SAFETY AND HEALTH PROTECTION ON THE JOB

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INTRODUCTION:
The intent of the Indiana Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1974, Indiana Code 22-8-1.1, is to assure, so far as possible, safe and healthful working conditions for the workers in the State.

The Indiana Department of Labor has primary responsibility for administering and enforcing the Act and the safety and health standards promulgated under its provisions.

Requirements of the Act include the following:

EMPLOYERS:
Each employer shall establish and maintain conditions of work which are reasonably safe and healthful for employees and free from recognized hazards that are causing or likely to cause death or serious physical harm to employees. The Act further requires that employers comply with the Occupational Safety and Health Standards, Rules, and Regulations.

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EMPLOYEES:
All employees shall comply with Occupational Safety and Health Standards and all rules, regulations, and orders issued under the Act, which are applicable to their own actions and conduct.

INSPECTION:
The Act requires that an opportunity be provided for employees and their representatives to bring possible safety and health violations to the attention of the Department of Labor inspector in order to aid the inspection. This requirement may be fulfilled by allowing a representative of the employees and a representative of the employer to accompany the inspector during inspection. Where there is no employee representative, the inspector shall consult with a reasonable number of employees.

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COMPLAINT:
Employees have the right to file a complaint with the Department of Labor. There shall be an inspection where reasonable grounds exist for the Department of Labor to believe there may be a hazard. Unless permission is given by the employees complaining to release their names, they will be withheld from the employer. Telephone Number (317) 232-2693.

The Act provides that no employer shall discharge, suspend, or otherwise discriminate in terms of conditions of employment against any employees for their failure or refusal to engage in unsafe practices or for filing a complaint, testifying, or otherwise acting to exercise their rights under the Act.

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Employees who believe they have been discriminated against may file a complaint with the Department of Labor within 30 days of the alleged discrimination. Please note that extensions of the 30-day filing requirement may be granted under certain special circumstances, such as where the employer has concealed or misled the employee regarding the grounds for discharge. However, a grievance-arbitration proceeding, which is pending, would not be considered justification for an extension of the 30-day filing period. The Commissioner of Labor shall investigate said complaint and upon finding discrimination in violation of the Act, shall order the employer to provide necessary relief to the employees. This relief may include rehiring, reinstatement to the job with back pay, and restoration of seniority.

All employees are also afforded protection from discrimination under Federal Occupational Safety and Health Act and may file a complaint with the U.S. Secretary of Labor within 30 days of the alleged discrimination.

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VIOLATION NOTICE:
When an alleged violation of any provision of the Act has occurred, the Department of Labor shall promptly issue a written order to the employer, who shall be required to post it prominently at or near the place where the alleged violation occurred until it is made safe and required safeguards are provided or 3 days, whichever is longer.

PROPOSED PENALTIES:
The Act provides for CIVIL penalties of not more than $7,000 for each serious violation and CIVIL penalties of up to $7,000 for each non-serious violation. Any employer who fails to correct a violation within the prescribed abatement period may be assessed a CIVIL penalty of not more than $7,000 for each day beyond the abatement date during which such violation continues. Also, any employer who knowingly or repeatedly violates the Act may be assessed CIVIL penalties of not more than $70,000 for each violation. A minimum penalty of $5,000 may be imposed for each knowing violation. A violation of posting requirements can bring a penalty of up to $7,000.

VOLUNTARY ACTIVITY:
The Act encourages efforts by labor and management, before the Department of Labor inspections, to reduce injuries and illnesses arising out of employment.

The Act encourages employers and employees to reduce workplace hazards voluntarily and to develop and improve safety and health programs in all workplaces and industries.

Such cooperative action would initially focus on the identification and elimination of hazards that could cause death, injury, or illness to employees and supervisors.

The Act provides a consultation service to assist in voluntary compliance and give recommendations for the abatement of cited violations. This service is available upon a written request from the employer to INSafe. Telephone Number (317) 232-2688.

COVERAGE:
The Act does not cover those hired for domestic service in or about a private home and those covered by a federal agency. Those exempted from the Act's coverage include employees in maritime services, who are covered by the U.S. Department of Labor, and employees in atomic energy activities who are covered by the Atomic Energy Commission.

NOTE:
Under a plan approved March 6, 1974, by the U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the State of Indiana is providing job safety and health protection for workers throughout the State. OSHA will monitor the operation of this plan to assure that continued approval is merited. Any person may make a complaint regarding the State administration of this plan directly to the OSHA Regional Office, Regional Administrator, Region V, U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, 230 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois 60604, Telephone Number (312) 353-2220.

MORE INFORMATION:

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Sean M. Keefer
Commissioner of Labor

EMPLOYERS: This poster must be displayed prominently in the workplace.