

Guide to On-the-Job Safety and Health

in Mexico

Occupational safety and health in Mexico is regulated and governed by federal law.

You and your employer share the responsibility of keeping your workplace safe and healthy.

You are entitled to a safe workplace even if you are a foreign worker or do not have a valid work permit.

Your safety in the workplace is extremely important. Make sure that you and your employer know and follow the appropriate safety procedures to protect yourself, your co-workers and the future of your family.



How am I protected?

- The Constitution protects your safety in the workplace.
- You are entitled to work in a safe place where your health will be protected for yours and your family's sake, as well as that of your colleagues.
- Your employer must comply with all applicable health and safety regulations for the Mexican workplace. If not, your employer may be fined or suffer other penalties.

Why should I care about workplace safety?

The purpose of workplace safety laws is to protect workers like you. If employers and workers both follow the rules, you are more likely to avoid getting hurt and you can keep earning money to support yourself and your family.



What are my responsibilities?

- You must read and follow safety instructions on all equipment and machinery.
- You must use the required protective equipment when performing specific tasks.
- You must make sure you are properly trained to handle the task or job you have been given.
- You must inform your employer of any dangerous equipment or unsafe conditions in your workplace.
- Your employer cannot discriminate or retaliate against you if you decide not to perform dangerous work.
- Talk to your supervisor and make sure he or she understands why you refused to perform the work.

I am a farm worker. What do I need to know?

- If you become ill, you and your family must be provided with medical assistance or be taken to a place that can provide you with medical assistance.
- If there is a tropical or local disease in the region where you are employed and that prevents you from working, you must be paid at least 75 percent of your wages for at least 90 days.
- Pesticides and other chemicals are extremely dangerous. For more information, see [Guide to Pesticide Safety in Mexico](#).

Workplace Health and Safety Committee

- Mexican law requires every workplace to have a health and safety committee.
- These committees allow your voice to be heard.
- Employee representatives must form part of these committees.
- Your committee assists in carrying out on-site inspections.
- Your committee investigates the causes of on-the-job accidents.
- Your committee makes proposals to help prevent workplace accidents and injuries.



Where do I report an unsafe workplace?

You can report an unsafe workplace to the General Office of Workplace Health and Safety (Dirección General de Seguridad y Salud en el Trabajo). To find out where you need to go, call or write:

Dirección General de Seguridad y Salud en el Trabajo
Valencia 36, Col. Insurgentes Mixcoac,
Del. Benito Juárez, C.P. 03920, México, D.F.
Tel: (55) 5563-0500

What are my employer's responsibilities?

- Your employer must always provide you with the necessary training so you can carry out your tasks safely.
- Your employer must post all federal safety rules and regulations for the workplace in a visible location.
- Your employer must make sure that you are aware of safety and health hazards before you take on any task or project.

What if my employer tells me to do work which I believe is dangerous?

- Mexico has ratified Convention 155 of the International Labor Organization for worker health and safety and the environment in the workplace. This is the law in Mexico and it protects your right to not perform any work that you believe constitutes a serious and imminent threat to your life or health.
- You do not have to accept any work that you believe could place you in imminent danger.

Where do I go to complain about unsafe or dangerous conditions?

You can file a complaint with officials responsible for health and safety in the workplace. They will send an inspector to the work site. Your workplace is subject to three main types of inspections by the Secretariat of Labor and Social Services (Secretaría del Trabajo y Previsión Social, STPS) office.

1. Initial inspection: carried out when your workplace is first opened.
2. Periodic inspections: usually carried out once a year, but can be more or less frequent depending on the business and workplace safety record.
3. Verification inspection: to make sure that the changes proposed by inspectors have been implemented effectively.

Penalties

If your workplace is unsafe, the STPS can issue fines and/or orders to have the facility closed until it is safe for all workers.

The type of fine will depend on:

1. how bad the safety violation is;
2. whether your employer has a history of past violations;
3. what the financial situation of the company is.

Special inspections for unsafe workplaces

- If you believe your workplace is dangerous, tell the authorities.
- After you complain to the authorities, the STPS will decide to inspect your workplace based on:
 - (1) the seriousness of the hazard; and
 - (2) your employer's past record.
- You have the right to take part in the inspection. Share your workplace safety concerns with the inspector.



Commission for Labor Cooperation