Steps for Staying in Compliance with OSHA

The federal Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (“Act”) requires employers (including nonprofit employers) to provide employees with safe and healthful working conditions. It establishes safety and health standards in the workplace.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) enforces the Act and promotes safety and health regulations.

Under the “General Duty Clause” of the Act, an employer has a duty to provide its employees with a workplace free of recognized hazards likely to cause death or serious injury.

OSHA has also promulgated specific regulations that establish safety requirements above and beyond those required by the General Duty Clause. These can be found on [OSHA’s website](http://www.osha.gov).

To prove that an employer is in compliance, OSHA requires the employer to meet a number of paperwork and reporting requirements. Employers who do not comply with these rules risk fines and penalties.

Below is an overview of OSHA’s general obligations for employers, including nonprofits:

* Track Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses
The Act and OSHA’s regulations require employers to keep track of work-related injuries and illnesses, with some limited exceptions for smaller entities and low risk industries. See the [OSHA website](https://www.osha.gov/recordkeeping/handbook/) for additional information recordkeeping obligations.
* Report Incidents Involving Death or Hospitalization of Multiple Employees
All employers must report any incident that results in death of one or more employees or the hospitalization of 3 or more employees. Employers must make this report within eight hours of the accident.
* Required Postings
All employers covered by OSHA must also post the following information:
	+ An OSHA poster informing workers of their rights and obligations under OSHA. An [OSHA poster](http://www.osha.gov/pls/publications/publication.AthruZ?pType=Types&pID=5) is [available from the agency's website](https://www.osha.gov/pls/publications/publication.html). Most employers will need only the poster titled "Job Safety and Health: It's The Law."
	+ Any current citations that OSHA officers have issued against the employer, and
	+ Any petitions that the employer has filed for modification or abatement.
* Post a Log and Summary
In addition, if an employer is covered by OSHA's recordkeeping requirements described above, the employer must post a log and summary of occupational illnesses and injuries.
* Submit to Inspections
In addition to the above recordkeeping and reporting requirements, all employers covered by the Act must submit to inspections by OSHA compliance officers.
* Other Requirements
Lastly, OSHA may require employers to: investigate accidents; develop written emergency action plans; provide suitable water in the workplace; maintain adequate first aid supplies; comply with applicable OSHA bloodborne pathogens standards, as applicable; and implement Hazard Communications on toxic substances in the workplace (does not apply to over the counter household cleaners used in the workplace). For further information on OSHA obligations, see [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov).