worked the closing shift at Nickel-Mart from 3pm to 11pm, often staying until midnight. This particular Nickel-Mart is located in the center of Los Angeles, and is one of the busiest stores in the chain. At the start of the pandemic, Donna and her coworkers noticed how quickly the store ran out of essential products, like toilet paper, flour, and eggs. The customers noticed too, and often took out their anger and frustration on the Nickel-Mart employees.

Despite the County’s Health Officer Orders, customer capacity was never capped, social distancing was rarely followed, and the already busy work environment got even busier. There were special directives from the Nickel-Mart headquarters and store management to follow new safety & health protocols, but Donna knew these would be hard to do in addition to their regular job demands. Even hand washing every two hours, keeping 6-feet of social distance, or sanitizing the checkout area in between customers was nearly impossible with the constant rush of customers. There is a small plexiglass barrier between Donna and the customers, but staff who bag the groceries for customers who have no barriers. The customers often took out their frustrations on Donna, complaining that she wasn’t doing enough to keep social distance between customers at the register, or to enforce mask wearing among customers.

When the pandemic first started, management would call a meeting when an employee tested positive for COVID-19 to inform other potentially exposed workers. However, months later, management stopped the meetings and just sent a text alert saying the number of team members that have been exposed to COVID-19, with no additional information. Within a two-week period in the winter, over a dozen team members tested positive for COVID-19. Donna and her coworkers were stressed and fearful that they had been unknowingly exposed to the virus while covering shifts for people who had to quarantine. Because of this uncertainty, Donna and her coworkers felt it would be helpful for them to get tested for COVID-19. However, when Nickel-Mart staff requested time off to get tested, Management said the time off would be unpaid.

During a lunch break, Donna and a few coworkers made a list of improvements they’d like to see implemented by management. When Donna brought the list to management, they laughed and said that profits will suffer, and that she and her coworkers could lose their jobs if they complained again. Donna is not sure what to do next, and worries that if it continues like this, more employees and customers could be exposed to the virus, and she could possibly bring the virus home to her mom and grandmother.

FILING COMPLAINTS

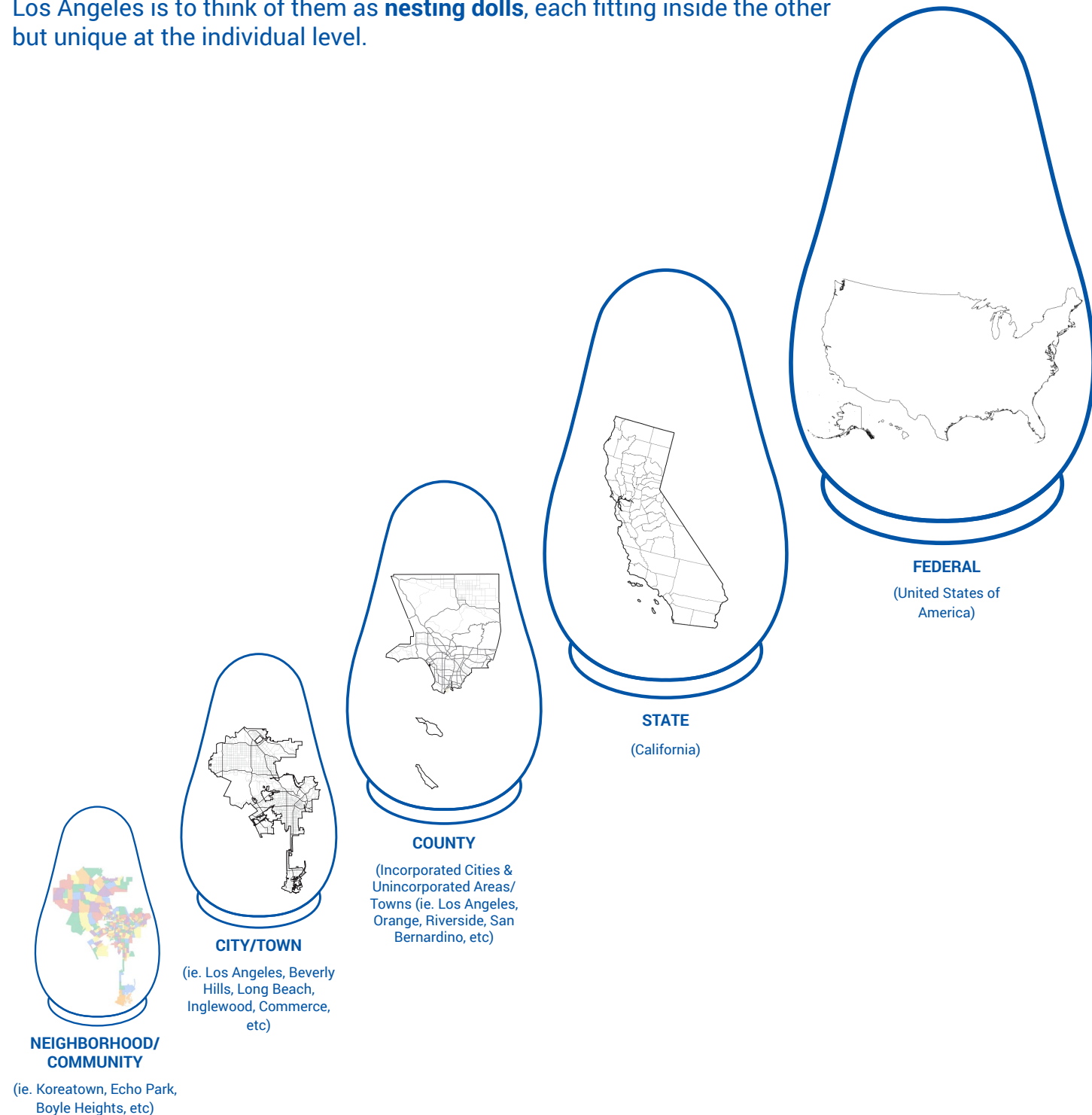
This section includes resources for individuals or groups of workers looking to file different types of complaints. You may want to utilize the “CTRL+F” or search function to search this guide for information you need by complaint type.

