

This publication does not itself alter or determine compliance responsibilities, which are set forth in OSHA standards themselves and the *Occupational Safety and Health Act*. Moreover, because interpretations and enforcement policy may change over time, for additional guidance on OSHA compliance requirements, the reader should consult current and administrative interpretations and decisions by the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission and the Courts.

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Voice phone: (202) 693-2120;



# Questions and Answers

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U.S. Department of Labor  
Occupational Safety and Health Administration

OSHA 3160  
1999 (Revised)





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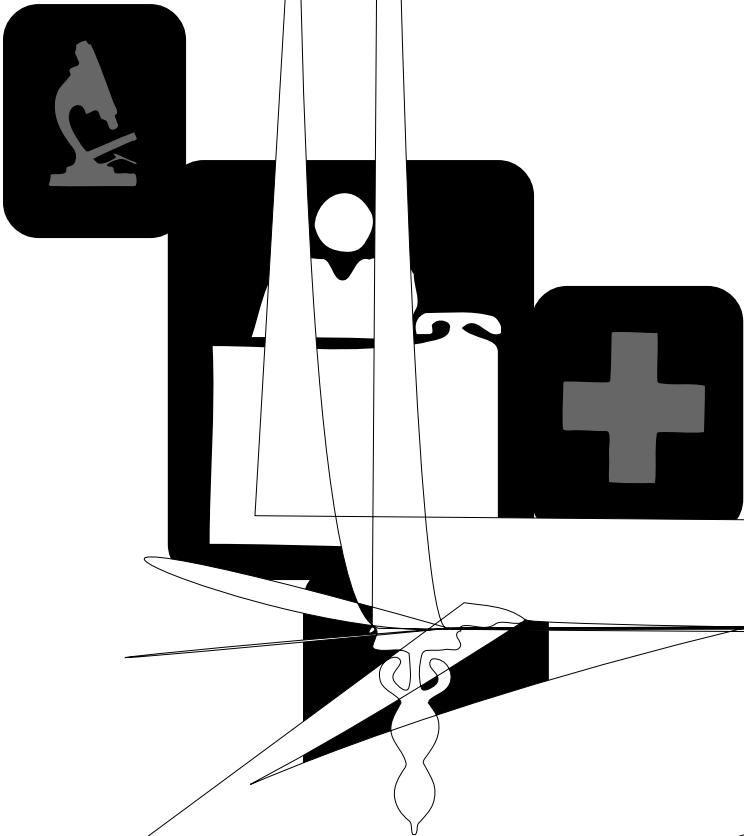
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# The Occupational Health Professional's Services and Qualifications: Questions and Answers

Controlling occupational injuries and illnesses and related expenditures is a top priority in most companies. Selecting a qualified health care professional to participate in the workplace safety and health activities can be a vital step in this process. The following questions and answers are to provide guidance and serve as a resource for those considering such a selection.





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A variety of health care professionals are available to employers. Selecting an appropriate provider for the worksite depends on a number of factors, including:

- The Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) screening and surveillance requirements for specific substances or hazards associated with the worksite;
- The number, diversity, size, and seriousness of the hazards involved at the worksite(s); and

## What *Unique* Contributions Can an Occupational Health Care Professional Make to Workplace Safety and Health?

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Health care professionals are uniquely qualified to assess and treat illnesses and injuries. Health care professionals must have the appropriate licensure, registration, or certification. Additionally, they should have occupational health experience and expertise in management and be available on a full- or part-time basis, depending on the nature and size of worksite(s).

They may be a permanent employee or hired on a contractual basis.


In addition to working collaboratively with other safety and health professionals, a qualified health care professional may be selected to:

- Provide screening related to specific chemicals or exposures, including preplacement (post-offer) physical examinations, job placement assessments, periodic examinations, and maintenance of confidential employee health records, including individual screening results.
- Manage and/or treat work-related illnesses and injuries, with emphasis on early recognition and intervention; make recommendations about work restrictions or removal; and follow up and monitor workers as they return to work.
- Develop and implement health promotion programs.
- Provide guidance for case management of employees who have prolonged or complex illnesses and injuries.

