

California ATD Standard: Teaching How to Use a New Standard

Purpose:

The objective of activity is to introduce participants to the 2009 CalOSHA Aerosol Transmissible Disease (ATD) Standard and show how it can be used to improve infection control programs.

In 2009, at the beginning of the H1N1 flu pandemic, California OSHA adopted this unique standard aimed at protecting workers in California at high-risk of droplet and airborne spread infectious diseases.

The ATD standard requires a written ATD exposure control plan that addresses infection control measures, including reducing exposures by the use of engineering controls, work practices, and personal protective equipment. This standard covers workers in healthcare, emergency response, corrections, public safety and laboratories.

Federal OSHA is now considering adopting a similar national standard.

Task 1:

You are a member of your union's health and safety committee at DGOLD#1 Hospital. Your committee has been hearing questions from your co-workers and management about this new ATD standard and what it means for your workplace. Your committee is meeting to go over these questions and find answers in the ATD standard.

In your small groups, choose a scribe to record your group's work and also a presenter to report back to the entire class. Your facilitators will provide each member a copy of the ATD standard (these are yours to keep). Your Group will be assigned several of the questions listed on pages 3-6. Find the answers in the ATD standard and write down the page number and paragraph so you can show this to others. You can also highlight the answer on the page of the standard.

Factsheet 1 on page 9-10 provides an outline of the standard with page numbers to make it easier to locate the sections that apply to your questions. Sometimes answers can be found in more than one part of the standard.

If your group is struggling with a question – taking more than a few minutes - ask for help from a facilitator.

Find the answer to the following questions in the CalOSHA ATD standard and highlight the location, including the page number so you can show others.

Question	Answer from the ATD standard (summarize if too long)	Page number & paragraph	Comments
1. Which diseases or pathogens covered by the ATD standard require airborne infection isolation?			
2. Which workplaces must followed the requirements of this new standard?			
3. Are there healthcare facilities that are not covered by the ATD standard?			
4. An HVAC contractor is hired to repair ventilation ductwork in your area, are they covered by the ATD?			

5. What is an exposure incident?			
6. What are some specific high hazard procedures?			
7. Does a Referring Employer have to train their employees?			
8. What are four key elements of an exposure control plan?			

<p>9. Do employees have to be involved in reviewing the effectiveness of the exposure control plan in their work areas?</p>			
<p>10. What has to be done when a patient is known or suspected of having an airborne disease?</p>			
<p>11. Your supervisor says that a surgical mask is considered proper protection for H1N1 flu under the ATD standard – is this true?</p>			
<p>12. How often does your employer have to redo the fit test for your respirator after the initial one?</p>			

<p>13. When an employee has had an exposure incident and a precautionary removal is recommendation by the physician or other licensed health care professional, what happens to their wages and benefits?</p>			
<p>14. When is training required?</p>			
<p>15. What is the minimum length of the required initial training ?</p>			
<p>16. Does your employer have to make records available to your local union under the ATD ?</p>			

Part 2: Role Play

Each group prepares a short role play (2 min) of a union Healthcare Worker asking a supervisor for something required under the ATD standard. Your facilitators will give each group their topic and directions on how the supervisor should react.

As a group, develop worker response, using knowledge of the standard and chooses someone to be the worker and supervisor. Each group will perform their role for the entire class.

Use the following template to prepare your role play

Topic	Supervisor reaction	Worker response
1. Worker asks for the hospital's Exposure Control Plan (required under the ATD)	Hospital follows state and local Health Department and CDC guidelines – you can get these from their websites. If pressed, says OSHA rules only for non hospital workplaces.	
2. Worker asks for respirator on being assigned a suspected Tb patient to care for.	Hands worker a surgical mask and claims it is a respirator. If worker argues, tells worker patient comes first, will look into it next week.	

Topic	Supervisor reaction	Worker response
<p>3. Worker reports that a contractor checking out ventilation is entering contaminated airborne isolation rooms before they cleaned</p>	<p>Go back to work – not our concern. No one told me they were coming.</p> <p>If pressed, since they are not healthcare workers, they are not covered by the ATD standard.</p>	
<p>4. Worker says their fit test card for their N95 is expired and ask what they should do</p>	<p>Supervisors says not to worry – no one really checks – its only one of those stupid OSHA things</p> <p>If worker argues, says heard health department doctor during the H1N1 a few years ago that there is no proof a fit test is needed</p>	

Factsheet CALIFORNIA OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH STANDARDS
TITLE 8, CHAPTER 4
§ 5199. Aerosol Transmissible Diseases.

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(e) Engineering and Work Practice Controls and Personal Protective Equipment	(begins on page 17)
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Appendix A – Aerosol Transmissible Diseases/Pathogens (Mandatory) This appendix contains a list of diseases and pathogens which are to be considered aerosol transmissible pathogens or diseases for the purpose of Section 5199.	(begins on page 36)

Appendix B – Alternate Respirator Medical Evaluation Questionnaire (This Appendix is Mandatory if the Employer chooses to use a Respirator Medical Evaluation Questionnaire other than the Questionnaire in Section 5144 Appendix C)	(begins on page 38)
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Appendix E: Aerosol Transmissible Disease Vaccination Recommendations for Susceptible Health Care Workers (Mandatory)	(begins on page 45)
Appendix F: Sample Screening Criteria for Work Settings Where No Health Care Providers Are Available (non-mandatory)	(begins on page 46)
Appendix G: Information for Respirator Fit-Test Screening (Mandatory if employer does not provide annual fit-test)	(begins on page 48)