Filing Complaints: Table of Contents

Where are you filing? Understanding Jurisdiction in LA County	38
Determining Where to File Workplace Health & safety Complaints in LA County	40
Important steps for filing a complaint	42
Federal Enforcement Agencies	42
US Department of Labor (DOL)	42
Federal Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA)	42
Wage & Hour Division (WHD)	42
State Enforcement Agencies	43
California Department of Public Health (CDPH)	43
State of California Civil Rights Department	43
State of California Department of Industrial Relations (DIR)	43
State of California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal/OSHA)	43
Division of Workers’ Compensation	44
Labor Commissioner’s Office (LCO/DLSE)	44
Wage Claim Adjudication Unit	44
Garment Work & Garment Wage Claim Adjudication Unit	44
Bureau of Field Enforcement (BOFE)	44
Labor Enforcement Task Force Unit (LETF)	44
Public Works Unit	45
Retaliation Complaint Investigation Unit	45
Judgement Enforcement Unit	45
County Enforcement Agencies	46
LA County Department of Public Health (LACDPH)	46
Acute Communicable Disease Control Unit (ACDC)	46
Department of Environmental Health (EH)	47
LA County Department of Consumer & Business Affairs (DCBA)	48
LA Public Works (DPW)	48
LA County Fire Department	48
Report an Environmental Health Violation in LA County: A Guide for Certified Worker Organizers (CWOs)	49
City Enforcement Agencies & Resources	51
Civil & Human Rights and Equity Department	51
Public Health	51
Environmental Health	51
Air Quality	51
Fire	51
City of LA Department of Building and Safety (LADBS)	51
Other resources	51
LOSH Referral List	51
Contact Information and Video	52

WHERE ARE YOU FILING? UNDERSTANDING JURISDICTION IN LA COUNTY⁶

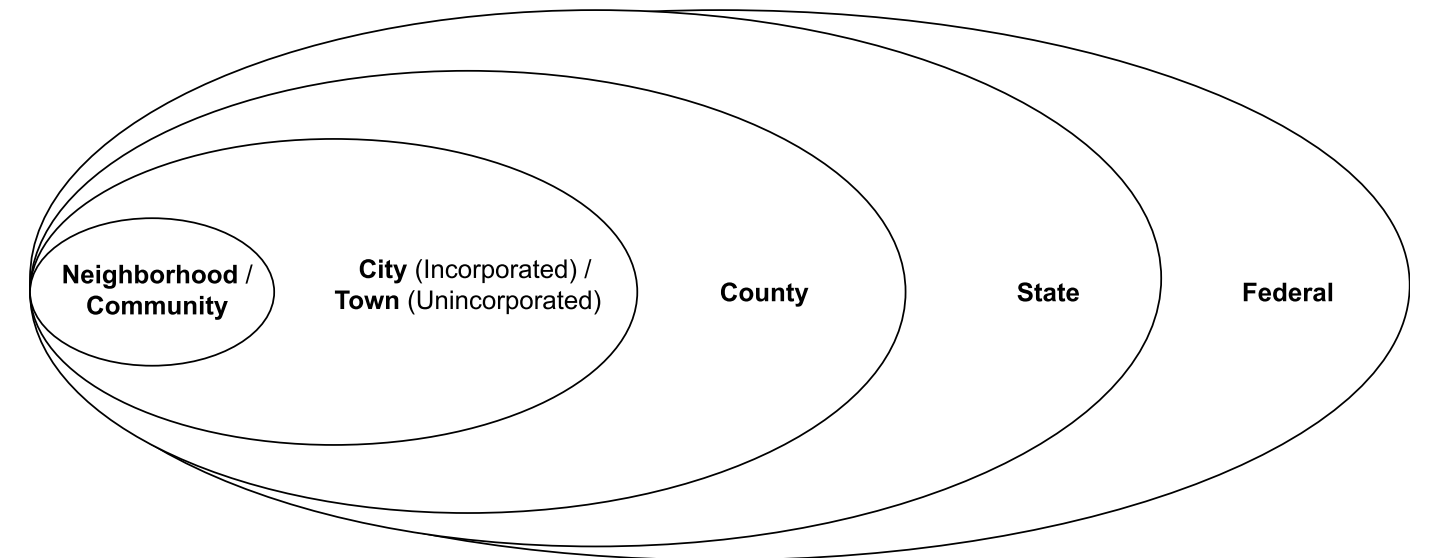
Jurisdiction in “Los Angeles” can be complicated. Los Angeles County, the largest county in California by population, holds about 10 million people. One way to conceptualize jurisdictions in Los Angeles is to think of them as **nesting dolls**, each fitting inside the other but unique at the individual level.