For small employers, or those with limited resources, one of several models for delivering occupational health care at the workplace can be considered. This might involve sharing the services of health care professionals within a business or industrial park, or contracting with a larger firm whose occupational health service includes an occupational health care professional as part of its total safety and health program. (See **References:** B. Burgel *Innovation at the Worksite.*)

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Health care providers such as licensed practical nurses (LPNs) and emergency medical technicians/paramedics (EMTs) can augment the services of the physicians or registered nurse. Physician assistants (PAs) also contribute valuable services.

Whatever health care professional is chosen, the employer should ensure that the provider has expertise or experience in occupational health and safety as well as an understanding of occupational illnesses and injuries.



Health care professionals qualified to design, manage, supervise, and deliver health care in occupational settings include a variety of practitioners. It is imperative, however, that the legal “scope of practice” unique to each state be considered prior to hiring or contracting for services.

The “scope of practice” refers to the credentials, responsibilities, and legally authorized practice of health care professionals.


Physicians, physician assistants, and registered nurses, including nurse practitioners, receive standardized educations with core curricula (individualized to their profession) necessary to pass national or state boards and to be licensed in a particular state. Physicians and registered nurses are then eligible to become certified in a specialty practice, such as occupational medicine (physicians and physician assistants) or occupational health nursing (registered nurses and nurse practitioners), through a combination of additional specific education and experience. The additional educational training in occupational health typically includes course work in epidemiology, toxicology, industrial hygiene, recognition and management of occupational illnesses and injuries, research, and general management of a comprehensive occupational health program.

## Physicians

***Medical Feal (Physicians)mf 11 0 6 11 545xpend onse3on8o5.28 2./gnslev passed the National Medical Board Exam or equivalent examinations and have a license to practice within a given state(s).***

***Doctors of Osteopathy (DOs)*** graduate from college and an osteopathic school approved by the American Osteopathic Association. They must pass a state board examination to qualify for a license to practice within a given state(s).

***Occupational Medicine Physicians*** are medical doctors or



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doctors of osteopathy who have completed additional occupational medicine training or acquired on-site experience. Completion of additional residency training and further practice in occupational medicine enables physicians to pursue certification in occupational medicine after meeting rigorous qualifying standards and successfully completing an examination in occupational medicine given by the American Board of Preventive Medicine (ABPM).

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## Registered Nurses

**Registered Nurses** (RNs) receive training and education at the college level and graduate from a state-approved school of nursing. They pass a state board examination and are granted a license to practice within a given state(s).

**Nurse Practitioners** (NPs) are registered nurses who are licensed in their state and have completed formal advanced education, usually at the master's level. NPs practice under their state *Nurse Practice Act*. Some NPs are certified in occupational health as a specialty area. NPs independently perform many health evaluation and care activities—including physical exams, common diagnostic and laboratory tests—and diagnose and treat employees who are ill or injured. They also can prescribe medications in most states. Additionally, NPs work collaboratively with physicians.

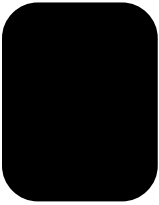
**Occupational Health Nurses** (OHNs) are registered nurses and nurse practitioners with experience and additional education in occupational health. Certified occupational health nurses (COHN or COHN-S) obtain certification from the American Board for Occupational Health Nurses after meeting rigorous qualifying educational and experience standards and successfully passing an occupational health nursing examination.





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Each state has a unique legal description of the



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## **Physician Assistant**

All states except Mississippi license physician assistants. PAs are licensed by the state medical board or by a separate licensing board. PAs are certified by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) [(770) 734-4500].

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## **Emergency Medical Technician**


The scope of practice for emergency medical technicians (EMTs) also varies from state to state. There are several practice levels of EMTs each determined by the number of hours of training and the range of procedures authorized. Each state has a director of EMTs listed in the telephone directory under State Government. The appropriate office may be contacted under the telephone directory subheading listed as either the Department of Health, Department of Public Health, or Department of Emergency Medical Services.

