

COVID-19

The Cal/OSHA Response

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State of California
Gavin Newsom
Governor

Overview

- Pandemic significantly impacted DOSH's enforcement operations due to a steep increase in the number of complaints received, and the large number of COVID-19 illnesses and fatalities.
- A significant number of business closed during the first few months of the pandemic.
- The total number of onsite inspections decreased in comparison with prior years.
- Inspections were more complex, which increased workload demand.

Starting in January 2020

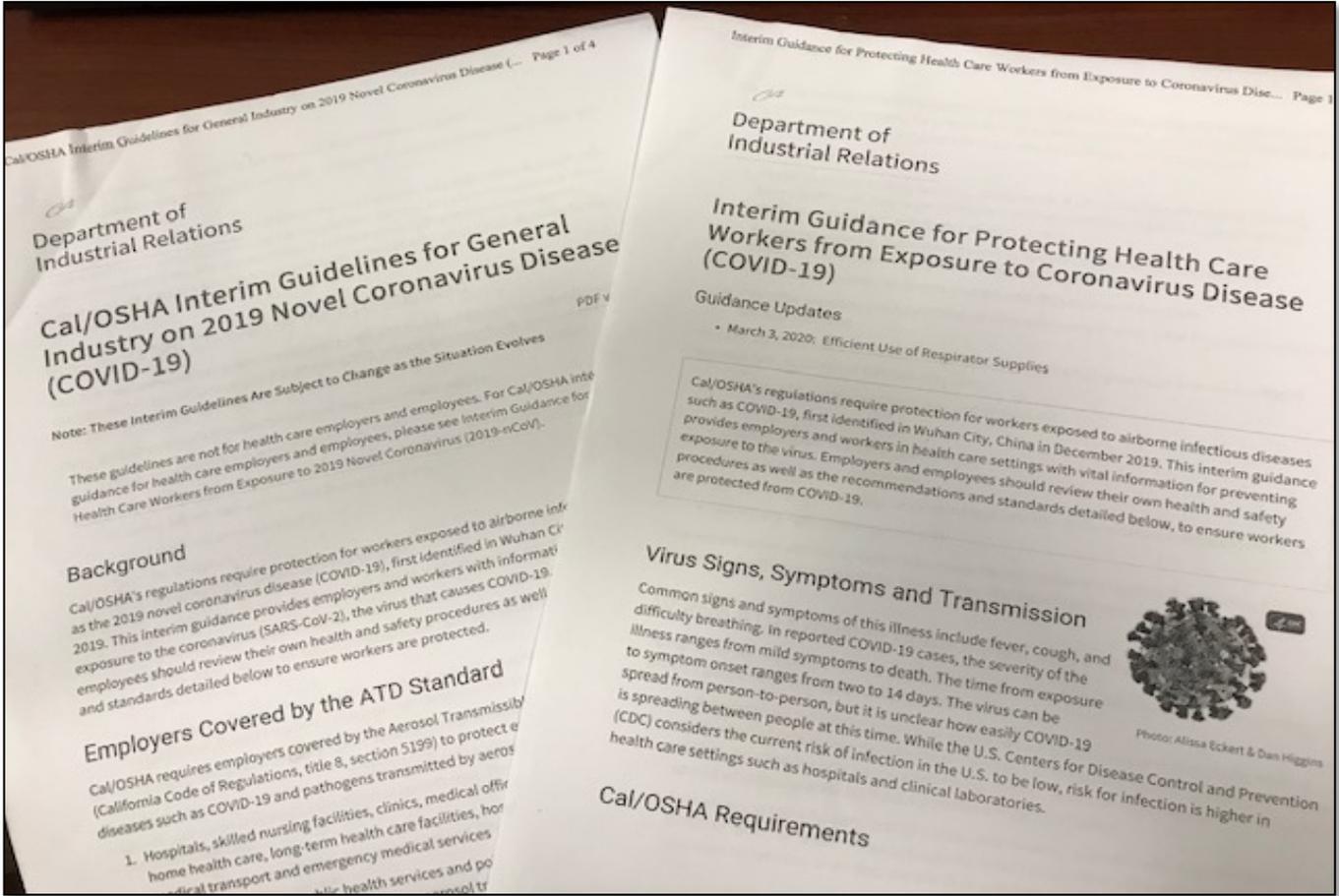
- February-March 2020

- First COVID guidance was posted on February 3, 2020.
- Cal/OSHA established enforcement response measures
- Governor Gavin Newsom declared a State of Emergency in California on March 4, 2020

- April-July 2020

- Significant outbreaks of COVID-19 illness were being reported
- Investigations and compliance assistance initiatives began by Cal/OSHA

Interim Guidelines



Glimpse of Early 2020



Example: An emergency treatment area erected for COVID-19 patients at El Centro Regional Medical Center, Imperial County's largest hospital.

