



SAFETY

Nebraska Building Chapter

AGC Safety Initiative E-News

January 7, 2022

OUR Safety MISSION: Help each other enforce safety rules to ensure that every person on construction site goes home safe and healthy at end of the workday.

Calendar of Events – [Learn more](#)

[COVID-19 Resources Update](#) Updated information with quick references.

AGC of America's **COVID-19 Vaccine Toolkit** <https://www.agc.org/covid-19-vaccine-toolkit>

[5-Step Plan for Employers as CDC Reduces COVID-19 Isolation and Quarantine Periods](#)

In response to the ongoing Omicron wave of COVID-19 cases, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently updated its [guidance](#) to reduce, in most instances, both the length of time an individual must isolate after contracting COVID-19, and the quarantine period for those exposed to the illness. While it may be a good sign the CDC believes shorter periods are appropriate due to the prevalence of milder Omicron cases, this new guidance doesn't come without complexities. The December 27, 2021, guidance not only abruptly changes rules many employers had in place for several months, it also leads to questions about which guidance employers should now follow given the status of [OSHA's Emergency Temporary Standard \(ETS\)](#). This article offers employers a practical, five-step compliance plan in light of this latest curveball.

[More information is available online.](#)

Study: Pandemic-related absences cost employers nearly \$1B per week

- In the last 22 months, workers' pandemic-related absences have cost employers more than \$78.4 billion — nearly \$1 billion each week — according to a Dec. 20 analysis from the Integrated Benefits Institute.
- The institute considered disability wage payments, state disability insurance, sick leave wages and employee benefits in its calculation. It used data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, as well as "lost workday experiences contained in its own dataset of employer-sponsored disability claims to model lost work time impacts" based on the total case count in the U.S.
- California, Texas, and New York exhibited the highest lost work time. Among metropolitan areas, New York City, Los Angeles, and Chicago incurred the largest lost-work-time-cost burden.

Employers may find it easy to track tangible pandemic expenses, but an outstanding cost lies in a more intangible area, according to IBI Research and Analytics Director Joseph Aller.

"The true cost of the COVID-19 pandemic to employers is far more than just the expense of workplace sanitization, testing, and masks," he said in a statement. "A holistic view of productivity presents a more accurate overall cost estimation."

Employers may battle productivity issues even among workers who clock in. Stress can cost employees hours of work time, a 2020 Headspace survey found. A quarter of the respondents said they lose an hour of work per day to stress. A fifth said they lose up to two hours.

To combat employee stress, many employers have adopted or augmented mental health benefits. One source recently told HR Dive that employers ought to emphasize preventative mental health care. Conditions like depression develop over time, meaning employers have many places on the mental health spectrum they can meet somebody before a condition becomes severe.

Safety Initiative Goals:

As an AGC Nebraska Building Chapter member, are you participating with:

- 100% of all AGC members and other contractors on AGC jobsites enforcing OSHA standards as they apply to falls, electrical safety and possible another topic.
- 100% of all AGC members will have set their own company goals to improve safety in their firm and have a way to measure progress towards the goal.
- 100% of all AGC members will encourage and support all contractors on their jobsites to set their own company goals for improving safety.