

The new workload will also impact its Legal Unit.

The Division seeks \$125,000 beginning in 2029-30 to fund half a position to implement AB 2975, which requires that hospitals install screening devices at hospital entrances to detect weapons and protocols for when weapons are detected. Rulemaking is needed to implement the law.

Once a rule is in effect, DOSH says enforcement will increase the time and resources needed for inspecting hospitals. It envisions an associate safety engineer working part-time to handle the increased workload.

The new money for DOSH's information technology project will take the Division from the 1980s in its information processing into the 21st century. The project will consolidate information into a central database, create an interface with other Department of Industrial Relations databases, and automate manual processes. The Department of Technology has approved stage four of the project. The modernization project began implementation last August, and the system's build phase will begin in February. User testing is scheduled to begin in August. The "go-live" date is targeted for February of 2026.

The total project budget is about \$100 million, and it comes from the Labor and Workforce Development Fund.

The \$170,000 to CHSWC would allow the commission to continue its efforts to assist schools in developing their IPPs. The money would come from the Workers' Compensation Administration Revolving Fund.

The commission has established a model training program known as the School Action for Safety and Health Program (SASH) and, to date, has conducted training for almost 2,300 school staff in 47 counties, CHSWC says.

OSH Fund Assessment Changes

The Department of Industrial Relations is sharply decreasing the assessment employers will pay added to workers' comp premium for the Occupational Safety and Health Fund. That is where much of the Cal/OSHA program funding is. The OSH Fund was established in 2008 to stabilize funding for the program.

It is one of several funding mechanisms paid for by surcharges on employers' workers' comp premiums for insured employers or indemnity payments for self-insured entities.

The total assessment supporting Cal/OSHA for fiscal year 2024-25 is \$189,509,130, 13% below the 2023-24 assessment of \$217,831,327. The new assessment factor for all workers' comp payers is 0.001185 of premium, a 74% decrease from the previous year. For self-insureds, the factor is 0.001177,

Corrections

In our January 10th edition, the workplace fatality chart related to demographics (p. 14350) for gender had transposed headers. The top set of numbers is for fatalities by female and the bottom for males. The correction was made to our online story.

In our Workplace Fatality Update story on p. 14355 of the same issue, the item about the vehicle incident involving employees of Emergency Packout Company stated, "Wear your seatbelts." However, a news report states that the victims were ejected from the vehicle despite apparently having worn safety belts. Nevertheless, wearing seatbelts is something we should all be doing.

Our thanks to sharp-eyed reader Matt Smylie for pointing out these errors.



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down 91% from last year’s 0.013699.

California Labor Code §§ 62.5 and 62.6 authorize the assessments for the costs of administering workers’ compensation, health and safety, and labor standards enforcement.

Workers' Comp Fund Assessments			
	% FOR ALL INSUREDS	% For SELF-INSUREDS	TOTAL ASSESSMENT
Occupational Safety and Health Fund	0.001885	0.001177	\$189,509,130
Workers' Compensation Administration Revolving Fund	0.012370	0.018754	\$698,761,939
Subsequent Injuries Benefits Trust Fund	0.030148	0.057041	\$848,000,000
Uninsured Employers Benefits Trust Fund	0.000818	0.001085	\$53,088,800
Labor Enforcement Compliance Fund	0.001058	0.000123	\$181,983,628
Workers Compensation Fraud Account	0.004096	0.006624	\$90,435,332
Totals	0.050375	0.084804	\$2,061,778,829

Cal/OSHA Adjusts to Federal Requirements

Cal/OSHA’s Division of Occupational Safety and Health has set its annual increase as required by the federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act. The increases are 3% across the board, like in 2024.

The Inflation Adjustment Act became law in 2015, requiring Fed-OSHA and the state plans to increase penalties for regulatory, general, willful, and repeat violations, plus serious violations for the Feds. California included the annual penalty adjustments in the California Labor Code as required by the Feds.

In California, serious violations are exempt from these increases because they are much higher than the Fed-OSHA penalty scheme.

The penalty schedule is based on statistics developed by the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers, compiled by the Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics. For 2025, the penalties for California include:

- A maximum penalty for general and regulatory violations, including posting and recordkeeping violations, of \$16,285, from \$15,873;
- Minimum penalties for willful violations of \$11,632 from \$11,337;
- Maximum penalties for willful cites or repeats of \$162,851 versus \$158,727.

Fed-OSHA has set the maximum penalties for repeat or

willful violations at \$165,514, up from \$161,323, and \$16,550, up from \$16,131, for serious and other-than-serious violations.

Cal/OSHA’s maximum penalty for serious violation remains the highest in the nation, at \$25,000.

No Cal/OSHA Appeals Board appeals process changes or settlement amounts are required.

Cal/OSHA’s Controversial Rulemaking Plans

Cal/OSHA, including the Standards Board and Division of Occupational Safety and Health, has numerous rulemaking projects for 2025. With some of the biggest ones in years already finalized – indoor heat illness, silica, and lead – 2025 could see several other proposals get formally proposed and be on their way to adoption. At least, that’s the plan, according to DOSH and the Board.

Here’s a roundup of the most significant, controversial, and pressing issues heading to resolution.

First-Aid

The close-to-20-year effort to simplify and streamline the contents of first-aid kits that employers are required to have might get off the shelf in 2025. Of course, that’s what the community thought back in early 2023, but Cal/OSHA terminated the rulemaking before an anticipated vote. DOSH and the Board said the need to document stakeholder comments properly threatened to surpass the one-year timeline for completing a formal proposal, so they opted for termination, vowing to reintroduce the proposal quickly. That was two years ago, and the Board anticipates a public hearing on the new proposal in June of this year.



Will this be the year when employers first-aid kits get a long-delayed makeover?

This saga began in 2006 when safety consultant Dave Smith petitioned the Board to revise the first-aid kit requirements so that kits didn’t have to be approved solely by a physician and to allow employers to stock kits according to the relevant national