Photo courtesy of El Centro Regional Medical Center

Glimpse of Early 2020

[What's Behind A COVID-19 Spike In Imperial County | KPBS Public Media](#)

According to KPBS, in late March, Imperial County had just nine confirmed cases of COVID-19, and the head of the largest hospital there thought his community had dodged a bullet.

KPBS | BY [JULIE SMALL / KQED](#)

Published June 17, 2020 at 10:10 AM PDT



Glimpse of Early 2020

20 people have died in Yucaipa from coronavirus. All but two were residents of one skilled-nursing facility

By [Melissa Gomez](#) Staff Writer

April 23, 2020 8:47 PM PT

Los Angeles Times

Cedar Mountain Post Acute Rehabilitation staff member Navi Cavaltera waters a flower pot put up by community to show their support for the nursing staff of the facility in Yucaipa. Eighteen of 20 coronavirus related deaths in Yucaipa were residents of the Cedar Mountain Post Acute Rehabilitation skilled nursing facility.

(Gina Ferazzi / Los Angeles Times)



Glimpse of Early 2020



More than 100 residents have the coronavirus at Escondido nursing home, state reports | KTLA

Escondido Post Acute had 111 residents and 70 healthcare workers who had the novel coronavirus out of a total of 139 residents and 81 staff who had tested positive there since the beginning of the pandemic. The facility has a maximum bed count of 180, according to data from the California Department of Public Health.

Los Angeles Times December 26, 2020

Glimpse of Early 2020

Nine COVID Outbreaks Reported at Food Processing Plants in Vernon Near LA - Times of San Diego

There are coronavirus outbreaks at nine plants in the tiny industrial City of Vernon, including the Farmer John slaughterhouse, where 153 workers have tested positive for COVID-19, according to Los Angeles County health officials.

Other facilities with outbreaks of between five and 24 employees testing positive are CLW Foods, which handles meat, Vie De France Yamazaki produces baked goods, California Farms Meat, Takaokaya USA produces green tea, F. Gavina & Sons, coffee, Golden West Trading, meat, Overhill Farms, frozen foods, and Rose & Shore, deli meat and prepared foods, according to the L.A. County Department of Public Health.

Source: [Chris Jennewein](#) May 26, 2020



Glimpse of Early 2020

[San Quentin faces California's deadliest prison outbreak after latest Covid fatalities | US prisons | The Guardian](#)

There have been 20,057 cases and 33 deaths linked to employees across the state. This includes staff for adult and youth facilities, training centers and California Correctional Health Care Services, which provides healthcare services to the state's prison inmate population.

August 4, 2020 The Guardian



Glimpse of Early 2020



A gloved hand points to a holding cell at the hospital ward of the Twin Towers jail in Los Angeles on April 16, 2020. Photo: Chris Carlson/AP

COVID-19 infections hit record high in California prisons – CalMatters

By [Rhonda Lyons](#) November 30, 2020
Updated September 28, 2021

Internal Preparation - Field Staff Training

- Developed health and safety protocols for field staff involving COVID-19 in Facilities and Operations Covered by Section 5199 Aerosol Transmissible Disease (ATD).
- Prepared and trained all field staff assigned to conduct inspections in workplaces that were identified as having a risk of transmission for COVID-19 infection and were covered under ATD standard.
- Training and instruction also provided to staff who performed inspections of workplaces not covered by the ATD standard.



Health and Safety Procedures

Included the following:

1. Workplaces and Employees
2. Assignment
3. Preparation for Onsite Activities
4. Access and Opening Conference
5. Walk Around and Exit Conference
6. Medical Follow-Up for Cal/OSHA Personnel

