***WA Update: Health Emergency Labor Standards Act (HELSA)***

The state of Washington has passed The Health Emergency Labor Standards Act (HELSA), effective immediately. Regulations for employers are as follows:

* Frontline workers (as defined by the Act) will be eligible for Workers Compensation if infected with a contagious or infectious disease due to exposure while on the job.
  + Examples of frontline workers per the act include emergency personnel, childcare workers at a licensed facility, public-facing retail workers, food workers, hotel/motel workers, health care aides and restaurant workers (full definitions list, details and exceptions are listed [here.](http://lawfilesext.leg.wa.gov/biennium/2021-22/Pdf/Bills/Senate%20Passed%20Legislature/5115-S.PL.pdf?q=20210510154340&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery))
* Employers of 50+ employees will be required to notify L&I of a contagious or infectious disease outbreak (defined as 10+ employees) within 24 hours.
* All employers are required to notify employees, union reps and contractors (and their employers), of potential exposure to a contagious or infectious disease.
* Employers are prohibited from any adverse employment actions or discrimination against “high-risk” employees if they ask for accommodation to protect themselves from a contagious or infectious disease.

The state is expected to release further guidance and enforcement measures regarding these new regulations shortly. Please visit the [L&I website](https://www.lni.wa.gov/) regularly for updates.