⁶ Information for this section was sourced in part from the following sources:
<https://www.kcet.org/socal-focus/a-guide-for-the-politically-perplexed-in-l-a-county>
<https://www.latimes.com/local/la-me-unincorporated-vote-20140527-story.html>
<https://nsholmes21.medium.com/the-puzzle-of-places-in-la-18e8a537e3ac>
<https://www.pbssocal.org/socal-focus/a-guide-for-the-politically-perplexed-in-l-a-county>

WHERE ARE YOU FILING? UNDERSTANDING JURISDICTION IN LA COUNTY *continued*

That is, we can think about areas in Los Angeles (or other similar areas with overlapping and connected communities) like this:



One example of this model is a neighborhood like Koreatown, which resides in an incorporated area of Los Angeles, also in Los Angeles County, in California.

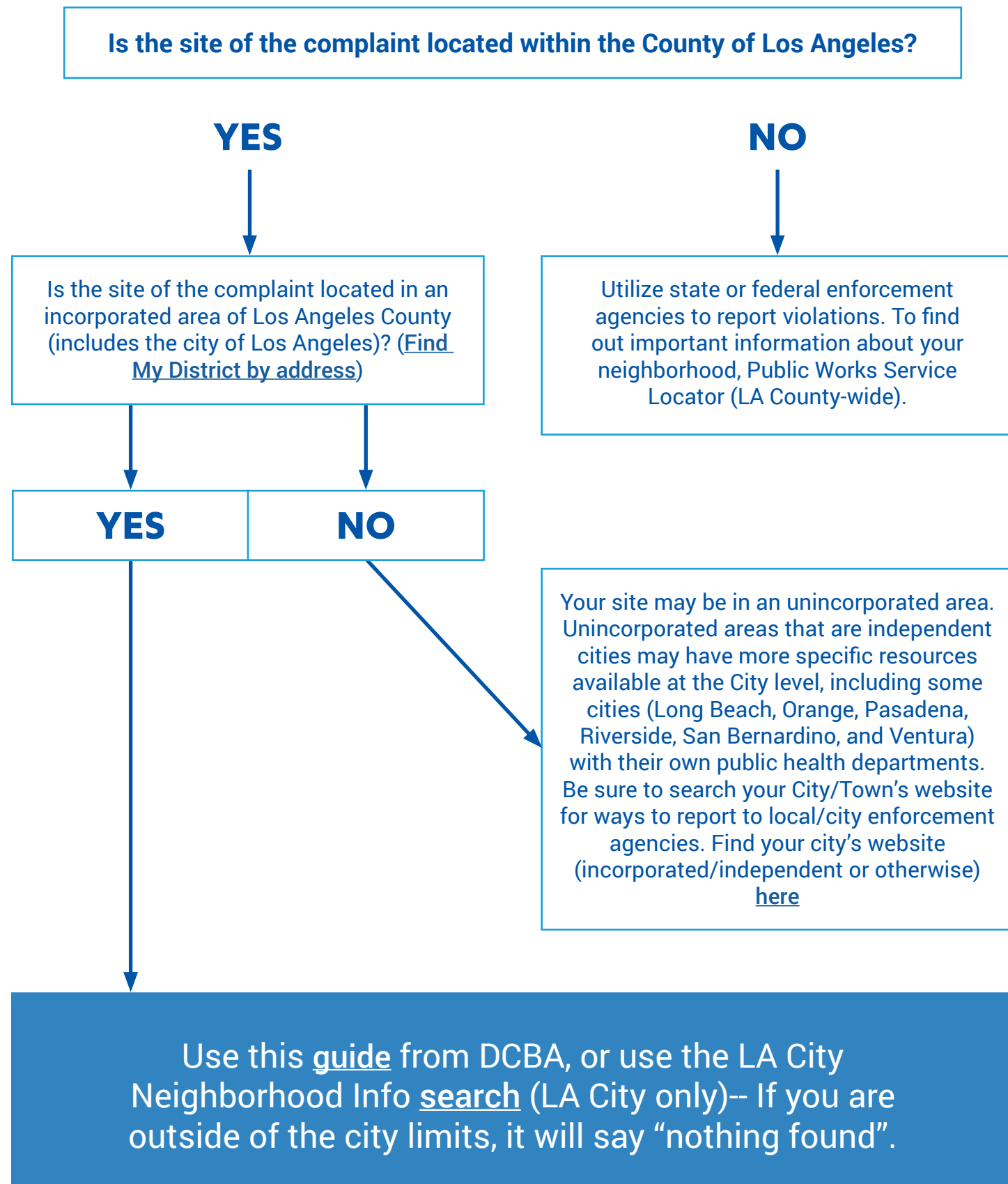
While their boundaries are blurred and at times disputed, each neighborhood/ community in the County of Los Angeles is part of a larger City or Town. Typically the term “cities” refers to incorporated areas, while “towns” refers to unincorporated areas. Over time, communities within the County have become incorporated cities⁷. Each of the 88 incorporated Cities, including the City of Los Angeles, has their own city Council & Mayor, and may pass employment laws beyond those passed by the County⁸. Incorporated cities may utilize their own public services or contract with LA County for municipal services like EMS, fire, and public health. The City of Los Angeles is the largest city in LA County with about 4 million residents.

