

Health Hazard Evaluation Program

What Employees
Should Know



Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health



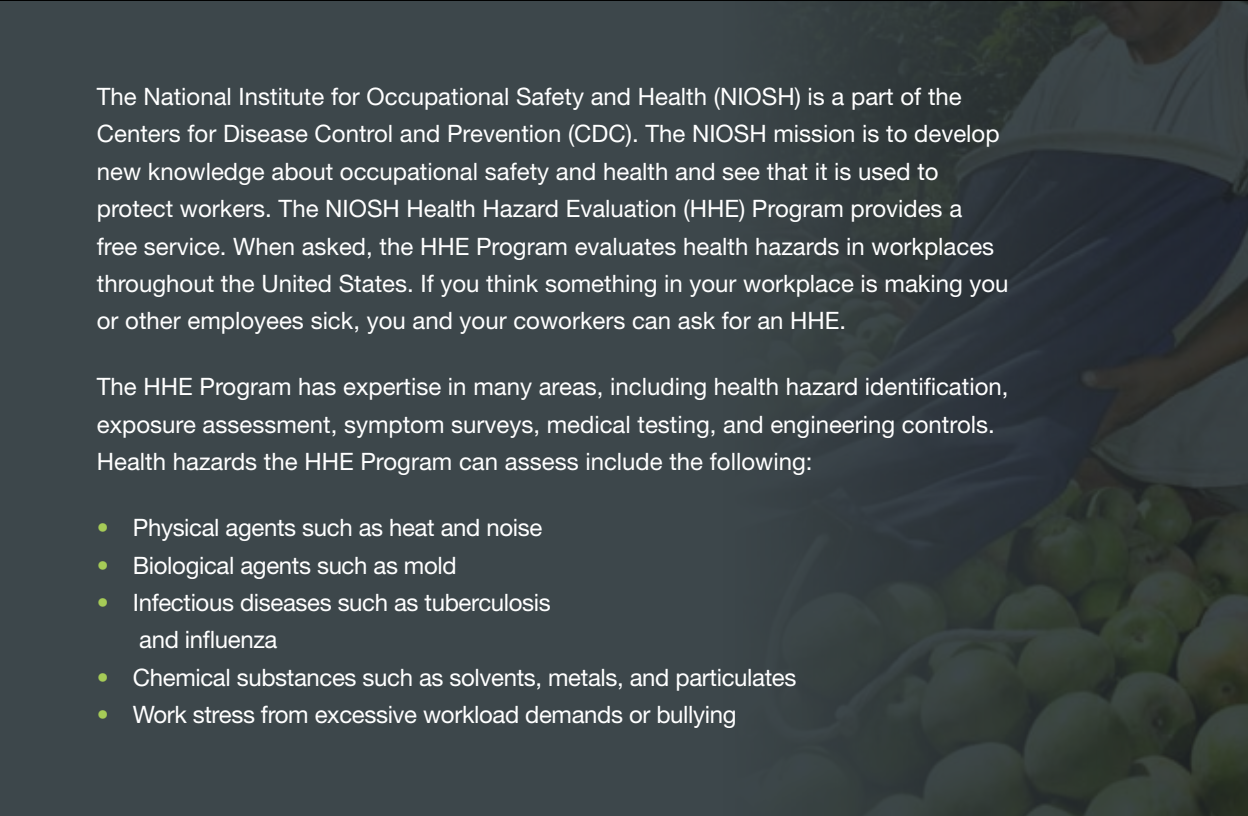


Health Hazard Evaluation Program

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/hhe/>

What is the NIOSH Health Hazard Evaluation Program?



The background of the slide shows a person wearing a white t-shirt and a blue apron, standing in front of a large pile of green apples. The person's hands are visible, and they appear to be sorting or inspecting the apples. The scene is outdoors, with some greenery visible in the background.

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) is a part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The NIOSH mission is to develop new knowledge about occupational safety and health and see that it is used to protect workers. The NIOSH Health Hazard Evaluation (HHE) Program provides a free service. When asked, the HHE Program evaluates health hazards in workplaces throughout the United States. If you think something in your workplace is making you or other employees sick, you and your coworkers can ask for an HHE.

