

# COVID-19 Workplace Health & Safety Updates

By: Daniel Burke on April 13, 2020 on [graydon.law](https://graydon.law)

A new week brings some important updates for employers related to their workplace health and safety obligations in the context of the current COVID-19 crisis:

- **OSHA relaxes COVID-19 recording requirement for most employers.**

On Friday April 10, OSHA issued guidance (see enforcement memo [here](#)) clarifying when an employer needs to record COVID-19 as a workplace illness in compliance with OSHA's recordkeeping requirements. An employer is generally obligated to record illnesses if they are determined to be "work-related." Because it is difficult to determine in many cases whether an employee contracted COVID-19 due to exposures at work, OSHA has determined that:

- Employers in the healthcare industry, emergency response organizations, and correctional institutions must continue to make work-relatedness determinations and record COVID-19 illnesses accordingly.
- Until further notice, however, all other employers do not have to make determinations about work-relatedness except where there is objective evidence that a COVID-19 case may be work-related and that evidence is reasonably available to the employer.

OSHA stressed that this relaxed recording policy will help employers focus their response efforts on implementing good hygiene practices in the workplace and otherwise mitigating COVID-19's effects, rather than making difficult work-relatedness decisions in circumstances where there is community transmission.

- **Ohio BWC returning \$1.6 billion in dividends to Ohio employers.**

On Friday April 10, the Ohio BWC announced a plan to send up to \$1.6 billion in dividends to eligible Ohio employers to ease the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. BWC will apply the dividend to an employer's outstanding balances first, including the recent installment deferrals. Any amounts exceeding outstanding balances will be sent to the employer. These dividend checks are expected to be sent to employers later this month. For more information, see the Ohio BWC's press release [here](#).