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## **Licensed Vocational/Practical Nurse**

The state board of nursing in each state is listed in the telephone directory and defines the scope of practice issues for licensed vocational or practical nurses LVNs/LPNs.

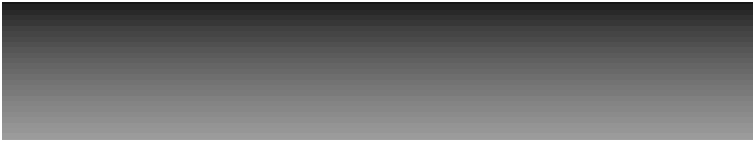
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An occupational health care professional evaluates the interactions between employees' work and health in the workplace. To do this effectively, the occupational health care professional should possess the following skills and competencies:

- General knowledge of the work environment, including worksite operations; familiarity with the toxic properties of materials used by employees as well as the potential hazards and stressors of work processes and jobs or tasks.
- Ability to determine an employee's physical and emotional fitness for work.
- Ability to recognize, evaluate, treat, and/or refer occupational illnesses and injuries.




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During the interview process, the following kinds of questions and issues are appropriate to evaluate prospective occupational health care professionals:







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You should expect the candidate to ask you about the following:

- Facilities (type, location)
  - Number of employees
  - Work processes
  - Known or potential hazards
  - Application of standards and/or regulations
  - Current method of providing occupational health care services
  - Other health care providers involved in providing services
  - Existence and specifics of a safety and health program
  - Medical surveillance programs
  - Collective bargaining contracts
  - Previous OSHA citations
- 
- References from current/previous employers or educational institutions should be requested.

# What Is the Difference Between Occupational Health Care Professionals and Other Occupational Safety and Health Professionals?



All occupational health and safety professionals are educated to have a proactive, preventive orientation, with the health and well-being of the employee as their primary focus. As mandated by each individual state, however, only health care professionals, within the scope of their practice, can assess and treat illness and injury beyond first aid.

Additionally, health care professionals, based upon their education and training, can provide high-quality preventive health care information and programs.

The following descriptions highlight the overall skills and areas of competency of other occupational safety and health professionals who might be part of an effective safety and health program at your work site.

## Industrial Hygienists

Industrial hygiene focuses on the identification and control of occupational health hazards arising as a result of or during work. The industrial hygienist focuses on the recognition, evaluation, and control of chemical, biological, or physical factors or stressors arising from the workplace, that may cause sickness, impaired health and well-being, or significant discomfort and inefficiency among workers or in the community. Professional industrial hygienists possess either a baccalaureate or master's degree in engineering, chemistry, biology, physics, or industrial hygiene.

The industrial hygienist monitors and uses analytical methods to detect the extent of occupational chemical, biological, or physical exposure and implements engineering controls and work practices to correct, reduce, or eliminate workplace hazards. Industrial hygienists can give expert opinion as to the magnitude of chemical, biological, or physical exposure, and the degree of associated risk. Certified industrial hygienists have passed a rigorous qualifying examination.



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## Industrial Engineers

Industrial engineering is the design, installation, and improvement



|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| Hazardous Waste and<br>Emergency Response                          | 1910.120  |
| Lead   | 1910.1025 |
| Methylene Chloride   | 1910.1052 |
| Methyl Chloromethyl Ether  | 1910.1006 |
| Methylenedianiline   | 1910.1050 |
| 4-Nitrobiphenyl  | 1910.1003 |
| N-Nitrosodimethylamine   | 1910.1016 |
| Occupational Exposure<br>to Hazardous Chemicals<br>in Laboratories | 1910.1456 |
| Respirators  | 1910.134  |
| Vinyl Chloride   | 1910.1017 |

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### **Some OSHA Standards that Require Occupational Health Services**

