



SECOND QUARTER 2005

HR Compliance 101, LLC

Putting Companies in the Safety Zone Since 1978

Head, Eyes, Lungs, Hands, Feet:

Protecting Employees against Workplace Hazards

The employees wore safety glasses when they operated equipment, but everyone complained about wearing glasses when they were simply crossing the production floor. Then one day a metal chip flew out from a workstation and hit an employee who happened by.

The safety glasses saved his eyesight.

OSHA requires personal protective equipment (PPE) in workplaces. Among other responsibilities, the employer must identify potential hazards, provide the correct PPE, train employees to use and care for the equipment, and make sure the PPE program is followed.

Employees have responsibilities, too. They must wear the required PPE, and they must attend training sessions. They must properly use, clean and maintain their equipment, and immediately report any faulty equipment to their supervisor.

Those rules and others related to personal protective equipment have one goal: creating a barrier between the employees and any source of harm.

HR Compliance 101 makes a point of creating a chart of PPE requirements for each job and then posting those requirements where employees can see them. If an employee returns to work after an absence, takes on a new job, or helps out in a new area during a deadline crunch, one glance at the chart shows exactly what PPE is required to complete the work safely.

The chart also reinforces the company's safety policy and gives supervisors the backing they need to enforce safety rules. These postings carry weight with OSHA and with insurance companies. In fact, such proofs of compliance

will spur many liability insurance companies to reduce your premiums.

Every industry and job requires different types of PPE. For example, a lathe operator needs safety glasses; a fork truck operator may need glasses, a hard hat and leather upper shoes; and someone handling foam might need gloves as well. Sometimes PPE is required only in specific locations or during one step in a task or while one specific tool is in use.

HR Compliance 101 assesses each workplace and each job, presents a list of findings and recommends the appropriate PPE. Any newly purchased equipment must conform to the American National Standards Institute guidelines, as listed in the OSHA PPE regulations.

Your PPE program and training should encourage employees and supervisors to understand, use and appreciate the need for personal protective equipment. Your program should help establish a culture of care: a workplace environment where employees are kept safe from hazards.

From Our Customers

"Our general liability insurance agent informed us that just by having HR Compliance 101 on our team—and the steps we've already taken under Pauline's guidance—we've saved \$15,600 on this year's insurance." Robert Van Dyke, owner, Van Dyke Construction in Rindge, NH

This newsletter refers to some of the regulations that may currently apply to small businesses.

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!
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Compliance Alert

Have you posted your completed OSHA 300A Form? OSHA 300A summarizes work-related injuries and illnesses throughout your company. You must post it from at least February 1st until April 30th. OSHA 300A gives employees the straight facts about safety in their workplace and reminds them that safety is everyone's concern. If you have any questions concerning the OSHA 300A Form, please don't hesitate to call us.

If OSHA visits you, they may ask to see your OSHA 300A forms for the past 5 years—and they may levy fines if the forms aren't available. If you haven't kept these records in the past, HR Compliance 101 can still put you into compliance: we'll work with your workmen's compensation carrier to compile the information you need.



Workplace and Training Solutions

Q. Some of my employees are failing to punch out for their lunch break. Do I still have to pay them for their time?

A. The NH Department of Labor supposes that the time card is a true and accurate record of the hours that employees work. So you *must* pay your employees for the lunch break because the record shows they worked through lunch. At the same time, any employee who works more than 5 consecutive hours is legally entitled to a half-hour lunch. When that employee fails to punch out for lunch, you—the employer—appear to be violating the law. What can you do? Ask the employee to change and initial the inaccurate time card. (As the employer, you can't change the card yourself.) Then set up a strict disciplinary policy that starts the very first time an employee forgets to punch out. Just remember: You can't dock an employee's pay.

For Our Customers

We now accept Credit Cards.
We'll give you a *free* copy of the new USERRA poster—don't pay for this poster. The USERRA poster explains military leave and you are required to post it.