

U.S. Department of Labor Commemorates 50 Years of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970

The Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Act was signed into law by President Richard M. Nixon on December 29, 1970. The Act was created to “assure safe and healthful working conditions for working men and women” and laid the groundwork for the creation of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration on April 28, 1971.

OSHA’s recent News Release noted, “The U.S Department of Labor’s OSHA will commemorate the 50th anniversary of the OSH Act with a yearlong celebration of past achievements, current efforts, and future initiatives to protect the American workforce.” The full news release is available at: <https://www.osha.gov/news/newsreleases/region/01212020>.



Image courtesy of Concurrent Technologies Corporation (CTC)

While the OSH Act was a milestone for workplace safety, it is important to note it did not all apply to federal agencies. The table below points out facts setting federal agency programs apart from the private sector.

Federal Agency Programs vs. Private Sector
<p>OSH Act: Only Section 19 of the OSH Act, Federal Agency Safety Programs and Responsibilities, applies to Federal agencies. Refer to: https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/oshact/section_19</p>
<p>Executive Order 12196 – OSH Programs for Federal Employees (signed February 26, 1980), expanded on the OSH Act requirement to have a program consistent with OSHA standards (Section 6 of the Act). The Executive Order applies to all agencies of the Executive Branch, except military unique equipment and systems. Refer to: https://www.archives.gov/federal-register/codification/executive-order/12196.html</p>
<p>29 CFR 1960 – Basic Elements for Federal Employee OSH Programs and Related Matters, is the implementing regulation for Executive Order is 29 CFR 1960. Refer to: https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1960</p>
<p>DoD Instruction 6055.01 – DoD Safety and Occupational (SOH) Program, applies to DoD Components and DoD contractor personnel deploying with the force when the contract terms specify DoD responsibility for contractor safety and health. Refer to: https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodi/605501p.pdf</p>
<p>Additional information on Federal Agency Programs is available at: https://www.osha.gov/enforcement/fap/</p>

For additional information, visit the “OSHA at 50” website at <https://www.osha.gov/osha50/>.

For additional information on the SMCX’s services, please visit the SMCX-hosted website at: <https://www.smcx.org/>.