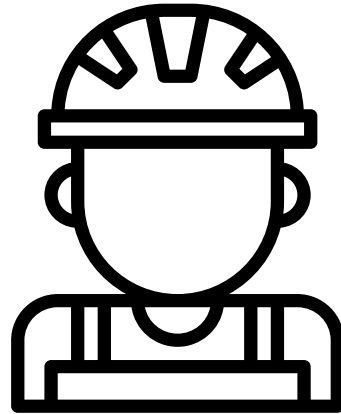




**Know Your Rights**  
**Organizing for**  
**Workplace Safety**



As the COVID-19 pandemic surges workers who cannot work alone or from home are increasingly vulnerable to transmission and life threatening symptoms.



This slide deck compiles some common questions and answers about your rights to safety working during COVID-19.

This information can also help support workers who are organizing to demand safety in the workplace and more

**You have the right to work in a safe and clean work environment where you are physically safe and not exposed to working conditions that are hazardous to your health.**

Among other health protections, your employer must provide you with all of the following:

- Access to a clean, sanitary washing facility maintained in good working condition
- Warm water and soap to wash your hands
- Clean individual towels, made of cloth or paper, or warm-air blowers to dry your hands

An unsafe environment includes being asked to do your job in an unsafe manner, such as without the proper health and safety equipment.

If you need personal protective equipment to do your job safely, like face masks, sanitizer and gloves, ask for them.

**Your employer must provide these at no cost to you.**

# What can I do if my workplace is unsafe?

If your workplace is unsafe for any reason, you should refuse to work in that environment and take one or more of the following actions:

- Report your concerns to higher managers or to human resources.
- Talk to your union. If you have no union, organize your co-workers to act together to demand safe working conditions. This action can include a strike.
- File a complaint with **CAL-OSHA (Division of Occupational Safety and Health)** at <https://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/complaint.htm>

## **Know your rights: Retaliation**

Your employer cannot fire you, or otherwise retaliate against you, for complaining (to your employer or to an outside organization) about unsafe working conditions or for refusing to work in an unsafe working environment.

If you have been fired or otherwise retaliated against for complaining about unsafe work conditions, you can file a complaint with the

**DLSE (Division of Labor Standards Enforcement).**

**<https://www.dir.ca.gov/dlse/HowToReportViolationtoBOFE.htm>**

In California, all workers are protected by labor laws. The DLSE or CAL-OSHA will not question your immigration status nor report it to other government agencies.

There is no need for a social security number or photo identification to file a report with either agency.

## **What type of action can I organize or participate in to get my employer to address Covid-19 issues in the workplace?**

You and your co-workers have a right to organize and employers may not “interfere” or get in the way of organizing activities. You may talk to each other about Covid-19 issues, attend meetings, pass out literature, wear buttons, and even strike.

*A strike is when you and your co-workers collectively decide to stop working, for short or long periods of time.*

Workers everywhere, including those at Whole Foods, Uber, General Electric, fast food places, and other worksites have been striking during the coronavirus pandemic to demand better conditions such as:

- personal protective equipment, like face masks, sanitizer, and gloves
- paid leave
- health care benefits
- hazard pay, which means pay for dangerous conditions
- coronavirus testing
- that their factories make ventilators
- reinstating coworkers terminated for organizing activity
- other improvements

**Employers may not conduct surveillance of your meetings, threaten to punish you, disfavor you based on organizing activity, issue rules to stop you from protesting, or shut down the worksite in order to discourage organizing.**

*You and your co-workers can walk off the job if there are “abnormally dangerous” conditions, like exposure to airborne toxins.*

Other actions include going to the employer as a group, known as a delegation; sick-outs where you collectively call in sick; slowing down work production; and calling for boycotts.

The National Labor Relations Act protects the right to strike. For complaints related to worksite organizing, whether you are union or not, contact the **National Labor Relations Board at <https://www.nlr.gov/>**.

If you are being asked to work under unsafe conditions, you may file a Labor Code claim under California Labor Code section 6310 with the **Division of Labor Standards and Enforcement at <https://www.dir.ca.gov/dlse/>**.



The information on these slides comes straight from the National Lawyers Guild, S.F. Bay Area Chapter's new publication **Know Your Rights: Employment and Labor During COVID-19**

You can read the entire publication here:  
[bit/lyblahblahblah](http://bit.ly/blahblahblah)