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| Access to Employee Exposure<br>and Medical Records | 1910.1020 |
| Confined Space                                     | 1910.146  |
| Fire Protection                                    | 1910.156  |
| Labor Camps  | 1910.142  |
| Medical Services/First Aid                         | 1910.151  |
| Noise  | 1910.95   |
| Pulpwood Logging                                   | 1910.266  |
| Telecommunications                                 | 1910.268  |
| Textiles   | 1910.262  |
| Welding  | 1910.152  |

## Resources

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The following resources may be useful for additional information on occupational health care professionals in your area. The associations are typically the professional organizations for members of the profession. They work to increase awareness of the profession, as well as offer educational, service, and placement benefits for the members. Most have local, state, and/or regional chapters. Boards are generally the certification bodies for occupational health professionals and determine eligibility requirements. They also administer the certification exam and maintain directories of all certified professionals in a particular specialty. All telephone and fax numbers are accurate as of the date of printing; however, changes can be verified by local telephone directory assistance.

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### Medical Doctors

#### **American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine**

55 West Seegers Road  
Arlington Heights, IL 60005  
Phone (708) 228-6850  
Fax (708) 228-1856  
[www.acoem.org](http://www.acoem.org)

#### **American Board of Preventive Medicine, Inc.**

9950 West Lawrence Avenue, Suite 106  
Schiller Park, IL 60176  
Phone (847) 671-1750  
Fax (847) 671-1751  
[www.abpremed.org](http://www.abpremed.org)

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### Osteopathic Doctors

#### **American Osteopathic Association**

142 E. Ontario Street  
Chicago, IL 60611  
Phone (312) 202-8000  
Fax (312) 280-5893  
[www.aoa-net.org/affiliatedorg/state.htm](http://www.aoa-net.org/affiliatedorg/state.htm)

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## **Occupational Health Nurses**

### **American Association of Occupational Health Nurses**

2920 Brandywine Road

Suite 100

Atlanta, GA 30341

Phone (770) 455-7757

Fax (770) 455-7271

[www.aaohn.org](http://www.aaohn.org)

### **American Board for Occupational Health Nurses, Inc.**

201 East Ogden Road

Suite 114

Hinsdale, IL 60521-3652

Phone (630) 789-5799

Fax (630) 789-8901

[www.abohn.org](http://www.abohn.org)

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## **Nurse Practitioners**

### **American Academy of Nurse Practitioners**

P.O. Box 12846

Austin, TX 78711

Phone (512) 442-4262

Fax (512) 442-6469

[www.aanp.org](http://www.aanp.org)

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## **Registered Nurses**

### **American Nurses Association**

600 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Suite 100

Washington, DC 20024

Phone (202) 651-7000

Fax (202) 651-7001

[www.ana.org](http://www.ana.org)



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**Physician Assistants**





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## **Industrial Hygienists**

### **American Board of Industrial Hygiene**

4600 W. Saginaw Street

Suite 101

Lansing, MI 48917

Phone (517) 321-2638

[www.aiha.org](http://www.aiha.org)

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## **Safety Professionals**

### **Board of Certified Safety Professionals of America**

208 Burwash Avenue

Savory, IL 61874-9510

Phone (217) 359-9263

Fax (217) 359-0055

## References

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American Association of Occupational Health Nurses, Inc. (AAOHN). *Occupational Health Nursing: The Answer to Health Care Cost Containment*. Atlanta, GA: AAOHN. 1991.

American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP). *Scope of Practice for Nurse Practitioners*. Austin, TX: AANP. 1993 (Revised).

American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA). *Physician Assistants: State Laws & Regulations*. 7th ed., Alexandria, VA: AAPA, 1998.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Various government and professional practice issue briefs." Alexandria, VA: AAPA, 1999. Online at <http://www.aapa.org/>.

American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine. "Scope of Occupational and Environmental Health Programs and Practices," *Journal of Occupational Medicine* 34(4): 436-440, April 1992.