While unincorporated areas are geographically within the County of LA, they are not their own independent cities, nor part of the city of LA. Depending on how one defines them, there are around 120 unincorporated areas in LA County. These areas rely entirely on municipal services from County departments, such as law enforcement, zoning, building permits, parks, libraries, etc. The county Board of Supervisors acts as the governing body for these areas, and their assigned district & Board of Supervisors Representative(s) act as their Mayor. Approximately 1 million people live in these areas, which make up more than 65% of the county’s land as Unincorporated County Territory.

⁷ For a list of these 88 cities, their supervisorial district(s), and incorporation dates, see County of LA City and Incorporation Year [list](#), and a list of Unincorporated Areas on LA County’s website. SPAs for unincorporated areas can also be found [here](#).

⁸ For details about the cities served by the County, visit the LA County Auditor-Controller’s office [website](#).

DETERMINING WHERE TO FILE WORKPLACE HEALTH & SAFETY COMPLAINTS IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY



IMPORTANT STEPS FOR FILING A FORMAL COMPLAINT

- Proactive steps** in recording evidence of labor law and/or wage & hour violations:
- Know your employer: Who you work for, company name, complete personal name(s), phone number, address, car license plate
 - Document Hours: Start / end times and meal periods (see the DOL [timesheet app](#))
 - Check stubs: Keep copies of your checks and related banking information if available. Also keep your W-2s, 1099s, and any written communication about work hours.
 - Keep a work diary: Write all relevant incidents (injuries, delays, equipment problems, miles, etc.) with dates and time, what happened, who was involved in the ER, how they responded, witnesses
 - Photos: Take photos of relevant postings or documents, timestamp if possible
 - Receipts: Keep receipts for work-related expenses or purchases

- Tips for filing a complaint:**
- Ask to speak to someone in your preferred language or to file written complaints in your preferred language
 - Ask for a complaint or record number for your report if applicable to follow up later
 - Keep logs of who you speak to and when so you can track your complaint's progress
 - Provide as much detail as possible about the complaint/issue, including time, date, location (business name/address, cross streets, or other identifying information)

Determine jurisdiction(s) in which you'd like to file: You may be able or want to file your complaint at multiple levels to get assistance from multiple levels of authority/offices. Utilize the "Where are you filing" flowchart to help you decide which offices to file with.



Not sure who your employer/business owner is?

You may start by utilizing the State of California Employment Development Department (EDD) [employer search tool](#). This site provides information about the number of employees at the site, contact information, and the industry in which the business is registered with the state (NAICS code). You can search by occupation, industry, geographic area, or employer/business name.

For unincorporated areas in the City of Los Angeles, you may search for existing business licenses by address, business owner name, and more via the [Treasurer and Tax Collector's office](#).

For areas within the City of Los Angeles, some information about permit status may be available about your location via the LADBS website. [Use this search tool](#) to look up Building & Safety related info, such as code enforcement and permits & related inspections.

FEDERAL ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

US Department of Labor (DOL)

The DOL administers and enforces roughly 180 US federal labor laws to guarantee worker's rights to fare, safe, and healthy working conditions. Click [here](#) for an organizational chart detailing the [agencies](#) & programs in the DOL. Among the most important agencies related to workers rights are:

- **Federal Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA)**
You may report any type of safety hazard, emergency, or complaint about workplace conditions to OSHA. A comprehensive list of hazards can be found [here](#), and a basic overview of worker rights and employer responsibilities can be found [here](#).
- **Wage & Hour Division (WHD)**
The Fair Labor Standards Act (AKA "Wages & Hours Bill"), protects employees by establishing the minimum wage, overtime pay, recordkeeping, tip theft & pooling laws, and child labor standards in the private sector. For more information on laws about tips, see [Fact Sheet #15](#) (DOL WHD Resource). File a complaint online [here](#).

Relevant Protections/Laws enforced by US DOL:

- Minimum Wage, overtime, tip theft ([Fair Labor Standards Act aka "Wages & Hours Bill"](#))
- Workplace Safety (OSH Act of 1970 & [General Duty Clause](#))
- [Employer responsibilities](#) to provide insurance coverage (Healthcare.gov/ [Affordable Care Act of 2010](#))
- Family Leave ([Family & Medical Leave Act \(FMLA\)](#))
- Employment-based Discrimination ([Civil Rights Act of 1964](#), [Lily Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009](#))

STATE ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

California Department of Public Health (CDPH)

Tracks information such as vital statistics, COVID-19 data, permits & licenses for healthcare facilities, and more. CDPH is responsible for handling reports of infectious diseases, including COVID-19. CDPH provides best practices & recommendations to reduce COVID-19 transmission at work and educational resources for workers. See Cal/OSHA section for details on the Emergency Temporary Standard.