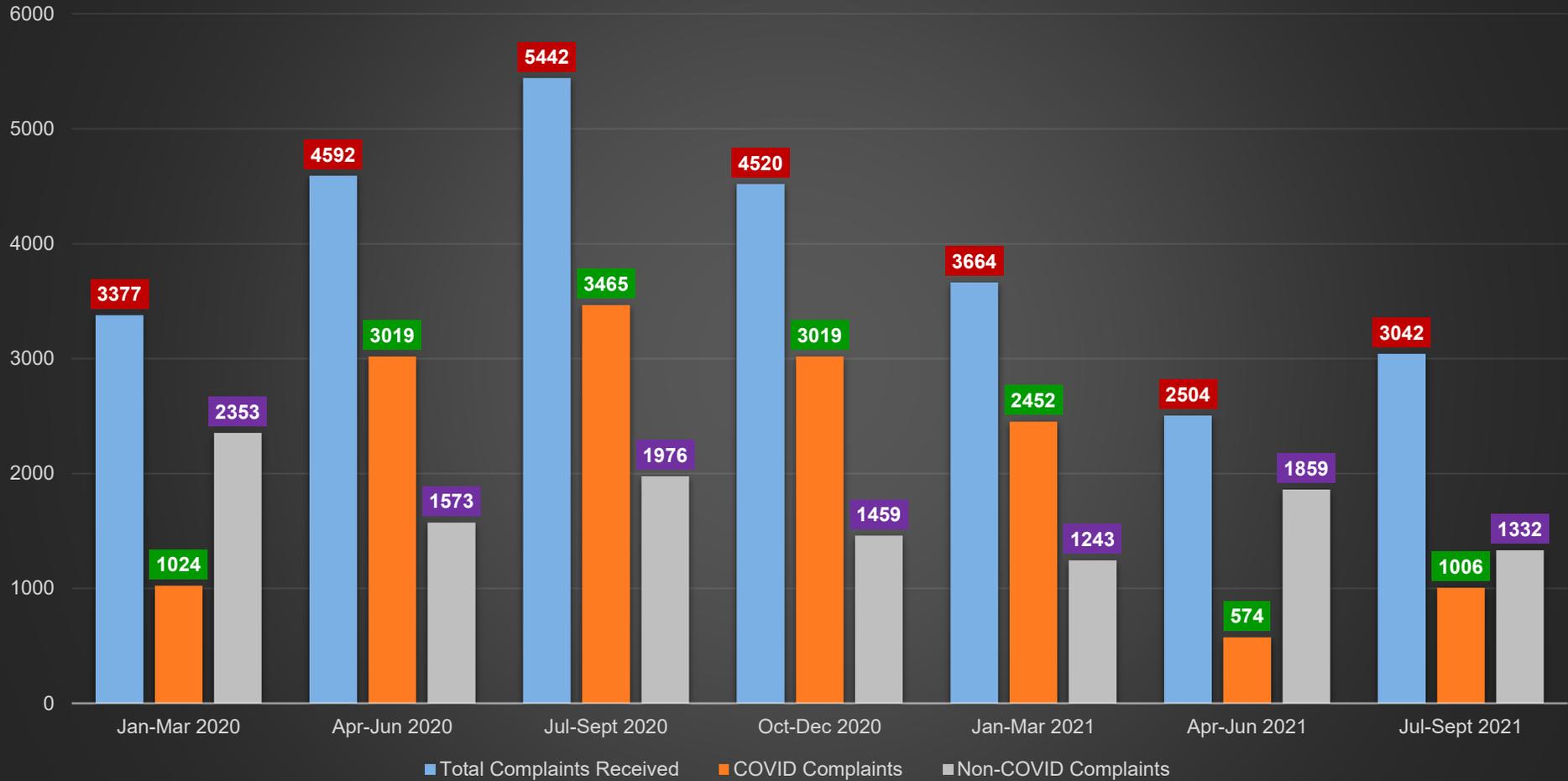
More Guidelines and Publications

- [Interim Guidance for Protecting Hospital Workers from Exposure to Coronavirus Disease \(COVID-19\).](#)
- [Interim Guidance for Protecting Mortuary and Funeral Home Workers from Exposure to Coronavirus Disease \(COVID-19\).](#)
- [Interim Guidance for Protecting Workers at Skilled Nursing and Long-term Care Facilities from Exposure to Coronavirus Disease \(COVID-19\).](#)

- [Infection Prevention for Agricultural Employers and Employees](#)
- [Infection Prevention in Child Care Programs](#)
- [Infection Prevention in Construction](#)
- [Infection Prevention in Grocery Stores](#)
- [Infection Prevention for Logistics Employers and Employees](#)
- [Model COVID-19 Prevention Program](#)

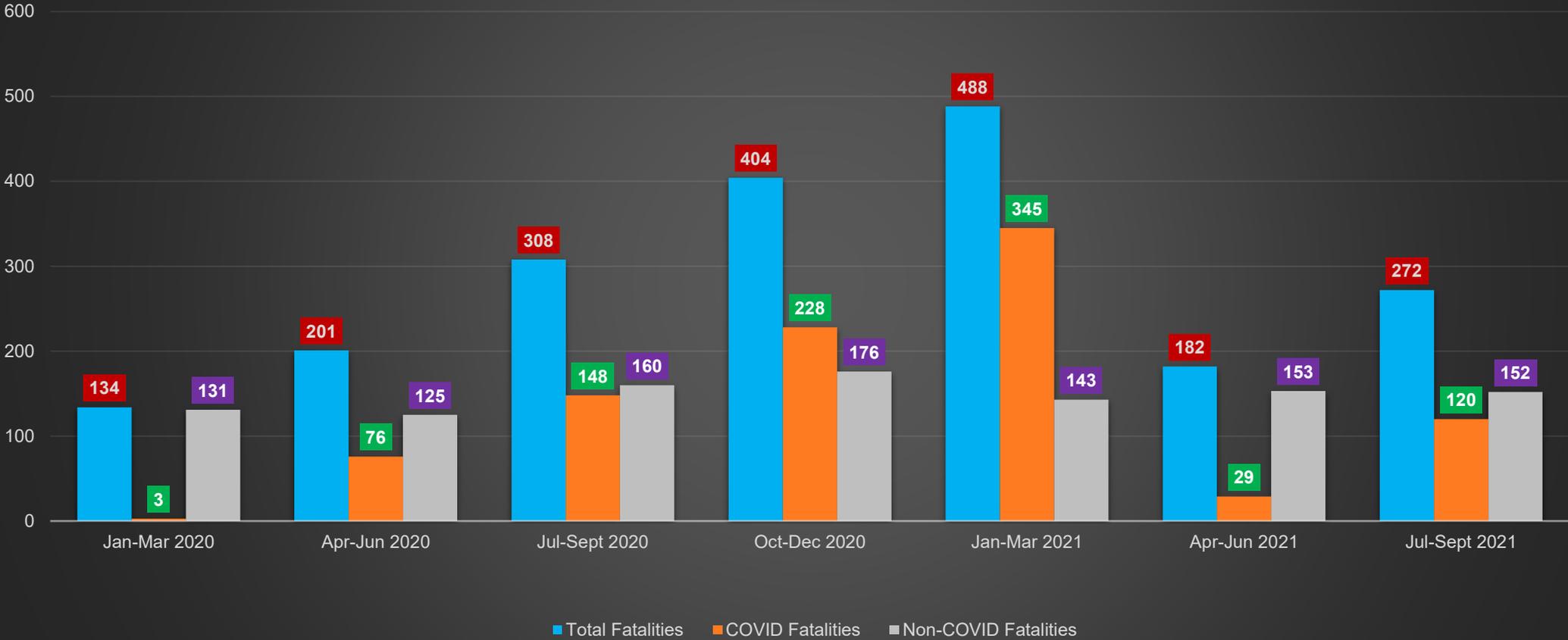
COVID-19 Complaints, Accident, and Fatality Tracking

