

Second Regular Session  
Seventy-fifth General Assembly  
STATE OF COLORADO

**PREAMENDED**

*This Unofficial Version Includes Committee  
Amendments Not Yet Adopted on Second Reading*

LLS NO. 26-0599.01 Josh Schultz x5486

**HOUSE BILL 26-1054**

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**HOUSE SPONSORSHIP**

**Rutinel and Velasco,**

**SENATE SPONSORSHIP**

**(None),**

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**House Committees**

Business Affairs & Labor  
Appropriations

**Senate Committees**

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**A BILL FOR AN ACT**

101 **CONCERNING WORKER SAFETY PROTECTIONS.**

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**Bill Summary**

*(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at <http://leg.colorado.gov>.)*

**Section 1** of the bill requires an employer to ensure the employer's workplace is free from recognized hazards, as interpreted consistent with the federal occupational safety and health administration's interpretation of the general duty clause of the "Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970" (OSH Act) as of September 1, 2025. Additionally, employers have the general duty to:

- Ensure that each workplace is constructed, equipped, arranged, operated, and conducted as to provide reasonable

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.  
Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material to be added to existing law.  
Dashes through the words or numbers indicate deletions from existing law.

- and adequate protection to the lives, health, and safety of all individuals employed or working in the workplace; and
- Comply with standards for workplace health and safety adopted by rule by the division of labor standards and statistics in the department of labor and employment (division).

The bill authorizes the following actions to address workplace health and safety concerns:

- The attorney general or the division may refer workplace health and safety concerns to relevant state or local authorities;
- The attorney general, the division, a labor organization, or a person aggrieved by a violation of the bill may file a civil action;
- For each violation of the bill or of rules adopted pursuant to the bill, a court may order the person that violates the bill or rules to pay statutory damages to a person aggrieved by the violation; and
- A court may order a person that violates the bill or rules adopted pursuant to the bill to pay a penalty to the attorney general for each violation.

The bill creates the workplace health and safety fund (fund) into which penalties collected pursuant to the bill are credited. The money in the fund may be used by the division for specified purposes.

The bill authorizes the division to adopt rules:

- To replace any requirement of the OSH Act or the "Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977" that is repealed, revoked, or amended in any manner that results in the federal protections of workers' rights or worker safety becoming less stringent;
- To define standards for workplace health and safety if there is no standard in effect under the OSH Act; and
- As necessary to implement the bill.

**Sections 2 through 8** make conforming amendments.

1 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

2 **SECTION 1.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add** part 2 to article  
3 14.4 of title 8 as follows:

4 **PART 2**  
5 **WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY**

1           **8-14.4-201. Short title.**

2           THE SHORT TITLE OF THIS PART 2 IS THE "COLORADO WORKER  
3 SAFETY ACT".

4           **8-14.4-202. Definitions.**

5           AS USED IN THIS PART 2, UNLESS THE CONTEXT OTHERWISE  
6 REQUIRES:

7           (1) "DIVISION" MEANS THE DIVISION OF LABOR STANDARDS AND  
8 STATISTICS IN THE DEPARTMENT.

9           (2) (a) "EMPLOYER" HAS THE MEANING SET FORTH IN SECTION  
10 8-4-101 (6).

11           (b) "EMPLOYER" DOES NOT INCLUDE THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

12           (3) "FUND" MEANS THE WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY FUND  
13 CREATED IN SECTION 8-14.4-205.

14           (4) "LABOR ORGANIZATION" MEANS AN EXCLUSIVE  
15 REPRESENTATIVE, AS DEFINED IN SECTION 8-3.3-102 (13).

16           (5) "OSH ACT" MEANS THE FEDERAL "OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY  
17 AND HEALTH ACT OF 1970", 29 U.S.C. SEC. 651 ET SEQ.

18           (6) "STRINGENT" MEANS A LAW, RULE, OR STANDARD'S OVERALL  
19 EFFECTIVENESS IN PROTECTING THE RIGHTS AND SAFETY OF WORKERS. A  
20 LAW, RULE, OR STANDARD IS CONSIDERED TO BE MORE STRINGENT IF IT  
21 IMPOSES A SAFETY REQUIREMENT OR OBLIGATION ON EMPLOYERS THAT IS  
22 STRICTER OR MORE DEMANDING THAN WHAT IS OTHERWISE IMPOSED BY  
23 LAW OR IF IT PROVIDES FOR GREATER RIGHTS, BENEFITS, REMEDIES, OR  
24 PROCEDURES FOR WORKERS THAN WHAT IS OTHERWISE PROVIDED BY LAW.