State of California Civil Rights Department

Handles workplace discrimination complaints based on: race, color, ancestry, religion, age (40 & older), disability, medical condition, genetic information, sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation, marital status, military & veteran status, or national origin (including language restrictions). [Hate violence & crimes](#), as well as failure to provide [sexual harassment prevention training](#) to employees can be reported to this office.

State of California Department of Industrial Relations (DIR)⁹

DIR is responsible for the enforcement of labor laws across the state of California. Units within DIR receive, investigate, and address a variety of laws & requirements, including:

- **Workplace Safety: Cal/OSHA**
- **Labor Law:** Labor Commissioner's Office, BOFE, Judgement Enforcement Unit
- **Worker's Compensation:** Division of Workers Compensation, Disability Evaluation Unit, workplace injuries

State of California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal/OSHA)

DIR is responsible for the enforcement of labor laws across the state of California. Units within DIR receive, investigate, and address a variety of laws & requirements, including issues related to workplace safety, labor law, worker's compensation, and more. The three main bodies of the DIR are **Cal/OSHA**, the **Division of Workers' Compensation**, and **The Labor Commissioner's Office (LCO)** and its 6 units, described below.

- **State of California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal/OSHA)**
Handles labor law violations affecting a group of employees, including complaints of wage theft and labor law violations. To find your local enforcement office, use this [search](#) by zip code. Report labor law violations [online](#) [English only]. See conditions to report below, or submit retaliation complaints based on workplace health and safety or OSH claims [here](#). For information about the Cal/OSHA COVID-19 Prevention Emergency Temporary Standard (ETS), in effect until February 3rd, 2025, see this [factsheet](#) on LOSH [resource page](#).

Relevant conditions/issues to report: including non-payment of minimum wage, overtime, or business expenses; failure to provide rest and/or meal periods, itemized wage statements, and workers compensation insurance; other labor law violations including child labor, farm labor contractors, garment manufacturing, and unlicensed contractors.

⁹ Visit the DIR's website for a detailed Cal/OSHA [organizational chart](#).

STATE ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES *continued*

- **Division of Workers' Compensation**

Monitors workers' compensation claims and provides assistance in resolving disputes in relation to claims for workers' compensation benefits. DOL's [Comprehensive Guidebook for Injured Workers](#) includes necessary info for injured workers & basics of worker's compensation. [Fact sheets & guides for injured workers](#) also available in English, Spanish, Chinese, Hmong, Korean, Tagalog, Vietnamese.

- **Labor Commissioner's Office (LCO/DLSE)**

Also known as the Division of Labor Standards Enforcement (DLSE). The LCO handles a variety of claims related to labor law, and is divided into 6 units (see below). You may file with more than one LCO/DLSE unit depending on the details of your claim. Note that some units handle individual claims while others handle widespread/systemic violations.

- **Wage Claim Adjudication Unit**

Adjudicates individual claims of minimum wage & hourly wages promised, unpaid wages, overtime, vacation pay, meal & rest breaks, pay deductions, reimbursements of expenses, split shift premiums, final paychecks at termination, and bounced checks from employers. Make an account and [file online](#) or submit an [Initial Report of Claim form](#). Wage theft "Know Your Rights" resources, including guides explaining each process, available [here](#) (multiple languages).

- **Garment Work & Garment Wage Claim Adjudication Unit**

Pursues individual claims for wages not paid due to labor law violations. Also reviews & decides claims filed under [Garment Worker Protection Act \(AB 633\)](#) claims related to piece rate pay. Make an account and [file online](#) or file a paper [form](#). [Title 11 Code](#) has also been adopted by the City of Los Angeles.

- **Bureau of Field Enforcement (BOFE)**

Addresses labor law violations affecting a group of employees and/or involve systemic violations; BOFE **does not pursue individual claims**, and not all reports are assigned for investigation. Complaints can be submitted by an employee, representative, community member, or even family member, but ideally someone with knowledge of the situation. You may file wage claims AND a labor law violation(s) with BOFE. See an [overview](#) of the complaint process, [file online](#), or download & print [form](#) and submit in-person or by mail. *Relevant conditions/issues to report:* employer failure to provide minimum wage, overtime or meal & rest periods; violations including worker's compensation, child labor, recordkeeping, licensing, and registration laws. Also handles cases of [retaliation](#) (See Cal/OSHA section above) or discrimination under the Equal Pay Act.

- **Labor Enforcement Task Force Unit (LETf)**

Focuses on low-wage industries & high-hazard occupation with widespread employer violations of labor law, with related [retaliation protections](#). Report a bad employer [online](#). *Relevant conditions/issues to report:* No worker's compensation coverage; minimum wage, tax, or overtime violations, tax or payroll violations; health and safety violations; meal/rest break violations; cash pay; misclassification; contractor's license violations, retaliation/harassment, and refusal to pay all wages due.

