COVID-19 UPDATE

CAL/OSHA EMERGENCY REGULATIONS NOW IN EFFECT

The California Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA) Standards Board approved an emergency temporary regulation on COVID-19 prevention governing virtually all employers and workplaces in California. This new regulation went into effect on November 30th and will expire in six months unless it is readopted.

The regulation imposes several significant requirements related to testing and return-to-work requirements.

Testing:
- The employer must inform exposed employees that testing is available, the reason for the testing and the possible consequences of a positive test.
- Testing is required when there has been even one positive COVID-19 case in the workplace. In that situation, the employer must offer testing to all employees who have potentially been exposed to COVID-19.
- If three or more COVID-19 cases occur within a 14-day period, employers must test all employees in the exposed workplace and then test them again one week later.
- Employers must continue to test employees who remain in the workplace at least once per week, until there are no new COVID-19 cases detected over a 14-day period.
- If the workplace experiences 20 or more cases in a 30-day period, COVID-19 testing must be provided to all exposed employees twice per week until there are not any new cases detected for a 14-day period.

Return-to- Work Protocol: Following quarantine or isolation due to a positive test, employers must prevent the employee from working until specific requirements are met.
Employees who experienced symptoms cannot return to work:
- Until at least 24-hours since employees had a fever of 100.4+ without the use of fever-reducing medications.
- COVID-19 symptoms must have improved.
- It has been at least 10 days since symptoms first appeared.

Employees who have tested positive but did not develop any symptoms:

- The employee must not return to work until a minimum of 10 days have passed since the date of the specimen collection of their first positive COVID-19 test.
- If a public health authority issues the order to isolate or quarantine, the employee shall not return to work until either period of isolation or quarantine is lifted. If no period is specified, then the period shall be 10 days from the time the order to isolate was effective, or 14 days from the time the order to quarantine was effective.
- Employers cannot require a negative COVID-19 test for an employee to return to work.

See below for a variety of additional resources available regarding these emergency regulations:

FAQ's on emergency COVID-19 regulation

A short summary of the regulation

A model of company policy, **click here**.

Full text of regulation

CA FARMWORKER FOUNDATION OFFERING FREE COVID-19 TESTING FOR FARM EMPLOYEES

The California Farmworker Foundation announced on December 4th that it is now providing FREE COVID-19 testing for farm employees in the Central Valley. CFF has been selected as the first farmworker non-profit organization in the State of California to conduct testing. CFF will be working directly with the California Department of Food and Agriculture and California Department of Public Health to ensure agricultural employees have access to COVID-19 testing at their worksites and within their communities. In the upcoming weeks, CFF will continue to expand its capacity to test farmworkers throughout the Central Valley.

The COVID-19 testing performed by CFF is in the format of self-swab and will have a two to three-day turnaround time for results. The testing services provided by CFF are FREE to farmworkers and agricultural employers. If you are interested in testing your employees or would like more information, please contact CFF COVID-19 testing lead, Daity Tapia at (661) 778-0015.