American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine. "Code of Ethical Conduct," *Journal of Occupational Medicine* 36(1): 27-30, January, 1994.

Burgel, B. *Innovation at the Worksites*. American Nurses Publishing, 600 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20024, 1993.

U.S. Department of Labor. Occupational Safety and Health Administration. *OSHA Handbook for Small Businesses (OSHA 2209)*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1996 (Revised). Order Number 029-016-00176-0. \$7.00

\_\_\_\_\_. "Safety and Health Program Management Guidelines; Issuance of Voluntary Guidelines Notice." *Federal Register* 54(16):3904-3916, January 26, 1989.

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## Related OSHA Publications

Single, free copies of the following and other publications can be obtained from OSHA field offices or the OSHA Publications Office, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room N3101, Washington, DC 20210, (202) 693-1888, (202) 693-2498 (Fax).

*All About OSHA* - OSHA 2056

*Access to Medical and Exposure Records* - OSHA 3110

*Asbestos Standards for General Industry* - OSHA 3095

*Chemical Hazard Communication* - OSHA 3084

## States with Approved Plans

States administering their own occupational safety and health programs through plans approved under section 18(b) of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 must adopt standards and enforce requirements that are at least as effective as Federal requirements. There are currently 25 state plans: 23 cover private and public (State and local government) sectors and 2 cover the public sector only (Connecticut and New York).

### **COMMISSIONER**

Alaska Department of Labor  
1111 West 8th Street  
P.O. Box 21149  
Room 306  
Juneau, AK 99802-1149  
(907) 465-2700

### **DIRECTOR**

Industrial Commissioner  
of Arizona  
800 W. Washington  
Phoenix, AZ 85007  
(602) 542-5795

### **DIRECTOR**

California Department  
of Industrial Relations  
455 Golden Gate Avenue  
10th Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94102  
(415) 703-5050

### **COMMISSIONER**

Connecticut Department  
of Labor  
200 Folly Brooke Boulevard  
Wethersfield, CT 06109  
(860) 566-2211

### **DIRECTOR**

Connecticut Department  
of Labor  
38 Wolcott Hill Road  
Wethersfield, CT 06109  
(860) 566-4550

### **DIRECTOR**

Hawaii Department of Labor  
and Industrial Relations  
830 Punchbowl Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
(808) 586-8844

### **COMMISSIONER**

Indiana Department of Labor  
State Office Building  
402 West Washington Street  
Room W195  
Indianapolis, IN 46204  
(317) 232-2378

### **COMMISSIONER**

Iowa Division of Labor Services  
1000 E. Grand Avenue  
Des Moines, IA 50319  
(515) 281-3447

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**SECRETARY**

Kentucky Labor Cabinet  
1047 U.S. Highway, 127 South,  
Suite 2  
Frankfort, KY 40601  
(502) 564-3070

**COMMISSIONER**

Maryland Division of Labor  
and Industry  
Department of Licensing  
and Regulation  
1100 N. Eutaw Street  
Room 613  
Baltimore, MD 21201-2206  
(410) 767-2215

**DIRECTOR**

Michigan Department  
of Consumer  
and Industry Services  
4th Floor, Law Building  
P.O. Box 30004  
Lansing, MI 48909  
(517) 373-7230

**COMMISSIONER**

Minnesota Department  
of Labor and Industry  
443 Lafayette Road  
St. Paul, MN 55155  
(612) 296-2342

**ADMINISTRATOR**

Nevada Division of Industrial  
Relations  
400 West King Street  
Carson City, NV 89703  
(702) 687-3032

**SECRETARY**

New Mexico Environment  
Department  
1190 St. Francis Drive  
P.O. Box 26110  
Santa Fe, NM 87502  
(505) 827-2850

**COMMISSIONER**

New York Department of Labor  
W. Averell Harriman State Office  
Building - 12, Room 500  
Albany, NY 12240  
(518) 457-2741

**COMMISSIONER**

North Carolina Department  
of Labor  
4 West Edenton Street  
Raleigh, NC 27601-1092  
(919) 807-2900