STATE ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES *continued*

- **Public Works Unit**

Investigates violations of labor laws on public construction projects only. Prevailing wages are higher than the State minimum wage and are required for workers on most public construction projects. Report a labor violation on a public construction project [guide here](#).

- **Retaliation Complaint Investigation Unit**

Investigates retaliation complaints based on violations of protected activities. Complaints must be completed and filed by mail; Comprehensive retaliation report [guide here](#). More info [here](#). (Scroll down to "How to Report Retaliation" under "Learn More") Protected activities include: filing a wage claim or reporting a labor law violation to the LCO; complaining about unpaid wages to your employer; assisting in an investigation of your employer by a government agency; refusing to work in unsafe conditions. Examples of retaliation may include: transfer, suspension, transfer, or demotion; reduction in pay or hours; disciplinary action or threats; assaults or unfounded civil or criminal charges.

- **Judgement Enforcement Unit**

Helps workers collect when the Labor Commissioner determines they are owed unpaid wages. Special restitution funds compensate workers in the garment, car wash, and agricultural industries when employers do not pay wages they owe. Ask the Deputy Labor Commissioner assigned to your claim whether you may be compensated via these funds.

COUNTY ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

LA County Department of Public Health (LACDPH):

The focus of the LACDPH is on the Los Angeles County population as a whole, aiming to protect health, prevent disease, and promote health and well being for all persons in Los Angeles County. For a good overview of what a public health department does (specifically LA County's services), see the LACDPH publication "[Public Health: Working for You Every Day.](#)" Organizational chart available [online](#).

Acute Communicable Disease Control Unit (ACDC):

Responsible for prevention and control of infectious diseases in LA County, including those required to report communicable diseases such as doctors and nurses. Individuals who believe they contracted a foodborne illness can report here. COVID-19 outbreaks should be reported via the Environmental Health portal.

Relevant conditions/issues to report: Foodborne illness, reportable diseases and conditions as outlined in Title 17 of CCR, § 2500 (see "What is Reportable" [here](#))

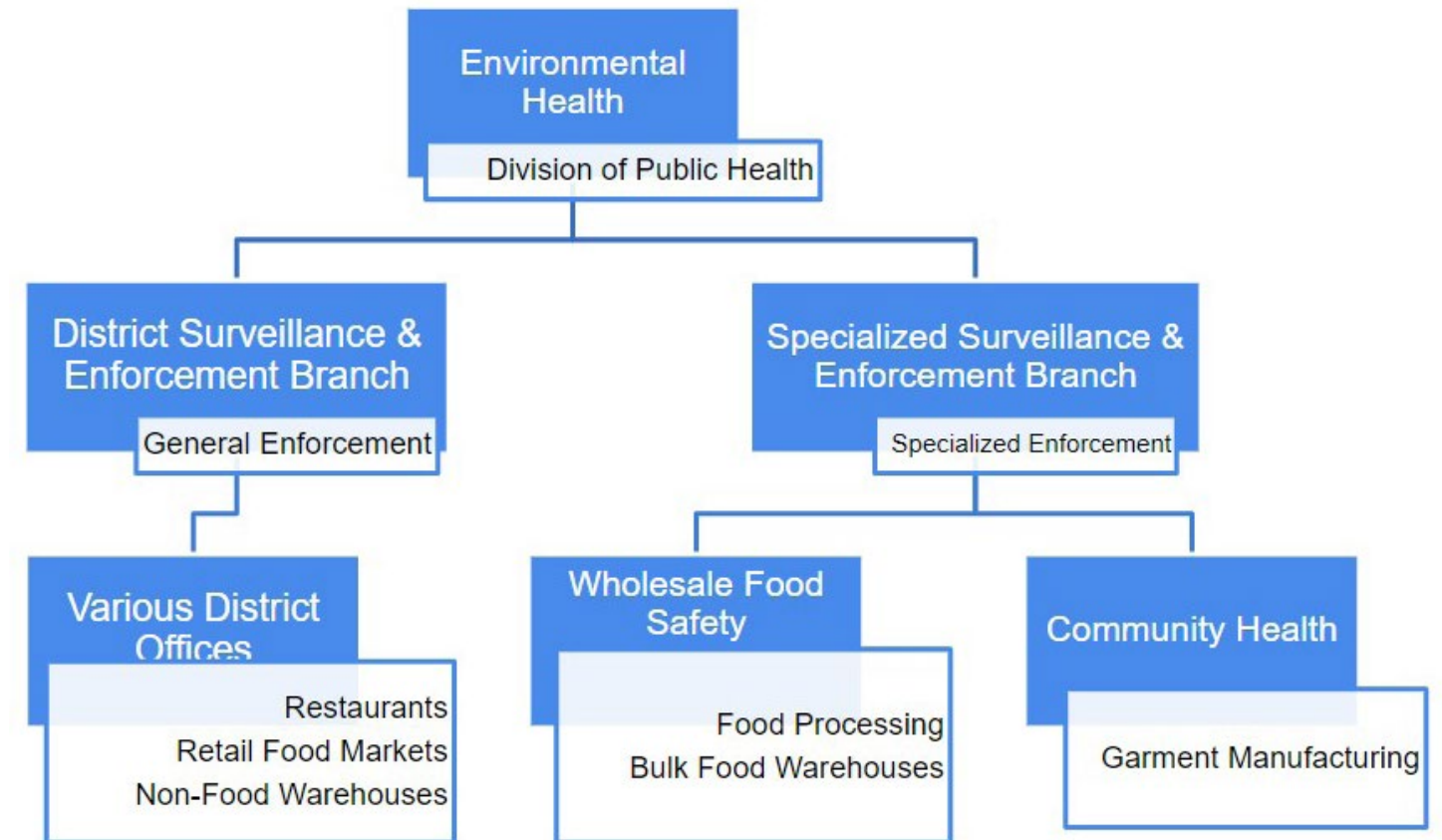
COUNTY ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES *continued*

