



NEWS RELEASE

STATE EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
No. 305 – July 27, 2020

Media contact:
[Jason Moon](#)
517-282-0041

MIOSHA focuses efforts on protecting employees in service industries with greater COVID-19 transmission risk

LANSING, MICH. To protect employees, customers and communities from the spread of the COVID-19 virus, the Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MIOSHA) launched a State Emphasis Program (SEP) focused on retail, restaurant, bar and service industry establishments that addresses the need for increased partnership, education and enforcement to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread.

“The vast majority of employers are working hard to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and its impact on their business and the economy. This new initiative is aimed at helping them educate employees and customers on best practices and assure that all workplaces remain safe for the community,” Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity Director Jeff Donofrio said.

The focus of this SEP is to educate and seek compliance with guidelines and rules that will protect workers and customers in locations serving the public where community spread of COVID-19 is a risk. The SEP includes businesses such as bars and restaurants, gas stations and convenience stores, grocery stores and other retail establishments.

Recently, Michigan has seen an [uptick across the state](#). MIOSHA will conduct inspections by referral or randomly at bars and restaurants, gas stations and convenience stores, grocery stores and other retail establishments to review how rules are being followed, educate and enhance compliance. While inspections will seek to help employers comply with safety standards, if the inspections determine major deficiencies in the employer’s COVID-19 preparedness and response plans, citations and penalties up to \$7,000 may be issued.

“MIOSHA staff will evaluate the employer’s compliance with existing MIOSHA standards along with Governor Gretchen Whitmer’s Executive Orders and guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as they pertain to protecting workers,” MIOSHA Director Bart Pickelman said. “Employers need to put certain safeguards in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and ensure the safety and health of their employees.”

Guidance and resources are posted at Michigan.gov/COVIDWorkplaceSafety in accordance with requirements of the Governor’s Executive Orders, CDC guidance and OSHA Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19.

A few of the steps that restaurants, bars, and other retail businesses must take include:

- Conducting daily health screenings of employees and contractors,
- Requiring employees and customers wear face coverings properly,
- Considering changes to indoor ventilation to reduce transmission risk,
- Implementing enhanced cleaning protocols when employees or the public become sick,
- Posting required signs and notifying customers of their obligation to wear face coverings, if medically tolerated, and not entering if they feel sick,
- Maintaining compliance with social distancing and capacity limits of the establishment, and
- Ensuring that they have and use a preparedness and response plan.

The MIOSHA Consultation Education and Training (CET) Division will use outreach activities as an opportunity to raise awareness among employers, employees and safety and health professionals on the best practices for COVID-19 preparedness and response plans in the SEP identified industries. CET consultants are available to help employers develop and implement long-term safety and health programs and comply with current MIOSHA regulations. For free statewide assistance, companies can call the CET Division at 517-284-7720 or toll-free at 800-866-4674.

Employers and employees with questions regarding workplace safety and health may contact MIOSHA using the new hotline at **855-SAFE-C19 (855-723-3219)**.

To report health and safety concerns in the workplace, visit [Michigan.gov/MIOSHAc Complaint](https://www.michigan.gov/MIOSHAc Complaint).

Learn more about MIOSHA and its efforts to protect Michigan's workforce during the pandemic and for information on the latest workplace safety guidance at [Michigan.gov/COVIDWorkplaceSafety](https://www.michigan.gov/COVIDWorkplaceSafety).

Information around this outbreak is changing rapidly. The latest information is available at [michigan.gov/coronavirus](https://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus) and [CDC.gov/Coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/Coronavirus).

###