The HHE Program has expertise in many areas, including health hazard identification, exposure assessment, symptom surveys, medical testing, and engineering controls. Health hazards the HHE Program can assess include the following:

- Physical agents such as heat and noise
- Biological agents such as mold
- Infectious diseases such as tuberculosis and influenza
- Chemical substances such as solvents, metals, and particulates
- Work stress from excessive workload demands or bullying

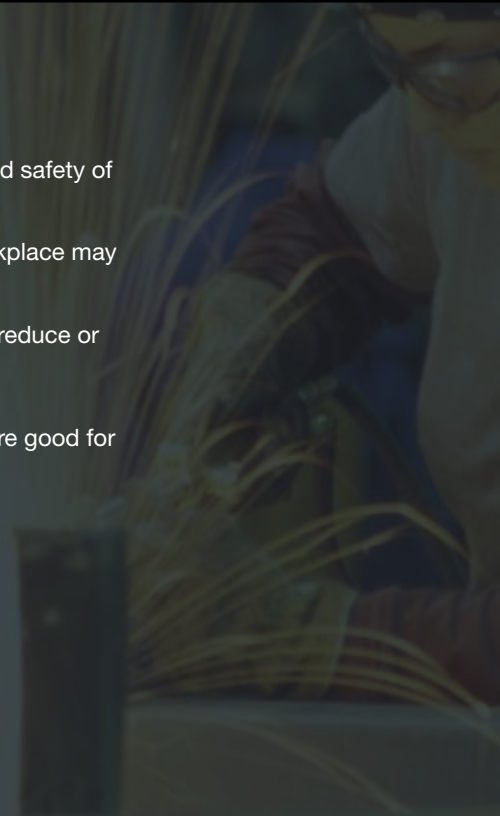
Why Should You Request an Evaluation?



An HHE can benefit employees.

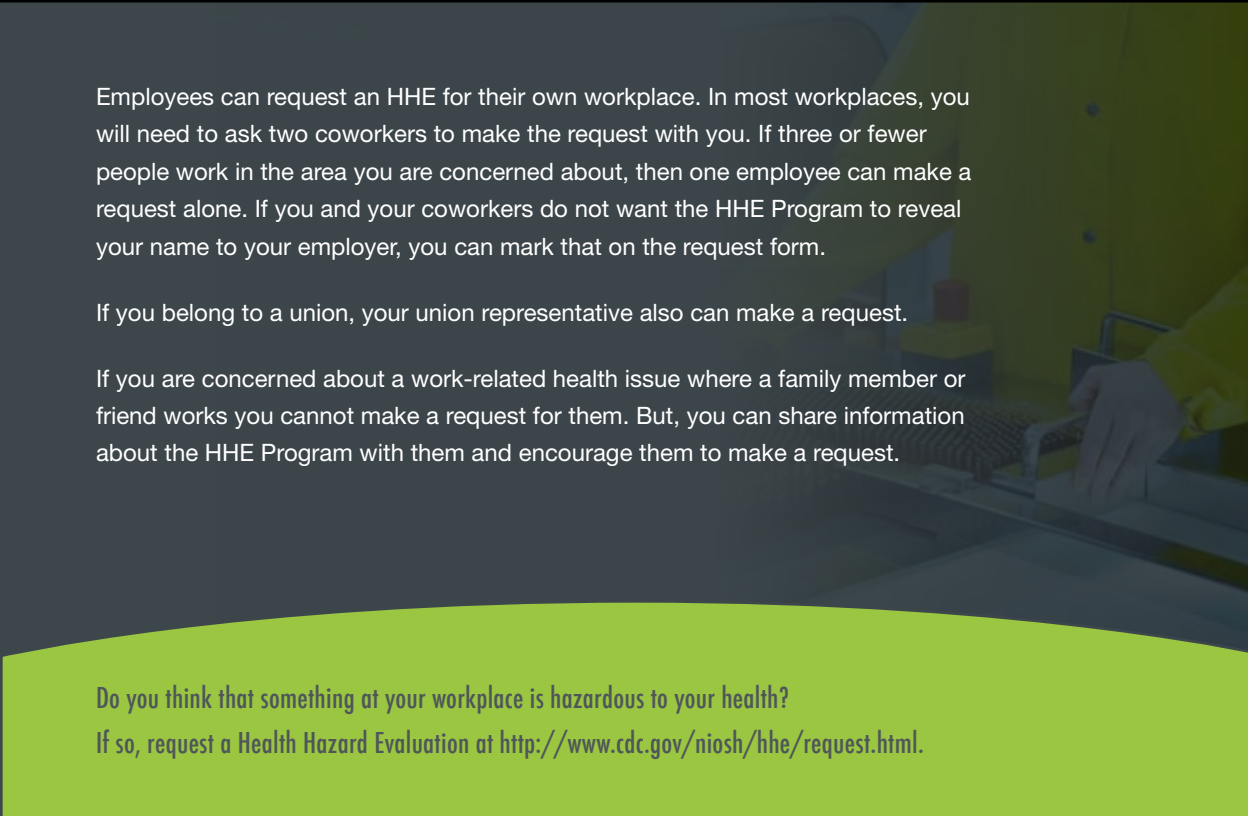
- An HHE can help give you a greater voice in the health and safety of your workplace.
- You will learn whether exposures or conditions in the workplace may harm your health.
- The HHE Program will tell you and your employer how to reduce or eliminate hazards in your workplace.