25           (7) "WORKER ORGANIZATION" MEANS A COMMUNITY-BASED  
26 NONPROFIT OR MEMBERSHIP-BASED ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO  
27 SUPPORTING WORKERS, ASSISTING WORKERS WITH MUTUAL AID OR

1 PROTECTION IN CONNECTION WITH WORK, OR EMPOWERING VULNERABLE  
2 WORKERS.

3 (8) "WORKPLACE" MEANS ANY PLACE WHERE AN EMPLOYER  
4 REQUIRES A WORKER TO PERFORM TASKS, JOBS, OR PROJECTS FOR  
5 COMPENSATION.

6 **8-14.4-203. General duty to maintain a safe workplace.**

7 (1) AN EMPLOYER SHALL ENSURE THE EMPLOYER'S WORKPLACE IS  
8 FREE FROM RECOGNIZED HAZARDS, WHICH DUTY SHALL BE INTERPRETED  
9 CONSISTENT WITH THE FEDERAL OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH  
10 ADMINISTRATION'S INTERPRETATION OF THE GENERAL DUTY CLAUSE OF  
11 THE OSH ACT, 29 U.S.C. SEC. 654 (a)(1), AS OF SEPTEMBER 1, 2025.

12 (2) AN EMPLOYER HAS THE GENERAL DUTY TO:

13 (a) ENSURE THAT EACH WORKPLACE IS CONSTRUCTED, EQUIPPED,  
14 ARRANGED, OPERATED, AND CONDUCTED IN A MANNER AS TO PROVIDE  
15 REASONABLE AND ADEQUATE PROTECTION TO THE LIVES, HEALTH, AND  
16 SAFETY OF ALL INDIVIDUALS EMPLOYED OR WORKING IN THE WORKPLACE;  
17 AND

18 (b) COMPLY WITH STANDARDS FOR WORKPLACE HEALTH AND  
19 SAFETY THAT THE DIVISION ADOPTS BY RULE PURSUANT TO THIS PART 2.

20 **8-14.4-204. Enforcement - referral to state or local authorities**  
21 **- statutory damages - civil action - injunction - withdrawal from**  
22 **dangerous workplace.**

23 (1) THE ATTORNEY GENERAL MAY REFER WORKPLACE HEALTH  
24 AND SAFETY CONCERNS TO RELEVANT STATE OR LOCAL AUTHORITIES,  
25 INCLUDING THOSE CHARGED WITH ENFORCING BUILDING CODES,  
26 SANITATION, FIRE RISK PREVENTION, AND INDUSTRIAL HAZARD  
27 PREVENTION.

1           (2) (a) THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, ■ A LABOR ORGANIZATION, A  
2     WORKER ORGANIZATION, OR A PERSON AGGRIEVED BY A VIOLATION OF  
3     THIS PART 2 MAY FILE A CIVIL ACTION AGAINST AN EMPLOYER THAT  
4     VIOLATES THIS PART 2 FOR ALL AVAILABLE EQUITABLE RELIEF, INCLUDING  
5     THE PREVENTION OF UNJUST ENRICHMENT; INJUNCTION; THE DETERRENCE  
6     OF THE USE OF DANGEROUS MACHINERY, EQUIPMENT, OR DEVICES; AND  
7     THE PREVENTION OF FURTHER WORK IN OR OCCUPANCY OF A DANGEROUS  
8     WORKPLACE.

9           (b) AN ACTION BROUGHT BY AN AGGRIEVED PERSON PURSUANT TO  
10    THIS SECTION MAY BE BROUGHT BY ONE OR MORE WORKERS ON BEHALF OF  
11    THEMSELVES OR OTHER WORKERS SIMILARLY SITUATED.

12          (c) IF A COURT IMPOSES AN INJUNCTION OR A STOP WORK ORDER  
13    LIMITING WORK OR PROHIBITING THE USE OF DANGEROUS MACHINERY,  
14    EQUIPMENT, OR DEVICES OR AN INJUNCTION OR A STOP WORK ORDER FOR  
15    A DANGEROUS WORKPLACE, THE EMPLOYER MUST EITHER:

16          (I) REASSIGN WORKERS TO WORK THAT DOES NOT INVOLVE  
17    DANGEROUS MACHINERY, EQUIPMENT, OR DEVICES AND THAT DOES NOT  
18    OCCUR IN THE DANGEROUS WORKPLACE; OR

19          (II) PAY WORKERS AT THEIR REGULAR RATE OF PAY FOR AT LEAST  
20    THE FIRST TEN REGULAR WORKING DAYS IF THEY ARE UNABLE TO WORK  
21    DUE TO THE INJUNCTION OR STOP WORK ORDER.

