

# Health Hazard Evaluation Program

What Employees  
Should Know

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



# What is the NIOSH Health Hazard Evaluation Program?



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The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) is a part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The NIOSH mission is to develop new knowledge about occupational safety and health and see that it is used to protect workers. Sometimes, NIOSH is confused with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), but they are separate agencies with different responsibilities for ensuring safe and healthy workplaces.

The Health Hazard Evaluation (HHE) Program evaluates 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 evaluation. It is done at no cost to you or your employer.

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
- Psychosocial issues such as work stress

# Why Should You Request a Health Hazard Evaluation?



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## **An evaluation can benefit employees.**

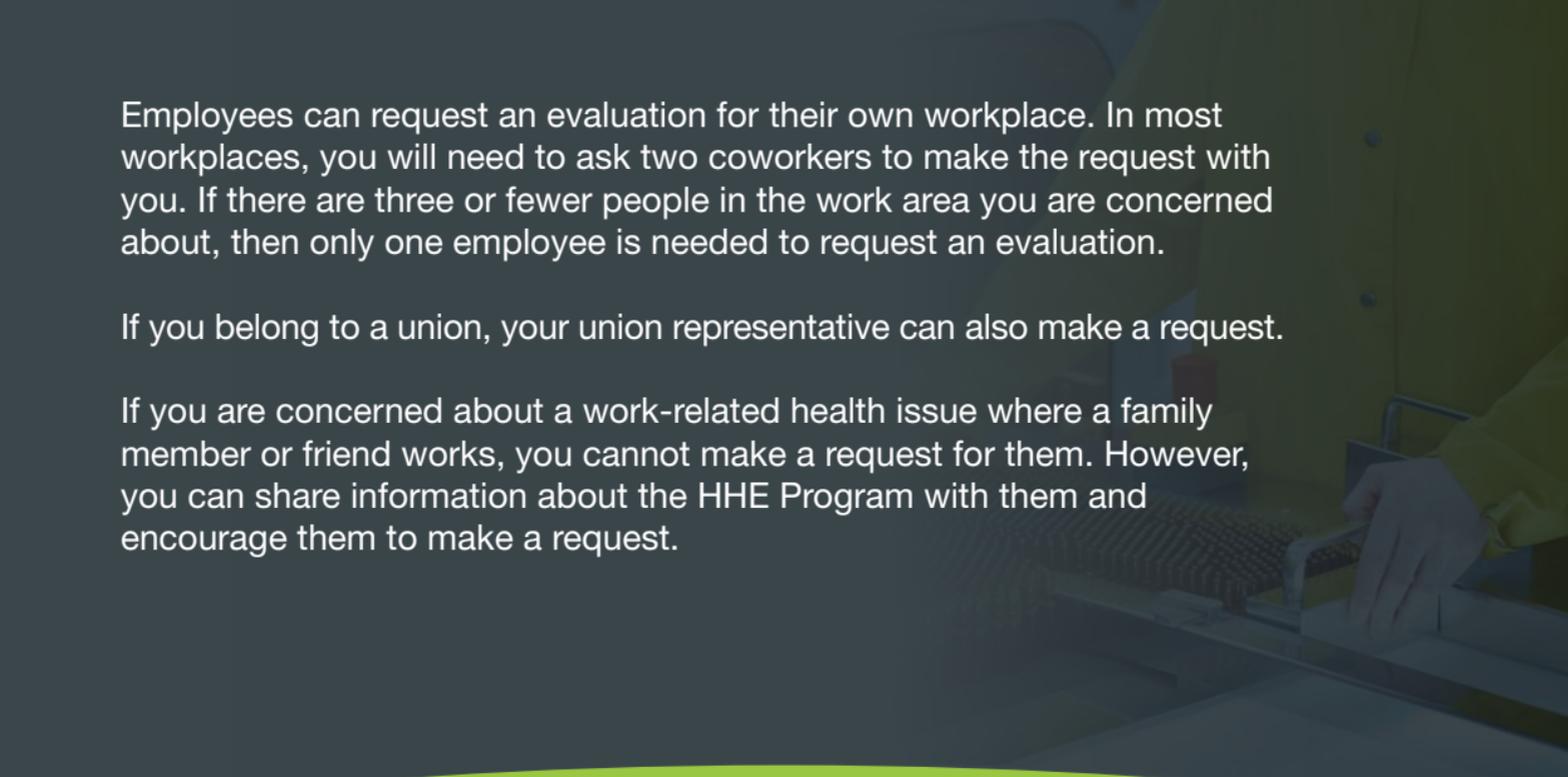
- An evaluation can help give you a greater voice in the health and safety of your workplace.
- You will learn whether exposures or conditions in the workplace may harm your health.
- The HHE Program will tell you and your employer how to reduce or eliminate hazards in your workplace.

