

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY SPECIALIST

Careers in occupational health and safety include safety specialists that analyze many types of work environments and work procedures. Specialists inspect workplaces for adherence to regulations on safety, health, and the environment. They also design programs to prevent disease or injury to workers and damage to the environment.

DUTIES

Occupational health and safety specialists typically do the following:

- Identify chemical, physical, radiological, and biological hazards in the workplace
- Collect samples of potentially toxic materials for analysis
- Inspect and evaluate workplace environments, equipment, and practices to ensure that safety standards and government regulations are being followed
- Recommend measures to help protect workers from potentially hazardous work conditions
- Investigate accidents to identify their causes and to determine how they might be prevented in the future

Occupational health and safety specialists, also known as safety inspectors or technicians, examine lighting, equipment, ventilation, and other conditions that could affect employee health, safety, comfort, and performance. Workers usually are more alert and productive in environments that have specific levels of lighting or temperature.

Specialists work to prevent harm not only to workers but also to property, the environment, and the public by inspecting workplaces for chemical, radiological, and biological hazards. Specialists who work for governments conduct safety inspections and can impose fines.

Specialists seek to increase worker productivity by reducing absenteeism and equipment downtime. They also seek to save money by lowering insurance premiums and workers' compensation payments and by preventing government fines. Some specialists develop and conduct employee safety and training programs. These programs cover a range of topics, such as how to use safety equipment correctly and how to respond in an emergency.

Occupational health and safety specialists work with engineers and physicians to control or fix potentially hazardous conditions or equipment. They also work closely with occupational health and safety technicians to collect and analyze data in the workplace. For more information, see the profile on [occupational health and safety technicians](#).

The tasks of occupational health and safety specialists vary by industry, workplace, and types of hazards affecting employees.



SALARY INFORMATION

Location	2018				
	10%	25%	Median	75%	90%
California	\$31,110	\$42,950	\$55,590	\$69,880	\$87,340

*Pay period based on yearly amount.

EMPLOYMENT
OUTLOOK



Stable growth rate is estimated to be **14%**



100 estimated annual job openings

- *Ergonomists* consider the design of industrial, office, and other equipment to maximize workers' comfort, safety, and productivity.
- *Health physicists* work in locations that use radiation and radioactive material, helping to protect people and the environment from hazardous radiation exposure.
- *Industrial hygienists* identify workplace health hazards, such as lead, asbestos, noise, pesticides, and communicable diseases.
- *Loss prevention specialists* work for insurance companies. They inspect the facilities that are insured and suggest improvements to prevent losses.

RELATED OCCUPATIONS

Construction and Building Inspectors
Environmental Scientists and Specialists
Fire Inspectors and Investigators
Health and Safety Engineers
Occupational Health and Safety Technicians
Risk Analysts