22          (d) THE COURT MAY AWARD A PERSON FOUND TO HAVE BEEN  
23    AGGRIEVED BY A VIOLATION OF THIS PART 2 STATUTORY DAMAGES IN AN  
24    AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS PER VIOLATION,  
25    EXCEPT IF THE EMPLOYER:

26          (I) REPEATEDLY VIOLATES THIS PART 2 OR RULES ADOPTED  
27    PURSUANT TO SECTION 8-14.4-206, IN WHICH CASE THE STATUTORY

1 DAMAGES FOR THE SECOND VIOLATION OR ANY SUBSEQUENT VIOLATION  
2 MUST NOT EXCEED TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS; OR

3 (II) WILLFULLY VIOLATES THIS PART 2 OR RULES ADOPTED  
4 PURSUANT TO SECTION 8-14.4-206 OR DEMONSTRATES PLAIN  
5 INDIFFERENCE TO THIS PART 2 OR RULES ADOPTED PURSUANT TO SECTION  
6 8-14.4-206, IN WHICH CASE THE STATUTORY DAMAGES FOR EACH  
7 VIOLATION MUST NOT EXCEED SEVENTY THOUSAND DOLLARS PER  
8 VIOLATION.

9 (e) IN ADDITION TO OTHER RELIEF AUTHORIZED BY THIS SECTION,  
10 THE COURT MAY ORDER AN EMPLOYER THAT VIOLATES THIS SECTION TO  
11 PAY A PENALTY FOR EACH VIOLATION OF THIS PART 2 OR RULES ADOPTED  
12 PURSUANT TO SECTION 8-14.4-206. PENALTIES IMPOSED PURSUANT TO  
13 THIS SUBSECTION (2)(e) SHALL BE CREDITED TO THE WORKPLACE HEALTH  
14 AND SAFETY FUND CREATED IN SECTION 8-14.4-205. THE PENALTIES MUST  
15 NOT EXCEED ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS PER VIOLATION, EXCEPT IF THE  
16 EMPLOYER:

17 (I) REPEATEDLY VIOLATES THIS PART 2 OR RULES ADOPTED  
18 PURSUANT TO SECTION 8-14.4-206, IN WHICH CASE THE PENALTY FOR THE  
19 SECOND VIOLATION OR ANY SUBSEQUENT VIOLATION MUST NOT EXCEED  
20 TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS; OR

21 (II) WILLFULLY VIOLATES THIS PART 2 OR RULES ADOPTED  
22 PURSUANT TO SECTION 8-14.4-206 OR DEMONSTRATES PLAIN  
23 INDIFFERENCE TO THIS PART 2 OR RULES ADOPTED PURSUANT TO SECTION  
24 8-14.4-206, IN WHICH CASE THE PENALTY FOR EACH VIOLATION SHALL NOT  
25 EXCEED SEVENTY THOUSAND DOLLARS.

26 (f) A COURT MAY AWARD THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, A LABOR  
27 ORGANIZATION, A WORKER ORGANIZATION, OR A PERSON FOUND TO HAVE

1 BEEN AGGRIEVED BY A VIOLATION OF THIS PART 2 REASONABLE COSTS  
2 AND ATTORNEY FEES INCURRED.

3 (g) EACH DAY A VIOLATION OF THIS PART 2 CONTINUES  
4 CONSTITUTES A SEPARATE AND DISTINCT OFFENSE, AND EMPLOYMENT OF  
5 ANY WORKER IN VIOLATION OF THIS PART 2 CONSTITUTES, WITH RESPECT  
6 TO EACH WORKER EMPLOYED, A SEPARATE AND DISTINCT OFFENSE.

7 (h) THIS PART 2 SHALL NOT BE CONSTRUED TO REPLACE THE  
8 "WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT OF COLORADO", ARTICLES 40 TO 47 OF  
9 THIS TITLE 8, AS THE APPROPRIATE MECHANISM FOR ADDRESSING  
10 JOB-RELATED INJURIES.

11 (i) THIS PART 2 SHALL NOT BE CONSTRUED TO AUTHORIZE  
12 INJUNCTIVE RELIEF THAT HAS THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OR EFFECT OF  
13 INTERFERING WITH LAWFUL, CONSTITUTIONALLY PROTECTED ACTIVITY OF  
14 THE PRESS, UNLESS SUCH RELIEF IS NECESSARY AND NARROWLY TAILORED  
15 TO REMEDY A SPECIFIC WORKPLACE HEALTH OR SAFETY HAZARD.