**ADMINISTRATOR**

Oregon Department of Consumer  
and Business Services  
Occupational Safety and Health  
Division (OR-OSHA)  
350 Winter Street, NE  
Room 430  
Salem, OR 97310-0220  
(503) 378-3272





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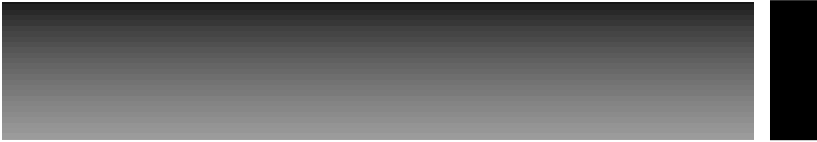
**ADMINISTRATOR**

Worker's Safety and Compensation Division (WSC)

Wyoming Department  
of Employment

Herschler Building, 2nd Floor  
East

122 West 25th Street  
Cheyenne, WY 82002  
(307) 777-7786



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Consultation programs provide free services to employers who request help in identifying and correcting specific hazards, want to improve their safety and health programs, and/or need further assistance in training and education. Funded by OSHA and delivered by well-trained professional staff of state governments, consultation services are comprehensive, and include an appraisal of all workplace hazards, practices, and job safety and health programs; conferences and agreements with management; assistance in implementing recommendations; and a follow-up appraisal to ensure that any required corrections are made.

For more information on consultation programs, contact the appropriate office in your state listed below.

**State**

**Telephone**

Alabama .....(205) 348-3033

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|                      |                   |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| Massachusetts .....  | (617) 727-3982    |
| Michigan .....       | (517) 322-6823(H) |
| .....                | (517) 322-1809(S) |
| Minnesota .....      | (612) 297-2393    |
| Mississippi .....    | (601) 987-3981    |
| Missouri .....       | (573) 751-3403    |
| Montana .....        | (406) 444-6418    |
| Nebraska .....       | (402) 471-4717    |
| Nevada .....         | (702) 486-9140    |
| New Hampshire .....  | (603) 271-2024    |
| New Jersey .....     | (609) 292-3923    |
| New Mexico .....     | (505) 827-4230    |
| New York .....       | (518) 457-2238    |
| North Carolina ..... | (919) 807-2905    |
| North Dakota .....   | (701) 328-5188    |
| Ohio .....           | (614) 644-2246    |
| Oklahoma .....       | (405) 528-1500    |
| Oregon .....         | (503) 378-3272    |
| Pennsylvania .....   | (724) 357-2396    |
| Puerto Rico .....    | (787) 754-2171    |
| Rhode Island .....   | (401) 222-2438    |
| South Carolina ..... | (803) 734-9614    |
| South Dakota .....   | (605) 688-4101    |
| Tennessee .....      | (615) 741-7036    |
| Texas .....          | (512) 440-3854    |
| Utah .....           | (801) 530-6901    |
| Vermont .....        | (802) 828-2765    |
| Virginia .....       | (804) 786-6359    |
| Virgin Islands ..... | (809) 772-1315    |
| Washington .....     | (360) 902-5638    |
| West Virginia .....  | (304) 558-7890    |
| Wisconsin .....      | (608) 266-8579(H) |
| .....                | (414) 521-5063(S) |
| Wyoming .....        | (307) 777-7786    |

