



**Occupational  
Safety and Health  
Administration**

[www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov)

# Small Business Handbook



**Employers are responsible for providing a safe and healthful workplace for their employees. OSHA's role is to assure the safety and health of America's workers by setting and enforcing standards; providing training, outreach and education; establishing partnerships; and encouraging continual improvement in workplace safety and health.**

## About this Handbook

This handbook is provided to owners, proprietors and managers of small businesses by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), an agency of the U.S. Department of Labor. For additional copies of this publication, write to the U.S. Government Printing Office, (GPO), Superintendent of Documents, Mail Stop SDE, 732 N. Capitol Street, NW, Washington, DC 20401, or call the OSHA Publications Office at (202) 693-1888, or fax (202) 693-2498 for ordering information. Please note that the entire text of the Small Business Handbook is available on OSHA's website at <http://www.osha.gov/Publications/osha2209.pdf>.

The handbook should help small business employers meet the legal requirements imposed by the *Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970* (the Act), and achieve an in-compliance status before an OSHA inspection. An excellent resource to accompany this information is OSHA's Safety and Health Program Management Guidelines, (54 *Federal Register* 3904-3916, January 26, 1989), also available on OSHA's website.

This handbook is not a legal interpretation of the provisions of the Act and does not place any additional requirements on employers or employees. Employers cannot be cited under the General Duty

Clause in Section 5(a)(1) of the Act for failure to follow recommendations in this handbook.

The materials in this handbook are based upon Federal OSHA standards and other requirements in effect at the time of publication and upon generally accepted principles and activities within the job safety and health field. They should be useful to small business owners or managers and can be adapted easily to individual establishments.

It is important to point out that 24 states, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands operate their own OSHA-approved safety and health programs under Section 18 of the Act. While the programs in these State Plan States may differ in some respects from Federal OSHA, this handbook can be used by employers in any state because the standards imposed by State Plan States must be at least as effective as Federal OSHA standards. A list of states that operate their own safety and health programs can be found on OSHA's website at [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov).

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This information will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request by voice phone (202) 693-1999 or teletypewriter (TTY) (877) 889-5627.

**Please Note:** The small business employer seeking information on procurement or contracting with the Department of Labor or OSHA should contact the Department of Labor's Office of Small Business Programs, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room C-2318, Washington, DC 20210.



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