

# Workplace Violence Prevention Law to Take Effect

**G**OV. GAVIN Newsom has signed into law a measure that will require nearly every employer in California to have in place a workplace violence prevention plan.

The new law, which takes effect July 1, 2024, will require any company with at least one worker to create a workplace violence prevention plan and conduct annual workplace violence prevention training.

The new legislation, SB 553, requires Cal/OSHA to start work on regulations to adopt a workplace violence standard. However, regardless of whether new regulations are in place or not, Cal/OSHA is authorized and required to start enforcing the new law starting July 1.

## EXCEPTIONS

The law does not apply to:

- The health care industry, which has its own prevention standard.
- Remote workers.
- Workplaces not open to the public and with fewer than 10 staff.
- Department of Corrections and law enforcement agencies.

## Main requirements

Employers will be required to implement and maintain an effective workplace violence prevention plan that includes:

- Procedures for the employer to accept and respond to reports of workplace violence.
- Procedures for staff to report an incident or concern,
- Procedures for responding to an incident.
- Procedures to identify and evaluate workplace violence

hazards, including scheduled periodic inspections.

- Procedures for post-incident response and investigation.
- The law also requires employers to create and keep:
  - Records of workplace violence hazard identification, evaluation and correction.
  - Training records.
  - A violent incident log for every incident.
  - Records of workplace violence incident investigations.

## Training

The law also requires employers to train their staff in the elements of their workplace violence prevention plan, including:

- The various parts of the plan (also make the plan available to all staff).
- How to report workplace violence hazards and workplace violence incidents.
- Corrective measures the employer has implemented.
- How to seek assistance to prevent or respond to violence.
- Strategies to avoid physical harm.
- Information about the violent incident log and how employees can obtain a copy.

## Guidance

Cal/OSHA will typically create model programs or plans for employers to follow.

It has not yet stated it will do so, but it likely will as it has in the past when requiring implementation of specific prevention plans.

While the law won't take effect until the middle of 2024, you should start preparing for it soon to ensure compliance. ❖