(H) - Health      (S) - Safety



## OSHA Area Offices


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| Area                      | Telephone      |
|---------------------------|----------------|
| Albany, NY .....          | (518) 464-4338 |
| Albuquerque, NM .....     | (505) 248-5302 |
| Allentown, PA .....       | (610) 776-0592 |
| Anchorage, AK .....       | (907) 271-5152 |
| Appleton, WI .....        | (920) 734-4521 |
| Austin, TX .....          | (512) 916-5783 |
| Avenel, NJ .....          | (908) 750-3270 |
| Bangor, ME .....          | (207) 941-8177 |
| Baton Rouge, LA .....     | (225) 389-0474 |
| Bayside, NY .....         | (718) 279-9060 |
| Bellevue, WA .....        | (206) 553-7520 |
| Billings, MT .....        | (406) 247-7499 |
| Birmingham, AL .....      | (205) 731-1534 |
| Bismarck, ND .....        | (701) 250-4521 |
| Boise, ID .....           | (208) 321-2960 |
| Bowmansville, NY .....    | (716) 684-3891 |
| Braintree, MA .....       | (617) 565-6924 |
| Bridgeport, CT .....      | (203) 579-5581 |
| Calumet City, IL .....    | (708) 891-3800 |
| Carson City, NV .....     | (702) 885-6963 |
| Charleston, WV .....      | (304) 347-5937 |
| Cincinnati, OH .....      | (513) 841-4132 |
| Cleveland, OH .....       | (216) 522-3818 |
| Columbia, SC .....        | (803) 765-5904 |
| Columbus, OH .....        | (614) 469-5582 |
| Concord, NH .....         | (603) 225-1629 |
| Corpus Christi, TX .....  | (512) 888-3420 |
| Dallas, TX .....          | (214) 320-2400 |
| Denver, CO .....          | (303) 844-5285 |
| Des Plaines, IL .....     | (847) 803-4800 |
| Des Moines, IA .....      | (515) 284-4794 |
| Englewood, CO .....       | (303) 843-4515 |
| Erie, PA .....            | (814) 833-5758 |
| Fort Lauderdale, FL ..... | (954) 424-0242 |

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|                             |                |
|-----------------------------|----------------|
| Fort Worth, TX .....        | (817) 428-2470 |
| Frankfort, KY .....         | (502) 227-7024 |
| Harrisburg, PA .....        | (717) 782-3902 |
| Hartford, CT .....          | (860) 240-3152 |
| Hasbrouck Heights, NJ ..... | (201) 288-1700 |
| Guaynabo, PR .....          | (787) 277-1560 |
| Honolulu, HI .....          | (808) 541-2685 |
| Houston, TX .....           | (281) 286-0583 |
| Houston, TX .....           | (281) 591-2438 |
| Indianapolis, IN .....      | (317) 226-7290 |
| Jackson, MS .....           | (601) 965-4606 |
| Jacksonville, FL .....      | (904) 232-2895 |
| Kansas City, MO .....       | (816) 483-9531 |
| Lansing, MI .....           | (517) 377-1892 |
| Linthicum, MD .....         | (410) 865-2055 |
| Little Rock, AR .....       | (501) 324-6291 |
| Lubbock, TX .....           | (806) 472-7681 |
| Madison, WI .....           | (608) 264-5388 |
| Marlton, NJ .....           | (609) 757-5181 |
| Methuen, MA .....           | (617) 565-8110 |
| Milwaukee, WI .....         | (414) 297-3315 |
| Minneapolis, MN .....       | (612) 664-5460 |
| Mobile, AL .....            | (334) 441-6131 |
| Nashville, TN .....         | (615) 781-5423 |
| New York, NY .....          | (212) 466-2482 |
| Norfolk, VA .....           | (757) 441-3820 |
| North Aurora, IL .....      | (630) 896-8700 |
| Oklahoma City, OK .....     | (405) 231-5351 |
| Omaha, NE .....             | (402) 221-3182 |
| Parsippany, NJ .....        | (973) 263-1003 |
| Peoria, IL .....            | (309) 671-7033 |
| Philadelphia, PA .....      | (215) 597-4955 |
| Phoenix, AZ .....           | (602) 640-2007 |
| Pittsburgh, PA .....        | (412) 395-4903 |
| Portland, OR .....          | (503) 326-2251 |
| Providence, RI .....        | (401) 528-4669 |

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|                          |                |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| Raleigh, NC .....        | (919) 856-4770 |
| Salt Lake City, UT ..... | (801) 487-0680 |
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| Toledo, OH .....         | (419) 259-7542 |
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