Many employers use the information to make changes that are good for the health of their employees.



Who Can Request an HHE?



A dimly lit industrial or laboratory setting with a person in the background. The scene is dark, with some equipment and a person visible in the shadows. The overall tone is serious and focused on workplace safety.

Employees can request an HHE for their own workplace. In most workplaces, you will need to ask two coworkers to make the request with you. If three or fewer people work in the area you are concerned about, then one employee can make a request alone. If you and your coworkers do not want the HHE Program to reveal your name to your employer, you can mark that on the request form.

If you belong to a union, your union representative also can make a request.

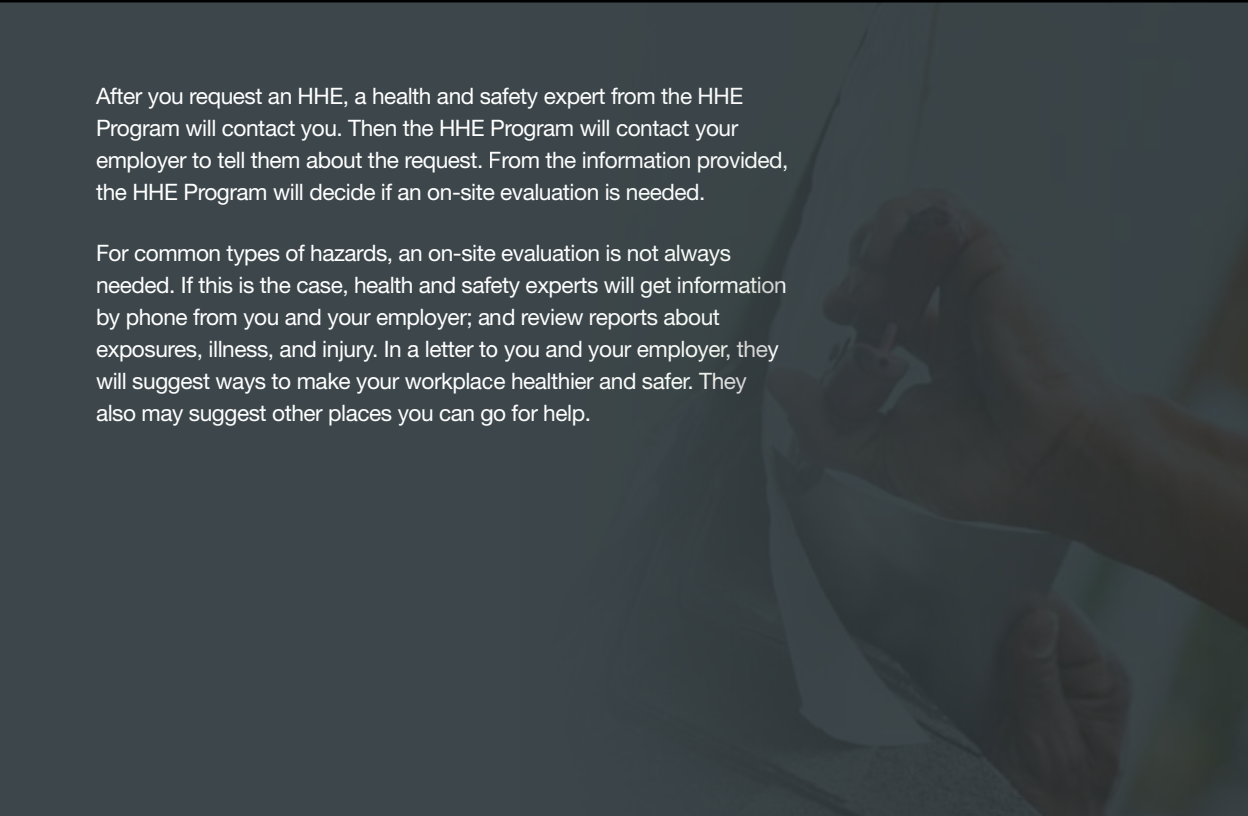
If you are concerned about a work-related health issue where a family member or friend works you cannot make a request for them. But, you can share information about the HHE Program with them and encourage them to make a request.

