

To Superintendents and CBOs:

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration released on Monday guidance to help employers prepare their workplaces for an outbreak of COVID-19 — along with a reminder that any incidents of employees contracting the novel coronavirus at work are recordable illnesses, subject to the same rules and failure-to-record fines as other workplace injuries and illnesses.

While OSHA specifically exempts employers from recording incidents of employees contracting common colds and the flu in the workplace, COVID-19 is not exempt, the agency noted on a newly added website providing OSHA guidance for preventing occupational exposure to the rapidly spreading virus.

The guidance, while not a standard or regulation, outlines safety standards that employers whose workers are at high risk of contracting COVID-19 should implement to remain in compliance with the Occupational Safety and Health Act’s general duty clause.

The report also advises employers to develop an infectious disease preparedness and response plan, implement basic infection prevention measures and develop policies for the identification and isolation of ill individuals.

Please contact RESIG’s Loss Prevention Department if you have further questions regarding this issue.