

United States Department of Labor launches Essential Workers, Essential Protections initiative

By [Phoebe B. Mitchell](#)

In another demonstration of its pro-worker agenda, President Biden's Administration has launched a new webpage: Essential Protections During the COVID-19 Pandemic^[1]. The webpage, created by the United States Department of Labor (DOL)'s Wage and Hour Division (WHD), is aimed at furthering the WHD's goal of "protecting and enhancing the welfare of workers during the COVID-19 pandemic."



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Online trainings are among the many resources provided in the Essential Protections webpage. The training page, titled Essential Workers, Essential Protections,^[2] states: "Workers in grocery stores, health care, delivery services, retail establishments, agriculture, and other essential industries have remained on the job despite many potential risks to their own health or that of their families. The Wage and Hour Division is committed to ensuring that these, and all workers, receive the workplace protections provided under the law."

The Essential Protections During the COVID-19 Pandemic webpage includes a new Frequently Asked Questions platform which combines many existing articles the WHD has promulgated during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Frequently Asked Questions address many common issues facing employers and employees during the pandemic, including questions about pay under the Fair Labor Standards Act and employee leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act. Additionally, the platform touches upon the plethora of sub-topics affecting employees amid the pandemic, such as business closures, COVID-19 testing in the workplace, quarantining, and teleworking.

The WHD's revamped website also includes a page entitled "How to File a Complaint."[\[3\]](#) The page includes user-friendly information for potential claimants regarding the necessary steps to file a complaint, the investigative process, and the nearest WHD office.

The DOL's renewed focus on worker rights means employers should be more vigilant than ever to comply with federal, state, and local employment laws. Phillips Murrah's labor and employment attorneys continue to monitor developments to provide up-to-date advice to our clients regarding the DOL's policies.

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