

## Don't Let Your Safety Guard Down

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You all are constantly reviewing your policies, procedures, and legal requirements to reduce employees' and residents' exposure to coronavirus. This is an all-consuming task for administrators and employees. However, this can distract from your normal safety efforts in reducing non-coronavirus worker's compensation claims. The Department of Labor and Industries is still using your non-coronavirus worker's compensation claims as part of your experience rating. Keeping your eye on normal prevention efforts is still so important because they can influence your retro refunds if your claims experience remains low.

We propose that you include usual safety efforts as part of your overall heightened coronavirus oversight. For instance, if you are touring your building to be sure that employees are deploying proper PPE use, why not also look for any trip and fall hazards. Trips and falls are one of the most prevalent reasons for serious injuries. When you review food services for proper food handling, look for proper lifting techniques used by employees. You will be emphasizing continued employee safety at the same time you are overseeing your organization's efforts to maintain heightened awareness of coronavirus exposures.

It is also important to continue to hold regular monthly safety meetings at your site. This gives you an opportunity to have a general discussion of employee worker's compensation claims (injury and illness) and talk about how to prevent these injuries or exposures in the future. This will further both your regular safety efforts as well as help prevent coronavirus exposures. These efforts are not mutually exclusive. Safety meetings can be used to discuss any safety issues (including coronavirus) that could cause injuries or disease for your employees.