Environmental Health Division (EH):

Responsible for inspecting, permitting, and enforcing rules at many types of businesses, including food manufacturing, garment manufacturing, grocery, massage, residential care, and restaurants. Other businesses and sectors may apply such as retailers that sell food, warehouses that store food, and car washes that sell food depending on size. Food trucks, housing, hotels, theaters, garment & apparel facilities, swimming pools, body art & tattoo shops, and other businesses may also be regulated by EH. COVID-19 outbreaks should be reported via the [LACDPH Suspected COVID-19 Outbreak Reporting Form](#). For guidance on what to include in your report, see "Reporting a Violation of LA County Health Officer Orders" in the next section.

Relevant conditions/issues to report: problems at food markets/restaurants, rodent problems, lead exposure, COVID-19 outbreaks, mold, unpermitted food vending, noise complaints, trash accumulation, unmaintained rental properties.

LA County Department of Consumer & Business Affairs (DCBA):



COUNTY ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES *continued*

DCBA serves consumers, businesses, and communities through education, advocacy, and complaint resolution. DCBA also offers dispute mediation, small business assistance, and enforces LA County's minimum wage. Report violations to the Worker Protection Program [here](#).

Relevant conditions/issues to report: minimum wage violations (not being paid the minimum wage in LA county), experiencing retaliation for reporting a health & safety violation, did not receive LA County hero pay, time off for a COVID-19 vaccine, or for violations of the LAC Human Trafficking ordinance.

LA Public Works (DPW):

For *unincorporated* areas of LA County. *Relevant conditions/issues to report:* Building & construction permitting or inspection issues, illegal dumping/water waste, maintenance requests for tree trimming & streetlight maintenance, and more.

LA County Fire Department (LAFD):

Provides firefighting & emergency medical services (EMS) for all unincorporated communities in LA county, as well as [60 other cities](#) through contracts. You may file complaints with your local fire department and request an inspection at your worksite of unsafe conditions or hazardous materials. Hazardous Materials guidance can be found [here](#).

- Find which of the four Geographic Bureaus, Central, South, Valley, or West, serves your community here: [LAFD Bureaus Map](#), and find a fire station near you [here](#) (LA County). You may also request certain fire reports & records from the Fire Department directly. To contact the LA County HAZMAT Division (HHMD), find your district office here: LA County HHMD District Offices.

Relevant conditions/issues to report: egress & access issues, fire code occupancy violations, lack of permit, lack of/insufficient signage or emergency information, expired or improperly functioning equipment (alarms, sprinklers, extinguishers, etc) or tags, hazardous material storage or improper handling, and other unsafe working conditions or materials.

REPORT AN ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH VIOLATION IN LA COUNTY: A GUIDE FOR CERTIFIED WORKER ORGANIZERS (CWOs)

Organizers who have been certified by the LA Public Health to support Public Health Councils can file a complaint on behalf of a worker or council regarding a violation or potential violation of Health and Safety Code to LA County Department of Public Health¹⁰. While originally designed for industry-specific HOOs related to COVID-19, they can be helpful in compiling information for complaints related to other health codes or laws in LA county, including Title 11. For a list of industries and more information, see list on page 9.

How can I file a complaint on behalf of a worker or a Public Health Council?

- Certified Worker Organizations can submit a complaint on the [LA Public Health Complaint Portal](#). The complaint form can also be accessed by going to the [Environmental Health Webpage](#).

How can a worker file a complaint for themselves?

- Workers can file a complaint online through the LA Public Health Website or the Environmental Health webpage.
- Workers can also call the Environmental Health Customer Call Center at **(888) 700-9995**. The line is staffed **Monday – Friday 8am to 5pm, except on holidays**.
- Workers should be advised that the online complaint form is only available in English, and folks who do not read or write in English should be advised to call the Environmental Health Customer Call Center.
- Anonymous complaints are accepted, but contact info is required if you'd like a reply.

What do I include in my complaint?

- Complaints should include specific issues. Indicate in the narrative if the complaint is being made on behalf of someone, and the worker's preferred language.
- Both online and email complaints should include as much detail as possible, including:
 - Name of your organization and name & address of the business where the violation occurred (street address, city, zip code, if possible), as well as if the business has other locations in the county
 - Type of work performed and approximate size of the worksite (number of workers)
 - Details about the potential violation that occurred, including the date it happened, on what shift it happened or is happening, who was/is involved, where in the facility it is occurring/ occurred
 - Best days/times for an inspector to visit and where at the facility they should inspect and types of workers or specific workers the inspector should speak with, including names and/or contact information for managers at the worksite (phone/email)
 - If applicable, details about previous complaints of non-compliance submitted about this business (provide approximate dates if available)
 - Photos, letters and other documents that might help inspectors can be attached to online complaints.