COMPLAINTS RECEIVED - CY 2020 & 2021



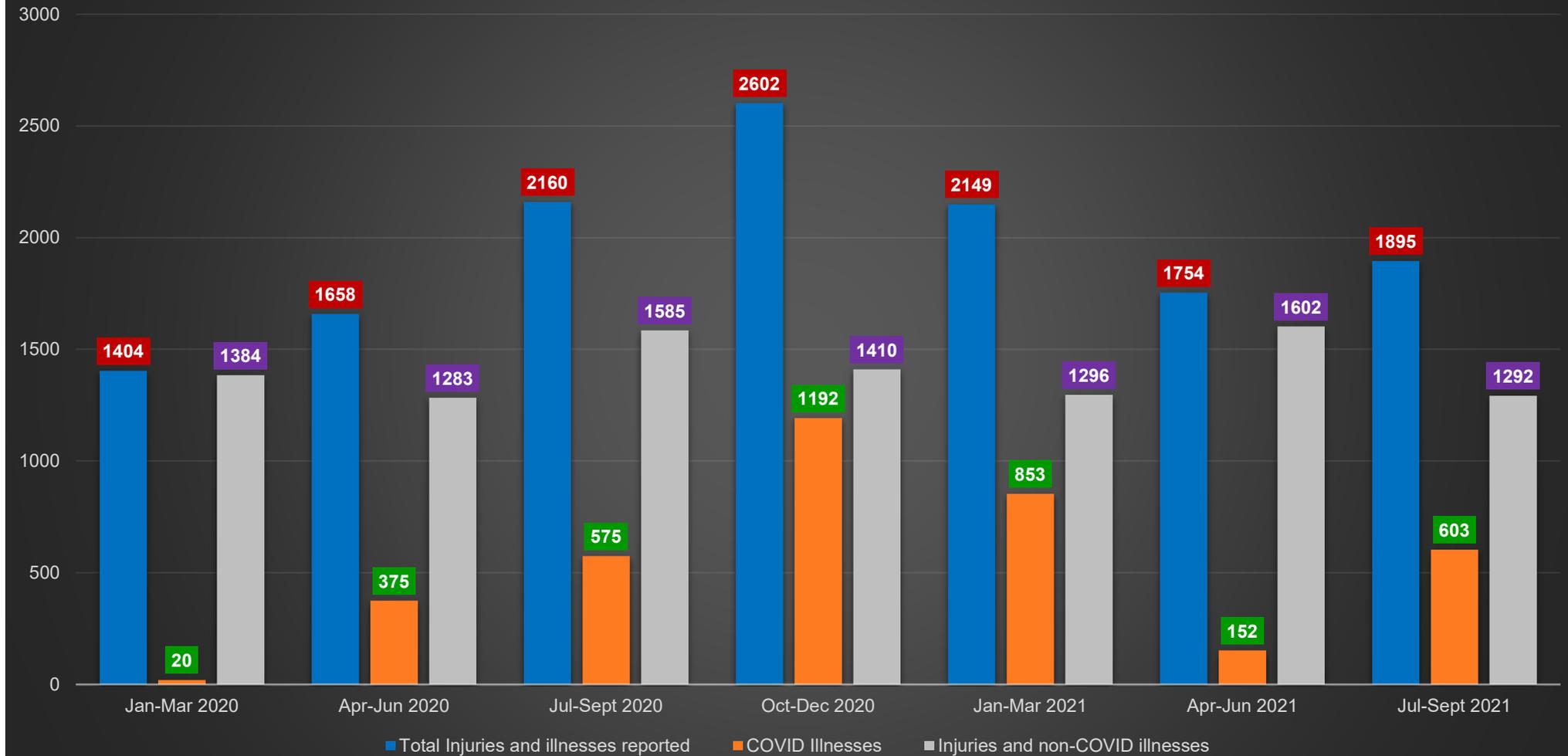
*Not all data from the most recent two quarters is included

