

## **NIEHS Worker Training Program infectious disease and pandemic prevention training: Then, now, and future.**

The NIEHS Worker Training Program (WTP) provides health and safety training for thousands of workers who may be involved in handling hazardous materials or in responding to emergency releases of hazardous materials. More than 4 million workers have been trained since its inception. As part of their efforts, WTP supports the development and implementation of training programs to prevent occupational exposure to infectious agents that cause diseases like COVID-19 and Ebola. These training programs target workers in a variety of occupations, including workers who face risk of exposure to infectious and biological hazards due to their jobs and assigned tasks, those who have frequent or close contact with the general public, and those with minimal occupational exposure but may have an ongoing risk in their community. For COVID-19, WTP was able to immediately respond with health and safety curricula, resources, and course delivery based on decades of building capacity for disaster and infectious disease response. Previous efforts included training on blood borne pathogens, avian flu, H1N1 (Swine Flu), and Zika. In particular, between 2017 and 2020, WTP administered the Ebola Biosafety and Infectious Disease Response Worker Training Program to build federal capacity for biosecurity, biopreparedness, and rapid response to emerging infectious diseases. These efforts included developing an infrastructure of trainers and organizations who can be a resource during emergencies. That program set the stage for WTP's COVID-19 response, which has trained more than 100,000 workers through both Congressional Emergency Appropriations and the Superfund-Related Activities funding. This presentation will review the history of WTP's infectious disease training and focus on the program's response to COVID-19.

**Related Citation:** Persaud E, Weinstock D, Wright DS. [Biosafety and Infectious Disease Occupational Health Training from the NIEHS Worker Training Program: A Historical Look at Capacity Building that Supported a COVID-19 Response](#). J Emerg Manag. 2022;20(7):9-18.

### **Related Websites:**

- WTP [Infectious Disease and Biological Hazards Training](#)
- WTP [COVID-19 Training Tool and Resources](#)
- [WTP COVID-19 Evaluation Summary Report](#)
- WTP [Infectious Disease Resources, including the Pathogen Safety Data Guide and Training Module](#)
- WTP [Material Upload and Search Tool for Infectious Disease \(MUSTID\)](#)