

Employment Law

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SOUTH AFRICA

Guidelines released by the Department of Employment and Labour: What every employer and worker should know about workplace safety

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**EMPLOYMENT LAW
ALERT**

Guidelines released by the Department of Employment and Labour: What every employer and worker should know about workplace safety

On 3 October 2024, the Department of Employment and Labour published a critical guide titled: *What every worker and employer should know about health and safety in the workplace*. This document outlines the key roles, obligations and rights that both employers and employees must understand to ensure compliance with occupational health and safety (OHS) laws. This guide is an indispensable tool for promoting a safe and compliant workplace.

Why it matters: Importance to employers and workers

The guide is a practical tool to raise awareness in an endeavour to prevent workplace accidents, ensuring worker safety and avoiding costly penalties for non-compliance. It provides detailed insight into both employer and worker responsibilities, from risk management to the necessity for the proper use of personal protective equipment ("PPE") where no other safety measures would be effective to remove or reduce risks to the health and safety of employees. The aim is to ensure safety in the workplace.

Key takeaways: What employers and workers should know

The guide highlights several important areas, including:

- **The role of OHS inspectors:** Inspectors have the authority to enforce health and safety standards, ensuring workplaces comply with legal requirements.
- **The OHS Act and its Regulations:** A guide to OHS laws in South Africa, outlining the obligations of both employers and workers under these regulations.

- **General duties of employers:** Employers are responsible for ensuring a safe working environment through regular risk assessments, protective measures and health-conscious policies.
- **Worker rights and responsibilities:** Workers must be informed about hazards, need to follow safety protocols, and are required to use the PPE provided to them, where necessary. They, too, must play a role in ensuring safety in the workplace.
- **Duties of manufacturers, designers, importers and suppliers:** Those providing workplace equipment or substances must ensure these items are safe for use and do not pose health risks.
- **Health and safety representatives:** These representatives play a crucial role in promoting workplace health and safety, meeting regularly to address any issues and ensure ongoing compliance.
- **PPE:** The guide takes a detailed look at the types of PPE required across different sectors and explains how it would protect workers from occupational hazards.
- **Inspections and co-operation with inspectors:** Employers and workers must co-operate with inspectors to ensure compliance, to avoid penalties and potential prosecution for non-compliance.

This document is an essential resource for any employer or worker aiming to meet OHS standards and create a safe working environment. We strongly encourage you to review the full guide to ensure compliance and safety in your workplace. You can find the guide [here](#).

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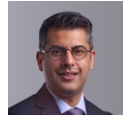
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Our BBBEE verification is one of several components of our transformation strategy and we continue to seek ways of improving it in a meaningful manner.

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