FATALITIES REPORTED - CY 2020 & 2021



*Not all data from the most recent two quarters is included

INJURIES AND ILLNESSES REPORTED - CY 2020 & 2021



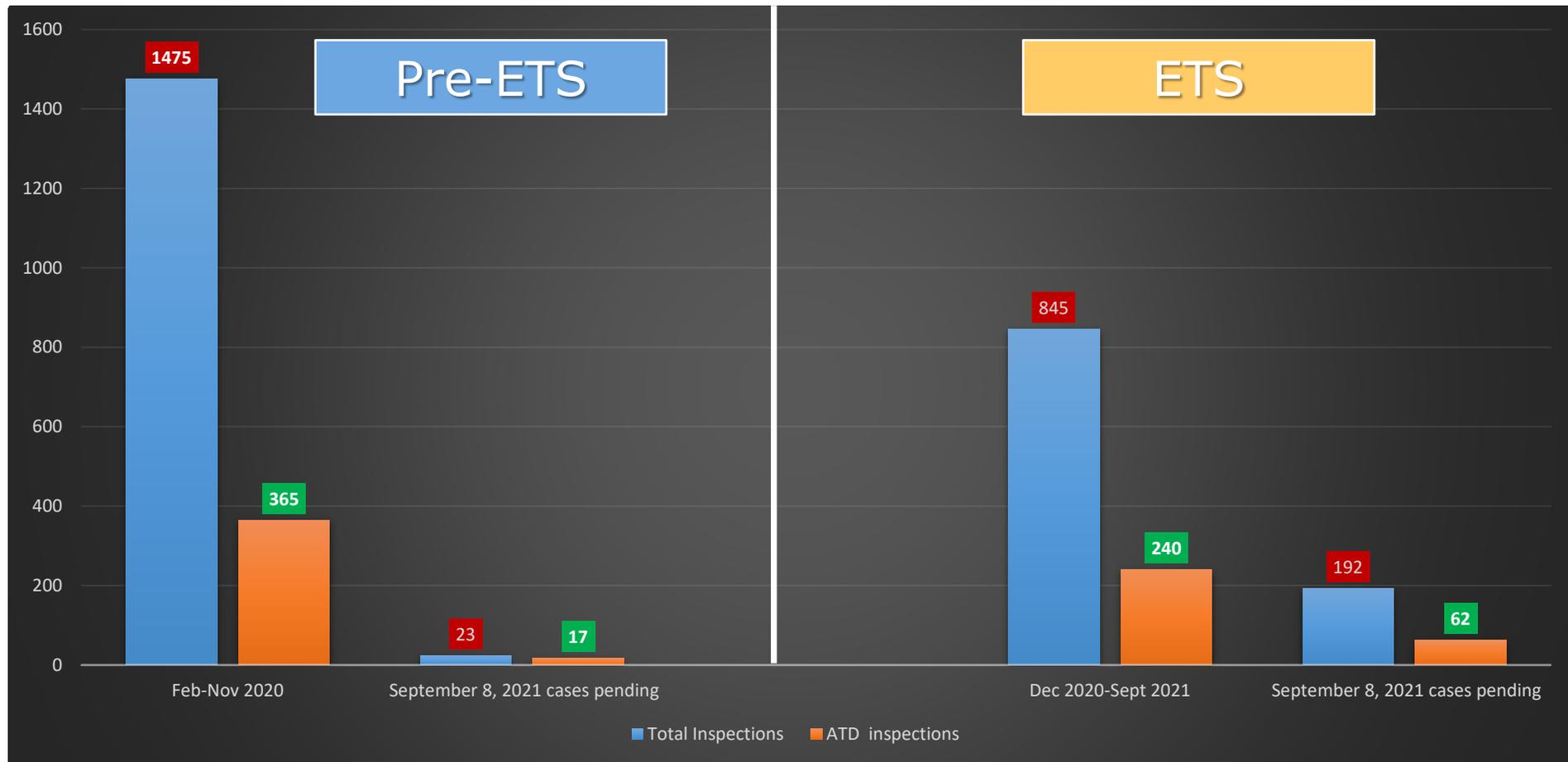
Application of Existing Standards – Prior to Emergency Temporary Standard

- Employers Covered by the ATD Standard: CCR T8 5199
- Additional Cal/OSHA Regulations for Employers Not Covered by the ATD Standard: CCR T8 3203
- Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP)
 - California employers are required to establish and implement an IIPP to protect employees from workplace hazards, including infectious diseases.
 - Employers are required to identify and evaluate their workplace to determine if employees may be exposed to COVID-19 infection their workplace.
 - If employees are exposed to the hazard, then employers must implement infection control measures, including applicable and relevant recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC),
 - Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), and Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19): How to Protect Yourself & Others.
- Misc. Standards : CCR T8 342(a), 14300, 5142, 3380, 3204, 5193, 5144

Back to the timeline of events...