16 **8-14.4-205. The workplace health and safety fund - created -**  
17 **permissible uses.**

18 (1) THE STATE TREASURER SHALL CREDIT PENALTIES COLLECTED  
19 FOR THE STATE PURSUANT TO THIS PART 2 TO THE WORKPLACE HEALTH  
20 AND SAFETY FUND, WHICH FUND IS CREATED. THE MONEY IN THE FUND  
21 MAY BE USED BY THE DIVISION TO COVER DIRECT AND INDIRECT COSTS  
22 ASSOCIATED WITH:

23 (a) ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES AUTHORIZED IN THIS SECTION;

24 (b) CREATING, DISTRIBUTING, SHARING, AND PUBLICIZING  
25 MATERIALS DESIGNED TO EDUCATE WORKERS AND EMPLOYERS ABOUT  
26 THEIR OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE OSH ACT, THIS PART 2, AND RELATED  
27 REGULATIONS AND POLICY; AND

1 (c) RULE-MAKING CONDUCTED PURSUANT TO SECTION 8-14.4-206.

2 (2) (a) MONEY IN THE FUND IS CONTINUOUSLY APPROPRIATED TO  
3 THE DIVISION FOR USE IN IMPLEMENTING THE PURPOSES SET FORTH IN  
4 SUBSECTION (1) OF THIS SECTION.

5 (b) THE STATE TREASURER MAY INVEST ANY MONEY IN THE FUND  
6 NOT EXPENDED FOR THE PURPOSE OF THIS PART 2 AS PROVIDED BY LAW.  
7 THE STATE TREASURER SHALL CREDIT ALL INTEREST AND INCOME DERIVED  
8 FROM THE INVESTMENT AND DEPOSIT OF MONEY IN THE FUND TO THE  
9 FUND. ANY UNEXPENDED AND UNENCUMBERED MONEY REMAINING IN THE  
10 FUND AT THE END OF A FISCAL YEAR REMAINS IN THE FUND AND SHALL  
11 NOT BE CREDITED OR TRANSFERRED TO THE GENERAL FUND OR ANOTHER  
12 FUND.

13 (3) THE LIMITATIONS SPECIFIED IN SECTION 24-75-402 DO NOT  
14 APPLY TO THE FUND.

15 **8-14.4-206. Rules.**

16 (1) IF, AT ANY TIME AFTER SEPTEMBER 1, 2025, ANY OSH ACT  
17 HEALTH OR SAFETY STANDARD, OR RULE ADOPTED THEREUNDER, IS  
18 REPEALED OR REVOKED, THE DIVISION MAY, AS SOON AS PRACTICABLE,  
19 ADOPT RULES ESTABLISHING A STATE STANDARD FOR EMPLOYERS IN THE  
20 STATE THAT IS AS STRINGENT AS OR MORE STRINGENT THAN THE FEDERAL  
21 OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH OR SAFETY STANDARD BEING REPEALED OR  
22 REVOKED AS A MINIMUM STANDARD FOR EMPLOYERS IN THIS STATE.

23 (2) ANY STANDARD ADOPTED PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (1) OF  
24 THIS SECTION MAY BE ENFORCED THROUGH SECTION 8-14.4-204.

25 (3) THE DIVISION MAY ADOPT RULES AS NECESSARY TO IMPLEMENT  
26 THIS PART 2.

27 **SECTION 2.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 8-14.4-101, **amend**

1 the introductory portion as follows:

2 **8-14.4-101. Definitions.**

3 As used in this ~~article 14.4~~ PART 1, unless the context otherwise  
4 requires:

5 **SECTION 3.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 8-14.4-102, **amend**  
6 (2)(b) and (4) as follows:

7 **8-14.4-102. Prohibition against discrimination based on claims**  
8 **related to health and safety.**

9 (2) (b) A contract or agreement that violates subsection (2)(a) of  
10 this section is void and unenforceable as contrary to the public policy of  
11 this state. A principal's attempt to impose such a contract or agreement is  
12 an adverse action in violation of this ~~article 14.4~~ PART 1.

13 (4) A principal shall not discriminate, take adverse action, or  
14 retaliate against a worker based on the worker opposing any practice the  
15 worker reasonably believes is unlawful under this ~~article 14.4~~ PART 1 or  
16 for making a charge, testifying, assisting, or participating in any manner  
17 in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing as to any matter the worker  
18 reasonably believes to be unlawful under this ~~article 14.4~~ PART 1.

19 **SECTION 4.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 8-14.4-103, **amend**  
20 (1) as follows:

21 **8-14.4-103. Principal post notice of rights - rules.**

22 (1) A principal shall post notice of a worker's rights under this  
23 ~~article 14.4~~ PART 1 in a conspicuous location on the principal's premises.

