

# OSHA proposes permanent COVID-19 workplace rules

Seeking to extend protections for workers against the coronavirus disease, Oregon OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) is proposing a permanent rule that largely maintains — with some improvements — the risk-reducing measures required by the current temporary emergency rule. It would replace the temporary rule, which expires on May 4.

The proposed permanent rule will receive virtual public hearings later this month and in early March. Although the rule must be adopted as a permanent rule because the law does not allow a temporary rule to be extended, Oregon OSHA expects to repeal the permanent rule once it is no longer needed to address the coronavirus pandemic.

“The public health emergency triggered by COVID-19 remains a significant concern in Oregon — as we know, we have not yet defeated this disease and we clearly will not have done so by the time the temporary rule expires. As a result, it is critically important that we carry forward measures that we know are effective at combating the spread of this disease and reducing

risks in the workplace,” said Michael Wood, administrator for Oregon OSHA. “Failure to do so will undoubtedly leave workers far less protected and leave employers with far less clarity and certainty in terms of what is expected of them.”

As with the temporary rule, which took effect Nov. 16, 2020, the proposed permanent rule maintains such requirements as physical distancing; use of face coverings; regular sanitation; employee notification and training; maximization and maintenance of existing ventilation systems; and formal exposure risk assessment and infection control planning. The proposed permanent rule would allow employers to rely upon the risk assessments, infection control plans, and infection control training already completed.

However, the permanent rule would add measures and strengthened provisions in certain areas. Those proposed changes include:

- Requiring employers to consider alternatives to transporting multiple people in a single vehicle, although such transportation would not be prohibited.
- Slightly modifying the ventilation measures

so that employers with more than 10 employees — and that have existing ventilation systems — must certify in writing that they are running their systems in line with current requirements. The proposed rule does not require the purchase or installation of new ventilation systems.

- Requiring employers to provide written notification to employees of their rights to return to work when employees must quarantine.
- Requiring employers to cooperate with public health authorities that ask to arrange for vaccination in the workplace. This proposed requirement is similar to the temporary rule’s provision mandating cooperation with public health officials if COVID-19 testing in the workplace is necessary.

- Requiring health care employers to provide respirators to employees working with known or suspected COVID-19-positive patients unless they demonstrate there is a genuine shortage that they are working to resolve.

The proposed permanent rule also strengthens the language discouraging the use of face shields, which have been shown to be less effective

than masks or facial coverings although such devices would remain an option for source control.

The proposed permanent rule was developed in consultation with two rulemaking advisory committees assembled for the purpose. It largely reflects the provisions of the current temporary rule, which itself was based to a large extent on the guidance produced by the Oregon Health Authority and enforced in the workplace by Oregon OSHA. The temporary rule was developed following an extensive stakeholder and public comment process last summer, which is not normally the case when temporary rules are developed.

Oregon OSHA encourages a careful reading of the proposed permanent rule. Virtual public hearings will be held at 10 a.m. on Feb. 23 and Feb. 26, and at 5 p.m. on March 3 and March 4. Details on how to sign up for the hearings — as well as other options for commenting on the proposed rule — are now available. The comment period will close on April 2.

Learn more about the division’s workplace guidance and resources at [osha.oregon.gov/Pages/re/covid-19.aspx](https://osha.oregon.gov/Pages/re/covid-19.aspx).

# PeaceHealth COVID-19 vaccination update

PeaceHealth Medical Group is proud to play a pivotal role in helping end this pandemic. Following federal and state guidance, PeaceHealth has provided a COVID-19 vaccine to more than 12,000 health care workers.

The local healthcare provider is eager to begin offering the vaccine to others in its communities as more vaccine becomes available and states indicate more people are eligible.

Here are a few questions people have been asking PeaceHealth:

## SHOULD I GET VACCINATED FOR COVID-19?

Most people should get vaccinated. The two vaccines that have been approved by the FDA for use in the U.S. have been proven very safe and are 94-95 percent effective in preventing people from getting COVID-19. The more people that get vaccinated, the safer our communities will be — and the quicker we can get back to “normal.”

Find out more about the vaccines in the FAQs on our COVID-19 Vaccine Resource Center, [www.peacehealth.org/coronavirus/vaccine-information](https://www.peacehealth.org/coronavirus/vaccine-information).

