



CIRSA HAZARD ALERT

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SAFER TOGETHER

Hazard Alert – Seasonal Workplace Safety



Seasonal workers make up a significant percentage of the workforce in the United States, particularly during the hectic holiday season and spring/summer months. Studies have found these temporary workers face greater risk of injury than full time employees. Whether they are part-time lifeguards, public works employees, landscapers, or from a temporary agency, it is the employer's responsibility to keep these workers as safe as full-time employees.

Seasonal workers should be afforded the same safety protections and follow the same safety protocols as full-time employees. Employers should ensure that seasonal workers:

- Receive workplace safety and health training in an understood language
- Work on machines that are safe
- Receive required safety equipment, such as gloves or a harness and a lifeline for falls
- Be protected from toxic chemicals

What can employers do to help keep seasonal workers safe?

- **Examine the workplace** - look at the areas where seasonal employees will be working and make sure there are no safety hazards present. If there are any changes, improvements, or repairs to be made, they should be done before new employees start work.
- **Perform a quality onboarding safety orientation** - new employee safety orientation programs cover information under two broad umbrellas:
 1. General organizational health and safety (information common in every job, including fire safety, slips and falls, safety from workplace violence, bullying, etc.).
 2. Role - and employer - specific health and safety (information unique to the organization and the employee's role and working environment).

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Seasonal Workplace Safety (cont.)

- **Perform regular trainings** - regular training sessions for seasonal workers will help ensure these employees are following procedures correctly and help reduce the risk of injuries.
- **Give a tour of the facilities** - in addition to showing seasonal workers the specific location(s) where they will be working, given them a tour of other key facilities and areas, particularly any related to their roles in carrying out safety plans.
- **Train on job-specific equipment and PPE** - employers are responsible for making sure employees understand their roles, know how to operate necessary equipment, and use the required personal protective equipment. Just as with full-time employees, seasonal employees should receive specific training in these areas.
- **Follow up** - employees will not retain all information reviewed with them during the safety orientation/onboarding process. Therefore, follow-up training may be necessary to review key safety policies, procedures, and hazards. Also, additional training classes may be needed to teach specific job skills to help prevent accidents and injuries.

Apart from providing seasonal workers with the same safety training and resources as other employees, employers should also recognize that any employee has the right to speak up about workplace health/safety hazards without fear of retaliation. Therefore, to further the shared goals of a safe workplace, employers should inform seasonal employees of the organization's policies and procedures for raising workplace safety concerns. The employer should also ensure that it has posted at the work premises Colorado required notice of workers' rights to express workplace health/safety concerns.

Resources:

- Temporary Workers: <https://www.osha.gov/temporaryworkers/>
- Safety Orientation: <https://safesitehq.com/safety-orientation/>
- CIRSA Safety Orientation Guide: <https://www.cirsa.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Safety-Orientation-Guide-For-New-Employees-1.pdf>
- Safety Tips: <https://www.galfandberger.com/2020/12/11/safety-tips-seasonal-workers/>
- Colorado Protected Health/Safety Expression & Whistleblowing Poster: <https://cdle.colorado.gov/sites/cdle/files/%5BCLEAN%20June%201%2C%202022%5D%20Poster%2C%20Paid%20Leave%20%26%20Whistleblower.pdf>