

FACT SHEET

COVID-19 Healthcare ETS



As part of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) commitment to protect workers and deliver stronger worker safety requirements, the agency has issued a COVID-19 Healthcare Emergency Temporary Standard (ETS) that establishes new requirements to protect workers from exposure to the coronavirus in all settings, with some exceptions, where any employee provides healthcare services or healthcare support services.

This healthcare ETS is aimed at protecting workers facing the highest COVID-19 hazards—those working in healthcare settings where suspected or confirmed COVID-19 patients are treated. This includes employees in hospitals, nursing homes, and assisted living facilities; emergency responders; home healthcare workers; and employees in ambulatory care settings where suspected or confirmed COVID-19 patients are treated. The ETS exempts fully vaccinated workers from masking, distancing, and barrier requirements when in well-defined areas where there is no reasonable expectation that any person with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 will be present. This fact sheet highlights some of the new requirements of the ETS; employers should consult [the standard](#) for full details.

The ETS generally requires employers to:

- Conduct a hazard assessment and implement a COVID-19 plan for each workplace. Engage employees in the development of the plan.
- Screen and triage patients, clients, residents, delivery people and other visitors and non-employees entering the setting for symptoms of COVID-19. Implement patient management strategies.
- Develop and implement policies and procedures to adhere to Standard and Transmission-Based Precautions in accordance with CDC guidelines.
- Provide and ensure employees wear facemasks when indoors and when occupying a vehicle with another person for work purposes.
- Provide and ensure employees wear respirators and other personal protective equipment (PPE) for exposure to people with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 and for aerosol-generating procedures (AGPs) on a person with suspected or confirmed COVID-19.
- Provide respirators and other PPE in accordance with Standard and Transmission-Based Precautions.

- For AGPs on persons with suspected or confirmed COVID-19, limit employees present to only those essential, perform procedures in an airborne infection isolation room (AIIR), if available, and clean and disinfect surfaces and equipment.
- Keep employees at least 6 feet apart from all other people when indoors.
- Install cleanable or disposable solid barriers at fixed work spaces in non-patient areas where employees are not separated from others by at least 6 feet.
- Follow standard practices for cleaning and disinfection of surfaces and equipment in accordance with CDC guidelines in patient care areas, resident rooms, and for medical devices and equipment. In all other areas, clean high-touch surfaces and equipment at least once a day. Provide alcohol-based hand rub that is at least 60% alcohol or provide readily accessible handwashing facilities.
- Ensure employer-owned or controlled HVAC systems are used according to manufacturer’s instructions and design specifications, and that air filters are rated Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value (MERV) 13 or higher if the system allows it.
- Screen employees before each work day and shift.
- Notify certain employees if a person who has been in the workplace is COVID-19 positive.
- Remove employees who have suspected or confirmed COVID-19, certain COVID-19 symptoms, or have had close contact to a person who is COVID-19 positive in the workplace. In some cases, provide pay and benefits to employees removed from the workplace.
- Provide reasonable time and paid leave for vaccinations and vaccine side effects (offset by tax credits for employers with fewer than 500 employees).
- Train employees on workplace policies and procedures regarding COVID-19 in a language they understand.
- Record all employee cases of COVID-19 on a COVID-19 log without regard to occupational exposure. Report work-related COVID-19 fatalities to OSHA within 8 hours of employer knowledge and work-related COVID-19 in-patient hospitalizations within 24 hours.

The ETS also contains a [mini respiratory protection program](#). [State plans](#) may have different requirements.

Read the full text of the ETS at [osha.gov/coronavirus/ets](https://www.osha.gov/coronavirus/ets).

This Fact Sheet is intended to provide information about the COVID-19 Emergency Temporary Standard. The Occupational Safety and Health Act requires employers to comply with safety and health standards promulgated by OSHA or by a state with an OSHA-approved state plan. However, this Fact Sheet is not itself a standard or regulation, and it creates no new legal obligations.