

## What should I do if an L&I inspector arrives at our workplace?

You are working in Washington state and L&I just showed up to open a DOSH safety inspection. If you have ever been pulled over or sent to the principal's office, it feels about the same way and you will have some of the same thoughts, such as: "I wasn't doing anything wrong!", "Why are they picking on me?", and "How much will this cost?".

### Do not Panic!

Before we get to the reasons why L&I is there, it is important to remember the #1 rule for safety inspections – do not panic! The inspector is a professional hired to do a job. There are many reasons he or she could be there, so do not assume the worst. Just be professional and polite as you would with any other job site visitor.

### Why are they picking on me?

When it comes to a job site inspection in Washington state, there are 5 main reasons why L&I will show up to inspect your work site or building. It can be as simple as your company name coming up on a random list or as serious as an immediate danger or an accident that has taken place.

**All work should stop when the inspector arrives.** If the inspector must wait for an authorized company representative to arrive (yes, you can ask them to wait), you could select a few workers to walk the site and make sure everything is clean and safe for when the inspector does their walk-around. Otherwise, no work should begin again until after the inspection is complete or until your supervisor tells you to.

No matter what the reason for the inspection, it will be performed in these 3 phases:

1. Opening conference
2. Walk-around
3. Closing conference

The conferences are simply meetings. DOSH inspectors will wait for up to one hour for an authorized company representative to arrive at the inspection. **It is crucial for employees to know:**

- a) who is the authorized representative for your company and/or work site and
- b) to politely ask the inspector to wait for that representative to arrive.

If you are an Approach client, call us as well! When available, our safety team will respond to be on-site at the inspection with you. We can also assist with any follow-up items that result from the inspection.

The inspector will talk privately with the employee representative and/or other workers during the inspection. **Here are some sample questions that may be asked** during these worker consultations:

- How long have you worked for the company?
- Have you or anyone else been injured or had close calls on the job?
- Does the employer provide PPE (personal protective equipment)?
- How often does the employer provide training and what is the training composed of?
- Is there anything you would change to make working conditions safer?

It is important to answer honestly and completely. They want to know about your company's safety culture.

**Remember... Do not panic!** Simply tell the inspector to wait at the job trailer or their vehicle while you contact your supervisor.