



NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH

CONSEJO NACIONAL DE SALUD Y SEGURIDAD OCUPACIONAL



PRESIDENTIAL EXECUTIVE ORDER ON PROTECTING WORKER HEALTH AND SAFETY

Executive Order 13999

Signed 1/21/2021

What is an executive order?

A president has the power to sign an **Executive Order** that requires US agencies to take certain actions. An executive order does not need approval from Congress or the Senate.

What is the purpose of this executive order?

To protect workers from getting sick with COVID-19 at work.

What does it do?

- Orders the Secretary of Labor to make guidelines for protecting workers.
- Requires the Secretary of Labor to consider whether there is a need for temporary rules that protect workers from COVID
- Calls for an outreach campaign in multiple languages to teach workers about their rights

Who will this affect?

All workers that OSHA protects, especially in places hit hard by COVID-19.

How will it impact your workplace?

OSHA is going to focus on enforcing protections that already exist, and on protecting workers from retaliation. They are also getting ready to make new requirements to protect workers during COVID.

What can I do?

- Talk to your coworkers about their rights and work together to make sure your employer keeps you safe. Urge your employer to work with you to develop a [COVID prevention plan](#)
- When the Secretary of Labor announces a temporary safety rule, lend your voice to support it. Go to nationalcosh.org to get involved!

To read the whole order, [click here](#).

Detailed Summary of EO 13999:

1. Protect healthcare and other essential workers' health and safety during COVID-19
2. Lower risk of workers contracting COVID-19 in the workplace by making science-based guidance, especially about
 - Mask-wearing
 - Partnerships with State and local governments (public employees)
 - Enforcing worker health and safety requirements
 - Pushing for additional resources for employers so they can protect employees
3. Under OSH Act:
 - Secretary of Labor shall:
 - Issue workplace safety guidance for COVID by 2/4/2020
 - Consider the need for an Emergency Temporary Standard (ETS) by 3/15/2020
 - Review OSHA enforcement efforts for COVID-19
 - Identify short, medium, and long-range changes to make to protect workers and ensure equity in enforcement
 - Establish a national program to focus OSHA enforcement on violations affecting the most workers or violations that are retaliatory against workers
 - Conduct a multi-language national campaign to inform workers of their rights
 - engage with unions, community organizations, and industries
 - With DoL's Office of Public Affairs, Office of Public Engagement, and all regional OSHA offices
 - Focus on communities hardest hit by pandemic
4. Protecting other categories of workers
 - Secretary of Labor shall:
 - Coordinate with states that have approved OSH Act plans to make sure they adequately protect workers from Covid
 - Take into account revised OSHA guidance/ETS
 - In states that don't have OSH Act plans, consult with state and local government entities that are responsible for public employee safety and health, and with public employee unions to improve protections for public sector workers
 - Explore mechanisms to protect workers not protected under the OSH Act during COVID-19
 - Secretary of Agriculture, Secretary of Health and Human Services, Sec of Transportation, Sec of Energy, and any others
5. Consider if there should be any ETS on COVID-19 for coal/metal/nonmetal mines
 - Secretary of Labor, Assistant Secretary of Labor for Mine Safety and Health
 - Issue as soon as they can