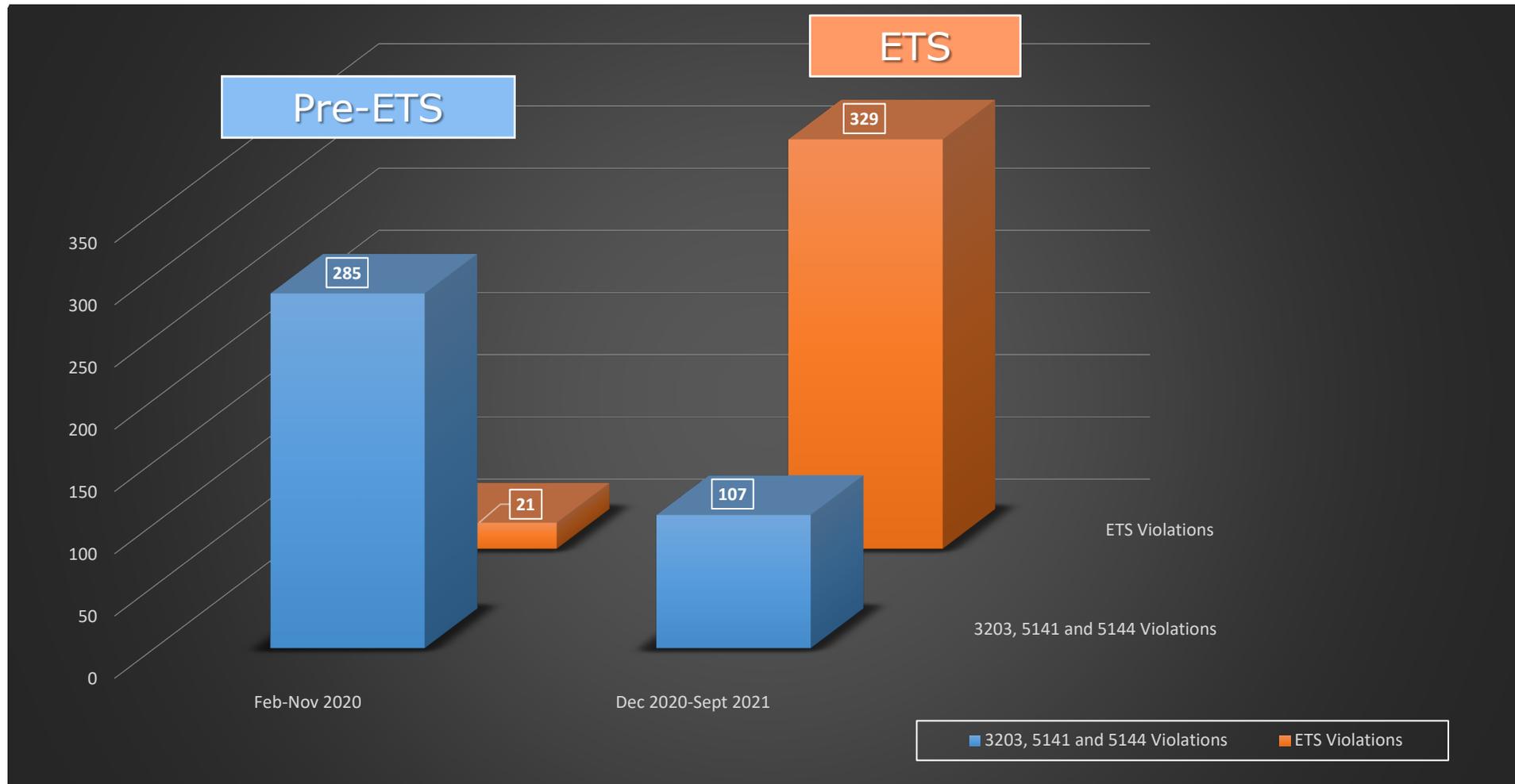
- November 20, 2020 - Occupational Safety and Health Standards Board adopted emergency temporary standards (ETS) Title 8 sections 3205, 3205.1, 3205.2, 3205.3, and 3205.4. The ETS established workplace safety and health requirements for COVID-19 prevention, including face coverings and physical distancing. Effective date of the ETS was 11/30/2020.
- June 17, 2021 - Readoption of the ETS included revisions to reflect the availability of vaccinations and the revised requirements of CDC and CDPH. Provides options for employers to make safe transitions while returning back to work. Employers required to follow CDPH and Public Health Orders on COVID-19 which may require use of face coverings by all individuals working indoors regardless of vaccination status. ETS Expires Jan. 14, 2022.

