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OSHA to be audited on handling of pandemic

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The Office of Inspector General for the Department of Labor is initiating an audit of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's "operations and efforts related to protecting employees from exposures to COVID-19," according to a Department of Labor memorandum issued Monday.



In the memo sent to OSHA's deputy assistant secretary for Occupational Safety and Health, the Inspector General's office stated it will contact OSHA's audit liaison to schedule an entrance conference to discuss the audit's objective, scope and methodology.

An OSHA spokeswoman issued a statement saying the Department of Labor "is committed to working with the OIG on our efforts to continually improve our ability to protect workers from exposure to COVID-19 and advocate for those who were hit hardest by the pandemic.

"As directed in the president's executive order, OSHA is assessing whether an emergency temporary standard is necessary to protect workers, a process reflecting developments in science, best practices, and standards. We are also working on a national emphasis program related to COVID-19 to focus our efforts on violations that put the largest number of workers at serious risk or are contrary to anti-retaliation principles. The Biden administration is committed to doubling the number of OSHA inspectors. OSHA is reviewing its enforcement efforts related to COVID-19 and will identify any changes that could better protect workers."

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