¹⁰ Aside: Violations that occur at worksites located in the city of Vernon should be reported to the Vernon Environmental Health Department at Health@ci.Vernon.ca.us. Use the same format.

Other helpful but not required information to include:

- What areas or departments should the inspector inspect inside and outside the worksite? (e.g. areas where the violation occurred, other places workers gather):
- Which workers should the inspector talk to during the inspection? (types of workers, areas in facility, or specific workers if you're able to provide their information):
- Are workers at this worksite fearful of retaliation? Have workers at this worksite experienced retaliation in the past?
- Did a Workers' Center or Union help prepare this complaint? If so, please provide organization name (not required)
- Suggested Attachments (e.g. supporting documentation; helpful but not required; maximum upload size is 4 MB; can send photos in separate emails if needed) Drawing/description of building layout showing high traffic/problem areas, e.g. locations where people stand/sit too close to one another, photos or description of posted occupancy restrictions (should be on Fire Safety placards or posted Public Health protocols), photos or description of posted cleaning schedules and cleaning agents used, photos/description of current ownership of facility, posted letters, photos, or information, or other relevant photos.

Finally, please note that in order to cite a violation on an inspection report, an inspector must witness a violation while in the process of conducting an inspection in order to issue a warning or citation to address the concern. Photo, video, or other testimony of someone witnessing the violation by themselves are not necessarily sufficient for citation, but may be useful for documenting violations.



This wallet card was printed and given to workers during outreach, informing them of how to report HOO violations to Environmental Health

CITY ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES & RESOURCES

Some cities in Los Angeles County have their own services, while others rely on the County to provide certain resources/services.

- **Civil & Human Rights and Equity**

- **Department:**

- Enforces the LA City Civil and Human Rights Law, and investigates claims of discrimination in the private sector (non-government employees, that is, commerce, education, employment, and housing, or parts of the economy not under direct government control) ONLY. Relevant conditions/issues to report: Claims of discrimination must pertain to one of the protected classes, such as race, color, ethnicity, gender, citizen status, disability, gender identity, religion, and more (full list [here](#)). [Submit a complaint online](#) starting with the address and date of the incident.

- **Public Health**

- LACDPH does not have jurisdiction over all areas in LA County. The following cities within LA County have their own independent health departments:

- [Long Beach](#)
 - [Pasadena](#)

- **Environmental Health**

- The following cities within LA County have their own independent Environmental health Departments:

- [Long Beach](#)
 - [Pasadena](#)
 - [Vernon \(also has its own Health Officer\)](#)

- **Air Quality**

- The South Coast Air Quality Management [complaint reporting system](#) is available to report smog or air quality issues throughout SoCal.

- [The California Air Resources Board also accepts complaints online](#) regarding smoking/noncompliant commercial trucks & passenger vehicles, idling, off-road vehicle complaints, and stationary source air quality complaints.

- **Fire**

- The fire department can often address issues related to access and egress (entry and exit), doors remaining & unlocked

open during business hours, fire hazards at the worksite, or other unsafe practices & workplace hazards. You may file complaints with your local fire department and request an inspection at your worksite of unsafe conditions or hazardous materials.

- [Find a fire station](#) (LA City)
 - For locations within LA County, but outside of the City of Los Angeles, Building & Safety concerns for privately owned properties should be reported via the [Public Works Website](#).

- **City of LA Department of Building and Safety (LADBS)**

- LADBS provides a variety of services to the City of Los Angeles, including monitoring and issuing permits for businesses and construction, zoning information, and code enforcement. You may be able to find information about your workplace using these search tools.

- [Check the status of a permit, inspection info, and code enforcement info](#)
 - [Search online building records](#) (by address)

- [Report a code violation](#) (including housing, street & sidewalk issues, noise, after-hours construction, hoarding etc)

- **Other resources**

- [LA Regional Human Trafficking Task Force](#): Includes fact sheets about Human Trafficking, tools for victim service providers, outreach tools and more
 - [California Against Slavery Resource Search](#): Search tool to find local resources & services related to Human Trafficking
 - [LA County Department of Mental Health](#): Find services and programs offered by DMH to people living and working in LA County

- **LOSH Referral List**

- List of Employment, Immigration, Worker's Compensation resources in Los Angeles (compiled by UCLA LOSH) available in English & Spanish

CONTACT INFORMATION AND VIDEO

Please share this toolkit widely with workers, potential PHC members, and anyone seeking resources in LA County and beyond. The PHC Program is ongoing and still growing, and we encourage you to reach out to discuss this toolkit or how you can start your own Public Health Council.

- [UCLA LOSH](#)
- [SoCal COSH](#)
- [Liberty Hill Foundation](#)
- [Los Angeles County Department of Public Health](#)
- [Public Health Councils website](#)