

Have You Started Your COVID-19 Training and Infectious Disease Plan In Virginia?

By

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Virginia recently enacted its [Emergency Temporary Standard for COVID-19](#). The standard's requirement that employers train workers came and went on August 26, 2020. Virginia Occupational Safety and Health expects employers to complete their Infectious Disease Preparedness and Response Plans no later than September 25, 2020.

If you are not on track with your training and your plan, it's time to get started.

The key is to first determine the hazard levels to which your employees are exposed. The hazard level drives the requirements. "Lower hazard" job tasks merely require employers to post or distribute a short flier with basic information. However, as hazard levels increase, requirements quickly get more complicated.

Virginia Occupational Safety and Health has higher standards for "medium hazard" employers whose employees have more than "minimal contact" with others, including:

- Manufacturers;
- Construction sites;
- Agricultural employers;
- Poultry, seafood and meat processing plants;
- Retail, grocery and retail stores;
- Commercial and public transportation providers; and
- Fitness and exercise facilities.

As of August 26, 2020, "medium hazard," "high hazard" and "very high hazard" employers were required to provide training on a variety of subjects, including:

- The signs and symptoms of transmission of COVID-19;
- The contents of the standard;
- Risk factors of underlying conditions;
- Asymptomatic and presymptomatic spread of COVID-19;
- Safe and healthy workplace practices;
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE);
- Antidiscrimination (antiretaliation) protections for employees;
- Guidelines provided by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; and
- The Infectious Disease Preparedness and Response Plan.

On September 25, 2020, "medium hazard" employers with eleven or more employees, "high hazard" and "very high hazard" employers must complete Infectious Disease Preparedness and Response Plans that include:

- Hazard assessments by job hazards and potential exposure sources;
- Employees' individual risk factors;
- Designated personnel for implementation;

- Employees with other jobs;
- Employee involvement; and
- Outbreak contingency plans.

Many employers are still unaware of the training deadline that has come and passed, and they may not know what requirements are yet to come. Organizations must be ready for agency inspections in response to an employee complaint, an agency referral or a COVID-19 outbreak.

If you haven't started, there is still time. The key is to begin to prepare now, before an inspector knocks.

If you need assistance developing your COVID-19 employee training or if you need help with your Infectious Disease Prevention and Response Plan or advice in complying with the Virginia COVID-19 standard, please reach out to a member of the [Jackson Lewis Workplace Safety and Health Practice Group](#).

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