

OSHA ETS: What you need to know

OSHA released on June 10 the COVID-19 Healthcare Emergency Temporary Standard (ETS). The ETS was in response to an Executive Order issued by President Joe Biden that directed the agency to take action to reduce the risk that workers may contract COVID-19 in the workplace. The ETS includes some important updates to the federal guidance that apply to healthcare settings. The following is a summary of the ETS requirements.



Applicability

Healthcare settings where the office does not screen all non-employees prior to entry **and** locations where all employees are not fully vaccinated.

Requirements

AAOMS strongly recommends practices maintain written evidence and records of these requirements in office files.



COVID-19 plan

Each practice must develop a plan in writing if the facility has more than 10 employees. See the [AAOMS Sample OSHA COVID-19 Plan](#).



Safety coordinator

Each practice must designate an individual with the authority to ensure compliance with the COVID-19 plan.



Hazard assessment

The facility should be assessed for any potential COVID-19-related hazards and a mitigation plan developed to address those hazards. Non-managerial employees must be involved in the hazard assessment and plan development. See the [AAOMS Sample Hazard Assessment](#).



Screening

COVID-19 screening must occur at points of entry where direct patient care is provided, and all patients, clients and other visitors or non-employees must be screened. All employees should be screened before each shift, and contact tracing between employees must be performed.



Standard precautions

Standard and transmission-based precautions based on [CDC guidelines](#) should be developed and implemented.



Facemasks

Fully vaccinated workers are exempt from masking, distancing and barrier requirements when in well-defined areas where there is no reasonable expectation that any person with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 will be present. All employees must wear facemasks when indoors and respirators or other PPE for exposure to people with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 and for aerosol-generating procedures on a person with suspected or confirmed COVID-19.



Aerosol-generating procedures

When performing an aerosol-generating procedure on a person with suspected or confirmed COVID-19, only essential personnel should be present, the procedure should be performed in an airborne infection isolation room if available, and surfaces and equipment should be cleaned/disinfected after the procedure is completed.



Physical distancing

Six feet must be maintained, and barriers installed where appropriate.



Cleaning requirements

Specific cleaning protocols must be implemented.

- Patient areas, medical devices and equipment – Use standard practices for cleaning and disinfection in accordance with [CDC's COVID-19 Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations](#) and the [CDC's Guidelines for Environmental Infection Control](#).
- In all other areas:
 - Clean high-touch surfaces and equipment at least once a day using manufacturers' instructions.
 - When employer is aware that a COVID-19 positive person was in the workplace within the last 24 hours, any areas, materials and equipment likely contaminated by the person must be cleaned and disinfected according to the [CDC's Cleaning and Disinfecting Guidelines](#).



Hand sanitizer

Alcohol-based hand rub should be provided that is at least 60 percent alcohol, or provide readily accessible hand-washing facilities.



Air ventilation

Outside air circulation should be maximized to the extent appropriate. Air filters should be at MERV-13 or higher if HVAC will allow, or highest compatible filtering efficiency for the system should be utilized. Filters should be maintained and replaced as necessary. All intake ports that provide outside air should be cleaned and maintained regularly.



Time off

Employers must provide reasonable time and paid leave for employees to become vaccinated and recover from vaccine side effects.



COVID-19 training

All employees must receive COVID-19 training. See the [AAOMS COVID-19 OSHA Training Guide](#) for additional guidance.



COVID-19 log

A COVID log must be developed and available that records each incident identified by the employer in which an employee is COVID-19 positive, regardless of whether the instance is connected to exposure at work. See the [AAOMS Sample COVID-19 Log](#).



Mini RPP

In situations where workers are not generally exposed to suspected or confirmed sources of COVID-19 but where respirator use could offer enhanced worker protection, the mini RPP program may be used. See the [AAOMS OSHA 'Mini RPP' infographic](#) for additional details.

View [OSHA's COVID-19 ETS](#) for additional information.

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