Do you think that something at your workplace is hazardous to your health?

If so, request a Health Hazard Evaluation at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/hhe/request.html>.

What Happens After You Request an HHE?





After you request an HHE, a health and safety expert from the HHE Program will contact you. Then the HHE Program will contact your employer to tell them about the request. From the information provided, the HHE Program will decide if an on-site evaluation is needed.

For common types of hazards, an on-site evaluation is not always needed. If this is the case, health and safety experts will get information by phone from you and your employer; and review reports about exposures, illness, and injury. In a letter to you and your employer, they will suggest ways to make your workplace healthier and safer. They also may suggest other places you can go for help.

What Happens During an On-Site Evaluation?



If an on-site evaluation is needed, health and safety experts will come to the workplace at a time agreed upon by all involved. They may:

- Observe work processes and practices
- Meet with managers
- Talk with employees
- Review reports of exposure, injury, and illness
- Measure exposures
- Survey employees about their health
- Carry out medical testing

The process may require more than one visit.

When exposure measurements or medical tests are done on employees, the HHE Program will send the results directly to each employee. Summary information will be shared with the employer without revealing employees' identities.

If you request an HHE, you can choose to meet with the team when they are on site. If you do not want to meet with the team, you can help find another employee to represent all employees at the workplace. Regardless of what you choose, the HHE Program will keep you informed of its activities and progress.

What Happens After the Evaluation?



The Report

After the evaluation is done, the HHE Program will send you and your employer a report. The report will tell you what the HHE Program did and what they found. It also will suggest ways to make your workplace healthier and safer for you and your coworkers. Your employer must post the report in a location where you and your coworkers can read it. The HHE Program also shares the reports with other federal agencies, and the reports become part of the public record. The HHE Program posts the report on its website where it is available to everyone for free.

The Follow Up

After the report is released the HHE Program will invite you or another employee representative to ask questions and share your thoughts in a phone call. Later, you will receive surveys by mail to get your opinion about the report and to give you a chance to describe actions taken after the HHE. To help improve the HHE Program, your employer may be asked about their interest in scheduling a follow-up visit. This will help the HHE Program learn how useful its recommendations were in improving health and safety in your workplace.

Are Employee Requests Confidential?



If you are an employee requesting an HHE, you can mark on the HHE request form that you do not want your name revealed to your employer.

As provided by federal law, the HHE Program protects personal information it gets from records, forms, or interviews. Federal law prohibits employers from retaliating or punishing employees for making HHE requests or cooperating with the HHE Program.

If you have any questions about how your identity and information will be protected, contact the HHE Program at HHERequestHelp@cdc.gov.

How Do You Request an HHE?

To request an HHE, find the request form at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/hhe/request.html>.

You can fill it out online. Or, you can print the form and send it by mail or fax.

If you have any questions, please contact the HHE Program Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Eastern Standard Time:



1-513-841-4382



HHERequestHelp@cdc.gov




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Delivering on the Nation's Promise: Safety and health at work for all people through research and prevention.

To receive documents or other information about occupational safety and health topics, contact NIOSH:

 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636)

 1-888-232-6348

 CDC INFO: cdcinfo@cdc.gov
or visit the NIOSH website
<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/>.

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