24 **SECTION 5.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 8-14.4-104, **amend**  
25 (1) introductory portion as follows:

26 **8-14.4-104. Relief for aggrieved person.**

27 (1) A person may seek relief for a violation of this ~~article 14.4~~

1 PART 1 by:

2 **SECTION 6.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 8-14.4-105, **amend**  
3 (1)(a), (1)(b)(I), and (2)(a) as follows:

4 **8-14.4-105. Enforcement by the division - rules.**

5 (1) (a) Within two years after an alleged violation of this ~~article~~  
6 ~~14.4~~ PART 1, an aggrieved individual or whistleblower may file a  
7 complaint against a principal with the division as specified in this  
8 subsection (1).

9 (b) Until the date the division makes a complaint form publicly  
10 available:

11 (I) An aggrieved individual or whistleblower may file a complaint  
12 of a violation of this ~~article 14.4~~ PART 1 with the division in any form, by  
13 mail or electronic mail;

14 (2) The division shall either:

15 (a) Investigate alleged principal violations of, or interference with  
16 rights or responsibilities under, this ~~article 14.4~~ PART 1 and complaints  
17 filed with the division by aggrieved individuals and whistleblowers; or

18 **SECTION 7.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 8-14.4-106, **amend**  
19 (1), (2) introductory portion, (3)(a), (3)(b), and (4) as follows:

20 **8-14.4-106. Relief authorized.**

21 (1) An aggrieved individual may, within ninety days after  
22 exhausting administrative remedies pursuant to section 8-14.4-105,  
23 commence an action in district court against a principal for a violation of  
24 this ~~article 14.4~~ PART 1.

25 (2) A court may order affirmative relief that the court determines  
26 to be appropriate, including the following relief, against a respondent who  
27 is found to have engaged in a discriminatory, adverse, or retaliatory

1 employment practice prohibited by this ~~article 14.4~~ PART 1:

2 (3) (a) In addition to the relief available pursuant to subsection (2)  
3 of this section, in a civil action brought by a plaintiff under this ~~article~~  
4 ~~14.4~~ PART 1 against a defendant who is found to have engaged in an  
5 intentional discriminatory, adverse, or retaliatory employment practice,  
6 the plaintiff may recover compensatory and punitive damages as specified  
7 in this subsection (3).

8 (b) A plaintiff may recover punitive damages against a defendant  
9 if the plaintiff demonstrates by clear and convincing evidence that the  
10 defendant engaged in a discriminatory, adverse, or retaliatory  
11 employment practice with malice or reckless indifference to the rights of  
12 the plaintiff. However, if the defendant demonstrates good faith efforts  
13 to comply with this ~~article 14.4~~ PART 1 and to prevent discriminatory,  
14 adverse, and retaliatory employment practices in the workplace, the court  
15 shall not award punitive damages against the defendant.

16 (4) If a plaintiff in a civil action filed under this ~~article 14.4~~ PART  
17 1 seeks compensatory or punitive damages pursuant to subsection (3) of  
18 this section, any party to the civil action may demand a trial by jury.

19 **SECTION 8.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 8-14.4-107, **amend**  
20 (1), (2)(a), (2)(b), and (3)(a) as follows:

21 **8-14.4-107. Whistleblower enforcement - qui tam - definition.**

22 (1) As used in this section, "whistleblower" means a worker with  
23 knowledge of an alleged violation of this ~~article 14.4~~ PART 1 or the  
24 worker's representative.

25 (2) (a) A whistleblower who has exhausted the administrative  
26 remedies pursuant to section 8-14.4-105 may bring a civil action against  
27 a principal for a violation of this ~~article 14.4~~ PART 1 on behalf of the state

1 in district court pursuant to this section. The state may intervene in the  
2 action to prosecute in its own name.

3 (b) At the time that the action is filed, the whistleblower shall give  
4 written notice to the division of the specific provisions of this ~~article 14.4~~  
5 PART 1 alleged to have been violated.

6 (3) The proceeds of any judgment entered pursuant to this section  
7 shall be distributed as follows:

8 (a) Seventy-five percent to the division for enforcement of this  
9 ~~article 14.4~~ PART 1; and

10 **SECTION 9. Applicability.** This act applies to conduct occurring  
11 on or after the effective date of this act.

12 **SECTION 10. Safety clause.** The general assembly finds,  
13 determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate  
14 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety or for appropriations for  
15 the support and maintenance of the departments of the state and state  
16 institutions.