COVID-19 Related Inspections



*based on opening date of inspection

COVID-19 Related Violations



Highlighted Industries

- Hospitals/Healthcare
- Skilled Nursing
- Meat/Food Processing
- Detention Centers, Corrections and Prisons

Most Common Problems Found in Healthcare/Hospitals

Most common problems found in the health care industry
Include the following:

1. Deficiencies in ATD Exposure Control Plan.
2. Did not report serious illness to Division.
3. Lack of implementing engineering and work practice controls to minimize exposure.
4. Did not provide appropriate respirator use for high hazard procedure.
5. Inadequate investigation of exposure incidents.
6. Inadequate training.



Most Common Problems Found in Skilled Nursing/Long Term Care

1. Lack of ATD exposure plan
2. Deficient training for employees
3. No reporting of serious illness to the Division
4. Reuse of respirators
5. Failure to maintain respiratory protection program
6. Using nonapproved cleaning methods
7. Undocumented exposure incidents
8. Failure to notify employees of significant covid-19 exposure
9. No post exposure medical evaluations



Most Common Problems Found in Meat/Food Processing Plants

1. Improper use of face coverings by workers in production areas and during breaks.
2. Not adequately addressing COVID-19 illnesses (including those that required hospitalization).
3. Not reporting serious COVID-19 illnesses to Cal/OSHA.
4. Not informing employees of possible exposure when coworkers were infected with COVID-19.

Most Common Problems Found in Meat/Food Processing (cont.)

5. Did not provide protective barriers to workers in the production lines and quality assurance areas.
6. Did not take steps to correct unhealthy conditions or work practices.
7. Workers shared PPE.
8. Did not ensure HVAC functioned properly.
9. Did not evaluate how to maximize quantity of outdoor air.

Most Common Problems Found in Detention Centers/Corrections and Prisons

Most common problems found in detention centers and correctional facilities and state prisons include the following:

1. Inadequate training and equipment for staff working with COVID-19 positive individuals.
2. Staff exposed to COVID-19-positive inmates were not provided adequate medical surveillance.
3. Incomplete ATD Exposure Control Plans and Respiratory Protection Plans.
4. Lack of implementing and enforcing work practice controls to minimize employee exposure.
5. Did not notify Division of serious illness.



Emergency Temporary Standard

California Code of Regulations Title 8 - 3205

The original ETS took effect on November 30, 2020 but was updated on June 17, 2021 to include requirements for vaccinated and unvaccinated workers.

In addition to these requirements, employers must follow public health orders on COVID-19.

Local public health orders may require the use of face coverings by all individuals indoors regardless of vaccination status.

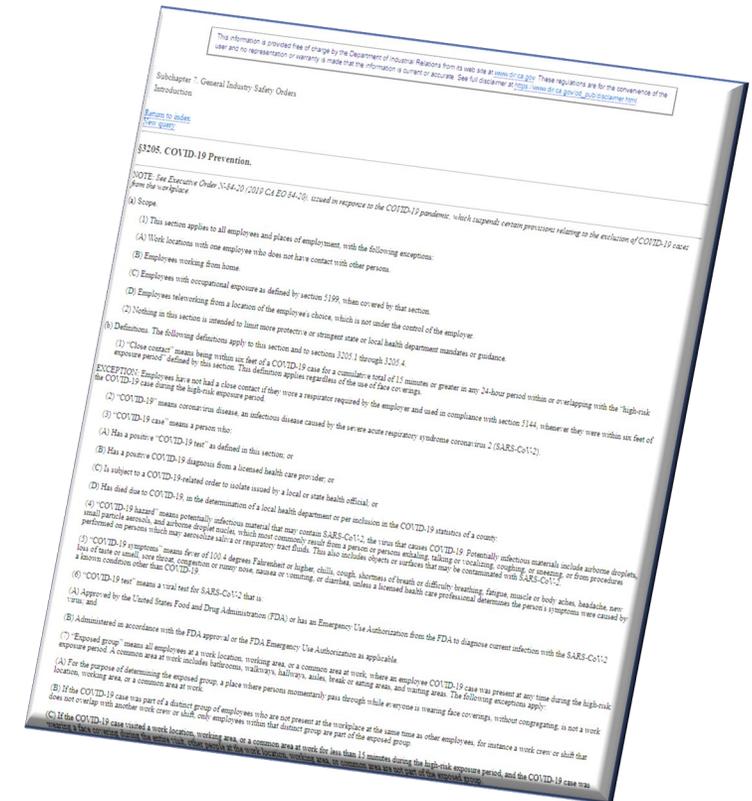
Cal/OSHA also encourages employers to follow the [California Department of Public Health's guidance](#) recommending all individuals wear face coverings while indoors.

Emergency Temporary Standard

California Code of Regulations Title 8 - 3205

Written COVID-19 Prevention Program

- 1) System for communicating
- 2) Identification and evaluation
- 3) Investigating and responding to Covid-19 cases in the workplace
- 4) Correction of Covid-19 hazards
- 5) Training and instruction
- 6) Face coverings
- 7) Other engineering controls and personal protective equipment
- 8) Reporting, recordkeeping and access
- 9) Exclusion of COVID -19 cases and employees who had a close contact



What are the Important Changes in the June 17, Revised ETS?

