

Why is it important that construction workers get vaccinated?

This document was developed by the NH Occupational Health Surveillance Program at University of New Hampshire in coordination with the National Institute for Occupational Safety & Health (NIOSH)

Construction work is considered essential during the pandemic. Because most construction work continues in-person, your workers are at greater risk of becoming infected with SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.ⁱ

For the 2020-2021 season, construction occupations experienced a 3.43% absenteeism rate compared to 2.32% for all other occupations.ⁱⁱⁱ

The estimated cost of lost work hours, among U.S. full-time construction workers, associated with the COVID-19 pandemic due to health-related issues was \$360 million.ⁱⁱ

Unplanned absences due to illness are among the most costly impacts of COVID-19 within essential workplaces. And with the quarantine requirements around COVID, unplanned absences become a 10-day loss of productivity versus one day of planned (or even unplanned) productivity.

Motivating workers to receive their vaccination is one of the most important steps toward ending the pandemic, getting back to life as we knew it, and for maintaining business activities.

Your employees are your most valuable asset. When one worker is down, the whole crew feels it. This impacts every aspect of the business, causing indirect costs such as:

- Training replacement employees
- Increased stress
- Lower morale
- Reduced productivity
- Increased mandatory overtime
- Increased # of safety issues
- Increased employee health problems
- Higher turnover rates

What can you do to prevent these added costs to your bottom line?

- Provide accurate information about COVID-19 vaccination.
- Establish supportive policies and practices to allow your workers to take the time to get the vaccine.

Waiting to get the COVID-19 vaccine is like leaving your tools out overnight. You're taking your chances and throwing away good money.

For more information about the COVID-19 vaccines, visit:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/index.html>

ⁱ NIOSH Blog, "COVID-19 Poses Big Challenges for Small Construction Firms," at: https://blogs.cdc.gov/niosh-science-blog/2021/03/09/construction_covid/
ⁱⁱ Compilation from U.S. Census Bureau Current Population Survey (CPS) Questionnaire. Available at: <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/technical-documentation/questionnaires.html>.

ⁱⁱⁱ NIOSH Absenteeism in the Workplace at: <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/absences/default.html>
Compilation from U.S. Census Bureau Current Population Survey (CPS) Questionnaire. Available at: <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/technical-documentation/questionnaires.html>.