

## N E W S   R E L E A S E

**News Release No.:** 2018-33

**Date:** April 27, 2018

### **DIR Honors Workers' Memorial Day**

**Oakland**—On Workers' Memorial Day 2018, the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) honors the California men and women who have lost their lives on the job. This international day of remembrance is held annually on April 28, the date Congress passed the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 which ensures all workers the right to safety on the job.

“DIR observes Workers' Memorial Day every year to honor those workers who lost their lives on the job as well as those who have helped forge California's legacy of protecting workers' rights,” said Juliann Sum, Chief of the California Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA). “We can pay tribute by continuing to improve health and safety working conditions for all California workers.”

A total of 376 Californians lost their lives on the job in 2016, nearly two of every five (39%) of them Latino. The causes of death range from preventable accidents to workplace violence. These tragedies affect communities both large and small throughout the state.

Cal/OSHA was the first in the nation to adopt a statewide Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP) standard in 1991 and also the first to adopt an emergency heat illness prevention regulation in 2005. The emergency regulation became law in 2006 and was amended in 2010 to add high-heat procedures to protect outdoor workers in industries including agriculture, construction, landscaping and oil and gas extraction. The heat illness prevention regulation was further amended in 2015 to increase worker access to water, lower the temperature trigger for shade and expand training for outdoor workers to recognize and address the signs and symptoms of heat illness.

Additionally, workers across the state are protected by permissible exposure limits that go beyond the corresponding federal minimums and cover a wider variety of chemicals. California is proud to have adopted the most comprehensive workplace violence prevention in health care standard in the country and to be the only state to enact a standard to protect workers from aerosol transmissible diseases. Together these efforts help California maintain workplace injury and fatality rates below the national average.

The California Division of Occupational Safety and Health, or Cal/OSHA, is the division within the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) that helps protect California's

workers from health and safety hazards on the job in almost every workplace. Cal/OSHA's Consultation Services Branch provides free and voluntary assistance to employers to improve their safety and health programs. Employers should call (800) 963-9424 for assistance from Cal/OSHA Consultation Services.

Employees with work-related questions or complaints may contact DIR's Call Center in English or Spanish at 844-LABOR-DIR (844-522-6734). The California Workers' Information line at 866-924-9757 provides recorded information in English and Spanish on a variety of work-related topics. Complaints can also be filed confidentially with Cal/OSHA district offices.

Members of the press may contact Erika Monterroza or Peter Melton at (510) 286-1161, and are encouraged to subscribe to get email alerts on DIR's press releases or other departmental updates.

# # #



The [California Department of Industrial Relations](#), established in 1927, protects and improves the health, safety, and economic well-being of over 18 million wage earners, and helps their employers comply with state labor laws. DIR is housed within the [Labor & Workforce Development Agency](#). For general inquiries, contact DIR's Communications Call Center at 844-LABOR-DIR (844-522-6734) for help in locating the appropriate [division or program](#) in our department.