- Fully vaccinated employees without symptoms do not need to be tested or quarantined after close contacts with COVID-19 cases unless they have symptoms.
- No face covering requirements outdoors (except during outbreaks), regardless of vaccination status, though workers must be trained on CDPH recommendations for outdoor use of face coverings.
- Employers may allow fully vaccinated employees not to wear face coverings indoors, but must document their vaccination status.

What are the Important Changes in the June 17, Revised ETS? (cont.)

- Employers must provide unvaccinated employees with approved respirators for voluntary use when working indoors or in a vehicle with others, upon request.
- Employers may not retaliate against employees for wearing face coverings.
- No physical distancing or barrier requirements regardless of employee vaccination status with the following exceptions:
 - Employers must evaluate whether it is necessary to implement physical distancing and barriers during an outbreak (3 or more cases in an exposed group of employees)
 - Employers must implement physical distancing and barriers during a major outbreak (20 or more cases in an exposed group of employees)

What are the Important Changes in the June 17, Revised ETS? (cont.)

- No physical distancing requirements whatsoever in the employer-provided housing and transportation regulations.
- Where all employees are vaccinated in employer-provided housing and transportation, employers are exempt from those regulations.
- Employers must evaluate ventilation systems to maximize outdoor air and increase filtrations efficiency, and evaluate the use of additional air cleaning systems.

Resources

- Revisions to the COVID-19 Prevention ETS FAQs
- COVID-19 Emergency Temporary Standards FAQs
- COVID-19 Emergency Temporary Standards – What Employers Need to Know
- COVID-19 Model Prevention Program
- California Department of Public Health - Find All Guidance
- Interim Guidance for Ventilation, Filtration, and Air Quality in Indoor Environments

The screenshot shows the Cal/OSHA website's COVID-19 resources page. The header includes the California Department of Industrial Relations logo and navigation links for Labor Law, Safety & Health, Workers' Comp, Self Insurance, Apprenticeship, Director's Office, and Boards. The main content area features a yellow warning box for 'COVID-19 Prevention Emergency Temporary Standards' with a detailed text block. Below this is a paragraph about workplace safety regulations. A sidebar on the right contains sections for 'Emergency Response' with links to guidance and standards, 'Quick Links' with links to file complaints and obtain consultations, and 'Cal/OSHA Branches & Units' with links to enforcement and consultation services. A bottom navigation bar lists 'COVID-19 Emergency Temporary Standards', 'Guidance by Industry', 'Frequently Asked Questions', and 'Educational Materials and Other Resources'.

<https://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/coronavirus/>

Recruiting and Hiring

The Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA) is actively hiring industrial hygienists, safety engineers, attorneys, administrative staff, supervisors and managers.

Available positions in Cal/OSHA branches, programs and units throughout the state include Enforcement, Consultation, Elevators, Legal, Research & Standards and more.

Work at Cal/OSHA
Make a Positive Difference in the Lives of California Workers

The Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA) is a national opportunity to work with a remarkable team of engineers, industrial hygienists, safety engineers, attorneys who work collaboratively to improve health and safety throughout the State of California. Cal/OSHA also helps keep our workplaces safe and healthy.

As leaders in the industry, Cal/OSHA employees have worked in a wide variety of industries including construction, mining and tunneling, process safety management, and more.

Benefits:
Cal/OSHA provides high quality classroom and on the job training to help you advance your career. As an employee of the State of California, you will receive generous benefits, including retirement and health, dental, and vision insurance. Cal/OSHA prides itself in being able to provide its staff with public transit discounts and unbeatable work-life balance.

Additional information about benefits:
Candidates must meet the minimum qualifications, possess strong analytical and communication skills, be able to prioritize tasks and meet multiple demands and deadlines. Bilingual candidates and candidates with combined safety and industrial hygiene experience are encouraged to apply.

Find out more about how you can join our diverse team:

- ▶ [Learn how to become a Cal/OSHA Field Inspector](#)
- ▶ [Learn how to get a state job](#)
- ▶ [Cal/OSHA is part of the Department of Industrial Relations \(DIR\). Learn more about how to apply at the DIR.](#)
- ▶ **Specific position information:**
 - [Become the Deputy Chief of Consultation, Process Safety, and Engineering Services](#)
 - [Become a Cal/OSHA Attorney](#)
 - [Become a Cal/OSHA Inspector](#)
 - [Become a Cal/OSHA Elevator Safety Engineer](#)

Job Openings and Exams

- [Current DIR Job Openings](#)
- [Current DIR Exams](#)
- [Current Industrial Hygienist Exams](#)

Have Questions? Want to learn more?
For assistance, reach out to our Cal/OSHA recruiter at CalOSHAJobs@dir.ca.gov

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Thank you!

**Are there any
questions?**

