

COVID-19 Control and Prevention Healthcare

COVID-19 is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. TOSHA is committed to protecting the health and safety of Tennessee's workers and workplaces during these unprecedented times. The following information may help prevent workplace exposures to COVID-19.

While there is no specific TOSHA standard covering COVID-19 exposure, some TOSHA requirements may apply to preventing occupational exposure. Among the most relevant are:

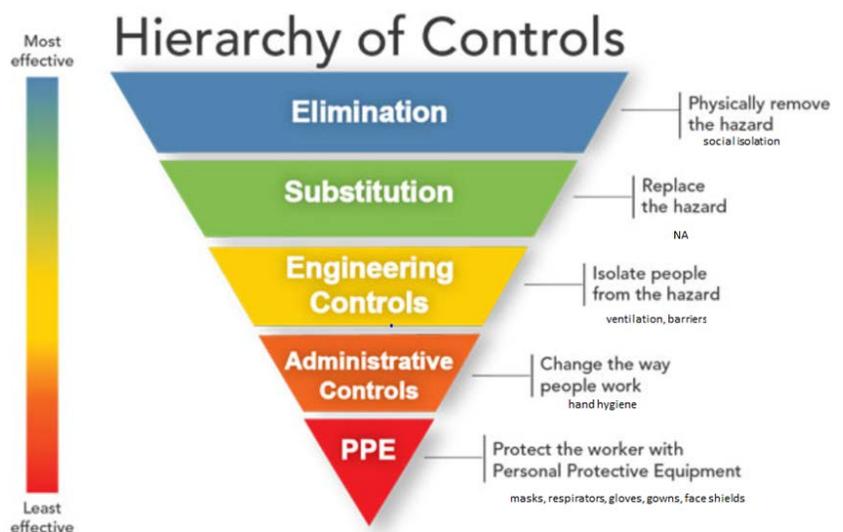
- The General Duty Clause which requires employers to furnish to each worker "employment and a place of employment, which are free from recognized hazards that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm."
- The Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) standards requiring the use gloves, eye and face protection, and respiratory protection for specific job tasks.
- The Sanitation standards which require employers provide soap, hot and cold (or tepid) water, and individual towels/air blowers be made available in the workplace. The employer is required to permit employees to utilize toilet facilities as needed. In addition, it requires that all workplaces be kept clean to the extent that the nature of the work allows.

Failure to take reasonable actions, such as those listed below, may be a violation of the TOSH act.

In addition to those actions taken in a [non-healthcare setting](#), TOSHA recommends conducting a risk assessment of your workplace to determine the exposure level for each task your employees conduct in the workplace to determine the engineering controls, administrative controls, work practices, and personal protective equipment that are needed.

TOSHA recommends utilizing the hierarchy of controls to protect employees from COVID-19. While TOSHA understands that employers cannot always utilize each section of the hierarchy we recommend and encourage employers to start at the top and work down as they work to protect their employees from the hazards in their workplace such as COVID-19.

TOSHA recommends reading and understanding the [Temporary Enforcement Guidance](#) and ensuring all respiratory protection standard guidelines are understood and followed. Generally, TOSHA is implementing identical or similar enforcement guidance. The current Temporary Enforcement Guidance suspends the requirement for annual fit testing of respirators; however, it does not suspend the requirement for initial medical evaluations and initial fit testing for employees required to wear a respirator (examples N95, KN95, elastomeric respirators).



The TOSHA COVID-19 webpage offers information, guidance, and resources for employers and workers on the control and prevention of COVID-19 per the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Visit the CDC's page, [Information for Healthcare Professionals](#) frequently for more information as it is continually updated.

For additional information, or to report any safety and health concerns, visit www.tnosh.gov or call 1-800-249-8510.

