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How Employers Can Prepare for New OSHA Regs for Temporary Workers

This past year, OSHA launched an initiative focused on improving safety for temporary workers. We have seen a correlated rise in inspections that examine how host employers treat temporary workers, especially with regard to training.

As prescribed by OSHA, host employers and staffing agencies share joint responsibility for *protecting temporary workers* by maintaining a safe work environment and providing safety training and hazard communication. The OSHA web page Protecting Temporary Employees details the enforcing organization's expectations.

Scott Insurance Risk Occurrence Specialist, Geary McMinn, points to five key actions employers should take. Doing so will put your company in a position to successfully demonstrate compliance and ensure employees are properly trained.

- 1. Understand OSHA's definition of temporary workers:** individuals "supplied to a host supplier and paid by a staffing agency," whether their job is temporary or not. OSHA requires host employers to ... "treat temporary workers like any other workers in terms of training and safety and health protections."
- 2. Communicate clearly** at the outset of any staffing engagement to determine the respective safety responsibilities for temporary workers (e.g., training), then document them in the parties' contract.

About the Author



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3. **Audit/evaluate worksite hazards.** Review the anticipated scope of the temporary workers' tasks and determine if they will be exposed to any potential safety hazards that are unique to the worksite. This will help determine which employer (host or staffing agency) will be in a better position to address them.
4. **Determine who will be responsible for injury/illness records.** The employer who will supervise the temporary workers on a day-to-day basis will bear responsibility for maintaining the workers' injury/illness records.
5. **Deliver and document adequate safety training/tools.** Depending on the hazards or equipment used at the work site, confirm that all temporary workers have received the necessary safety tools, PPE and training "in a language and vocabulary they understand." The training also should be documented and readily available should an inspector request it.

Work with your HR, safety and risk professionals to make sure you are in compliance with these requirements and providing the safest workplace environment for temporary workers.



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