

Safety and Health Topics | Competent Person

SAFETY AND HEALTH TOPICS

Competent Person

The term "Competent Person" is used in many OSHA standards and documents. An OSHA "competent person" is defined as "one who is capable of identifying existing and predictable hazards in the surroundings or working conditions which are unsanitary, hazardous, or dangerous to employees, and who has authorization to take prompt corrective measures to eliminate them" [29 CFR 1926.32(f)]. By way of training and/or experience, a competent person is knowledgeable of applicable standards, is capable of identifying workplace hazards relating to the specific operation, and has the authority to correct them. Some standards add additional specific requirements which must be met by the competent person.

There are currently no specific standards regarding competent persons.

How do I find out about employer responsibilities and worker rights?

[Workers](#) have a right to a safe workplace. The law requires employers to provide their employees with working conditions that are free of known dangers. The OSHA law also prohibits employers from retaliating against employees for exercising their rights under the law (including the right to raise a health and safety concern or report an injury). For more information see www.whistleblowers.gov or [worker rights](#).

OSHA has a great deal of information to [assist](#) employers in complying with their [responsibilities](#) under the OSHA law.

OSHA can help answer questions or concerns from employers and workers. To reach your regional or area OSHA office, go to OSHA's [Regional & Area Offices](#) webpage or call 1-800-321-OSHA (6742).

Small Business employers may contact OSHA's free and confidential [on-site consultation service](#) to help determine whether there are hazards at their worksites and work with OSHA on correcting any identified hazards. On-site consultation services are separate from enforcement activities and do not result in penalties or citations. To contact OSHA's free consultation service, go to OSHA's [On-site Consultation](#) webpage or call 1-800-321-OSHA (6742) and press number 4.

Workers may file a complaint to have OSHA inspect their workplace if they believe that their employer is not following OSHA standards or that there are serious hazards. Employees can [file a complaint](#) with OSHA by calling 1-800-321-OSHA (6742) or by printing the complaint form and mailing or faxing it to your local OSHA area office. Complaints that are signed by an employee are more likely to result in an inspection.

If you think your job is unsafe or you have questions, contact OSHA at 1-800-321-OSHA (6742). It's confidential. We can help. For other valuable worker protection information, such as Workers' Rights, Employer Responsibilities, and other services OSHA offers, visit [OSHA's Workers'](#) page.