

Cal/OSHA Field Compliance Officer Vacancies

Gavin Newsom Administration: 2019 – 2026

During the entire Newsom Administration Cal/OSHA has faced crippling vacancies in the staffing of field compliance health and safety officers (CSHO) who conduct the agency's worksite inspections in response to worker complaints and accident-related injuries and fatalities.

During the seven-year period, the staffing vacancies have grown to crisis proportions. At the end of January 2026, there were nine District Offices having vacancy rates above 40% and the overall vacancy rate for field enforcement inspectors was 33%. This means that effective enforcement of state regulations and protection of California's 19 million workers is severely compromised, as documented by the July 2025 California State Audit of Cal/OSHA.

Cal/OSHA's inspector to worker ratio of 1 inspector to 99,000 workers in January 2026 is much less health protective than Washington State's ratio of 1 to 28,000 workers, and Oregon's ratio of 1 to 23,000 workers. [These non-California ratios were cited in the April 2025 "Death on the Job" report.]

All this data is from official documents from the Department of Industrial Relations – Cal/OSHA's parent agency – which generates a monthly census of all authorized and funded positions in Cal/OSHA called the "DIR List of Authorized DOSH Positions."

Governor Newsom proposed, and the Legislature approved, a \$16 million cut targeted for Cal/OSHA enforcement starting on July 1, 2025. Newsom has proposed additional budget cuts for Cal/OSHA enforcement for the 2026-27 fiscal year starting in July 2026.

This reduction in worker protection is not required by state finances as Cal/OSHA has funding completely independent of state revenues and the "OSH Fund" for Cal/OSHA has run a \$200 million surplus for the last three fiscal years.

There is no financial reason for the cuts to Cal/OSHA.

The people who pay the cost for a safety agency riddled with vacancies are the state's working people.

Year / Month	Number of CSHO Vacancies	CSHO Vacancy Rate	Total number of permanent, full time CSHO positions
Year 2026			
January	95	33%	288
Year 2025			
December	100	35%	289
October	95	33%	287
August	95	34%	280
June	101	36%	280
April	110	39%	281
January	122	44%	275
Year 2024			
August	124	46%	267
June	101	40%	269
May	100	39%	269
March	109	39%	280
January	108	38.8%	278
Year 2023			
November	97	35.5%	274
July	95	35%	270
Year 2022			
December	75	29%	262
August	70	27%	260
July	65	25%	260
April	63	24%	263
February	56	21.6%	259
Year 2021			
December	77	27.2%	258
September	64	24.8%	258
August	61	24%	253
July	57	22.5%	253
June	58	23%	251
May	65	25.7%	253
April	64	25.5%	251

March	60	24%	248
February	59	23.9%	247
January	59	23.7%	248
Year 2020			
December	57	23%	246
November	54	21.9%	246
July	53	21.5%	246
June	52	21%	245
May 2020	52	21%	246
April	52	21%	246
March	50	20.5%	244
February	52	21%	244
January	48	19.5%	246
Year 2019			
November	46	18.5%	249
August	37	14.8%	249
July	36	14%	250
June	32	12.8%	250
May	29	11.6%	249
February	30	12.5%	248

Compiled by Garrett Brown from the official “DIR List of Authorized DOSH Positions” for each month noted.

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