## WHO CAN GET A VACCINE RIGHT NOW?

You can get vaccinated at PeaceHealth if you are eligible according to the rules in your state, and if PeaceHealth has vaccine available. Vaccine doses are allocated each week at the federal level and distributed through states, and we follow state and local public health orders on who is eligible to receive those doses.

PeaceHealth is committed to ensuring that patients who receive a first dose also receive the second required dose.

You can check who is eligible in your state from our COVID-19 Vaccine Resource Center. Eligibility does not guarantee that

the vaccine will be available.

## WHEN CAN I GET VACCINATED?

You can visit [www.peacehealth.org/coronavirus/vaccine-schedule](https://www.peacehealth.org/coronavirus/vaccine-schedule) to sign up for general COVID-19 vaccine email updates on eligibility and availability. MyPeaceHealth patients will also be notified when medical or age-related information in your electronic health record indicates you are eligible.

If you haven’t done so already, now is a good time to set up your MyPeaceHealth account and make sure all your contact information is up to date so you can make appointments, receive test results and manage prescriptions.

## DO I NEED TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT?

Yes, appointments are required to receive the vaccine at PeaceHealth at this time. This is to ensure that we’re delivering the vaccine in an orderly way to people who are eligible, and for the health and safety of people at the vaccination sites.

Vaccination appointments are not available now, but will be soon.

You’ll be able to make an appointment using MyPeaceHealth or by calling a phone number we’ll provide when our vaccination clinics are accepting appointments.

## HOW MUCH WILL A VACCINE COST?

There is no out-of-pocket expense for COVID-19 vaccines delivered to any patient at PeaceHealth vaccination sites.

We look forward to offering the vaccine to as many people as possible in the coming months. Thank you for trusting us with your care.

For more information about PeaceHealth, visit [www.peacehealth.org](https://www.peacehealth.org).

# Cultural Coalition seeks member from West Lane County

The Lane County Cultural Coalition is seeking applications from Lane County residents interested in serving on the Lane County Cultural Coalition. Currently, the coalition seeks representatives who either live or work in West Lane County, District 1, and Springfield, District 2.

The coalition seeks two energetic and committed community members with a passion in the areas of arts, heritage, and humanities. Made up of 12 representatives from across Lane County, the coalition especially welcomes applications

from BIPOC community members in the county’s arts and culture communities.

Successful applicants will serve 3-year terms alongside representatives from all five Lane County districts — two members from each district, plus one representative from the Lane Arts Council and one member-at-large. The new members will be appointed in June 2021.

The coalition’s primary task is to distribute more than \$30,000 of Oregon Cultural Trust funds to Lane County arts, heritage and humanities projects. Responsibilities

include evaluating grant applications, selecting new committee members, and promoting the Oregon Cultural Trust within our local community.

Requirements:

- 1) Ability to meet via Zoom during the pandemic. We will continue to do so until it is safe to convene in person.
- 2) Access to email.
- 3) Grants are written and received in English, therefore, a reading competency in English is required.

Applications are available online [laneculture.net/about-us/join-us/](https://laneculture.net/about-us/join-us/). People can return appli-

cations to [info@laneculture.net](mailto:info@laneculture.net) or mail them to:

Lane County Cultural Coalition c/o Lane Arts Council, 1590 Willamette St., Suite 200, Eugene, OR 97401.

For more information, visit [laneculture.net](https://laneculture.net).

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**BOB HORNEY, CHAPTER LEADER/FACILITATOR  
BOTH MEETINGS ARE CURRENTLY ON HOLD.  
WATCH SIUSLAW NEWS FOR RESUMPTION**

- **Tuesday Evening Group (2nd Tuesday)**  
5-7 p.m. - Ichiban Chinese/Japanese Restaurant  
Urologist Dr. Bryan Mehlhoff attends.

- **Tuesday Lunch Group (3rd Tuesday)**  
12 noon - 1:00 p.m. - Ichiban Chinese/Japanese Restaurant  
Urologist Dr. Roger McKimmy attends.

Contact Bob for more information:  
(H) 541-997-6626 (C) 541-999-4239  
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