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

# Who Can Request a Health Hazard Evaluation?



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Employees can request an evaluation for their own workplace. In most workplaces, you will need to ask two coworkers to make the request with you. If there are three or fewer people in the work area you are concerned about, then only one employee is needed to request an evaluation.

If you belong to a union, your union representative can also 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. However, you can share information about the HHE Program with them and encourage them to make a request.

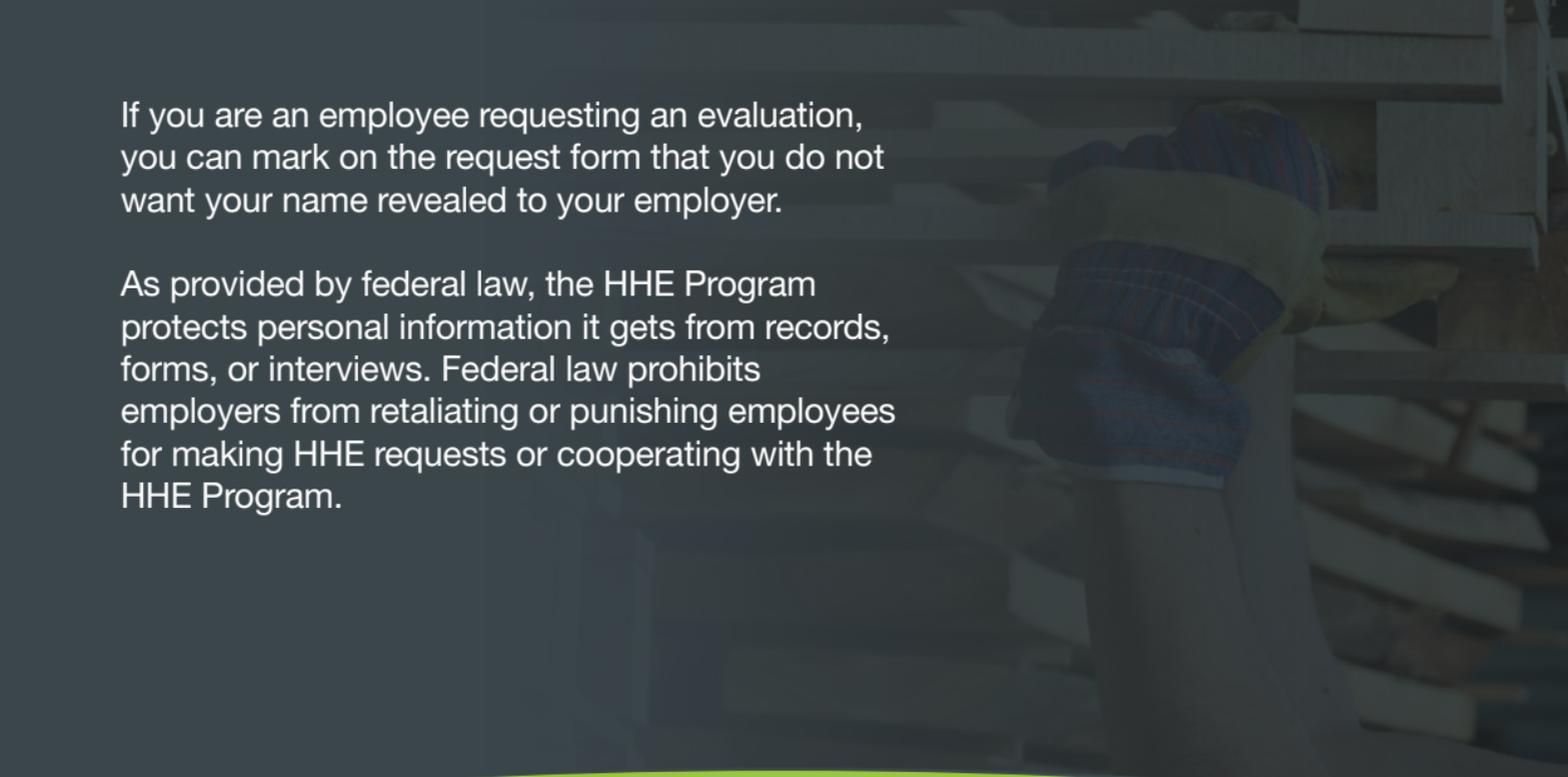
**Do you think that something at your workplace is hazardous to your health?**

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

# Are Employee Requests Confidential?



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

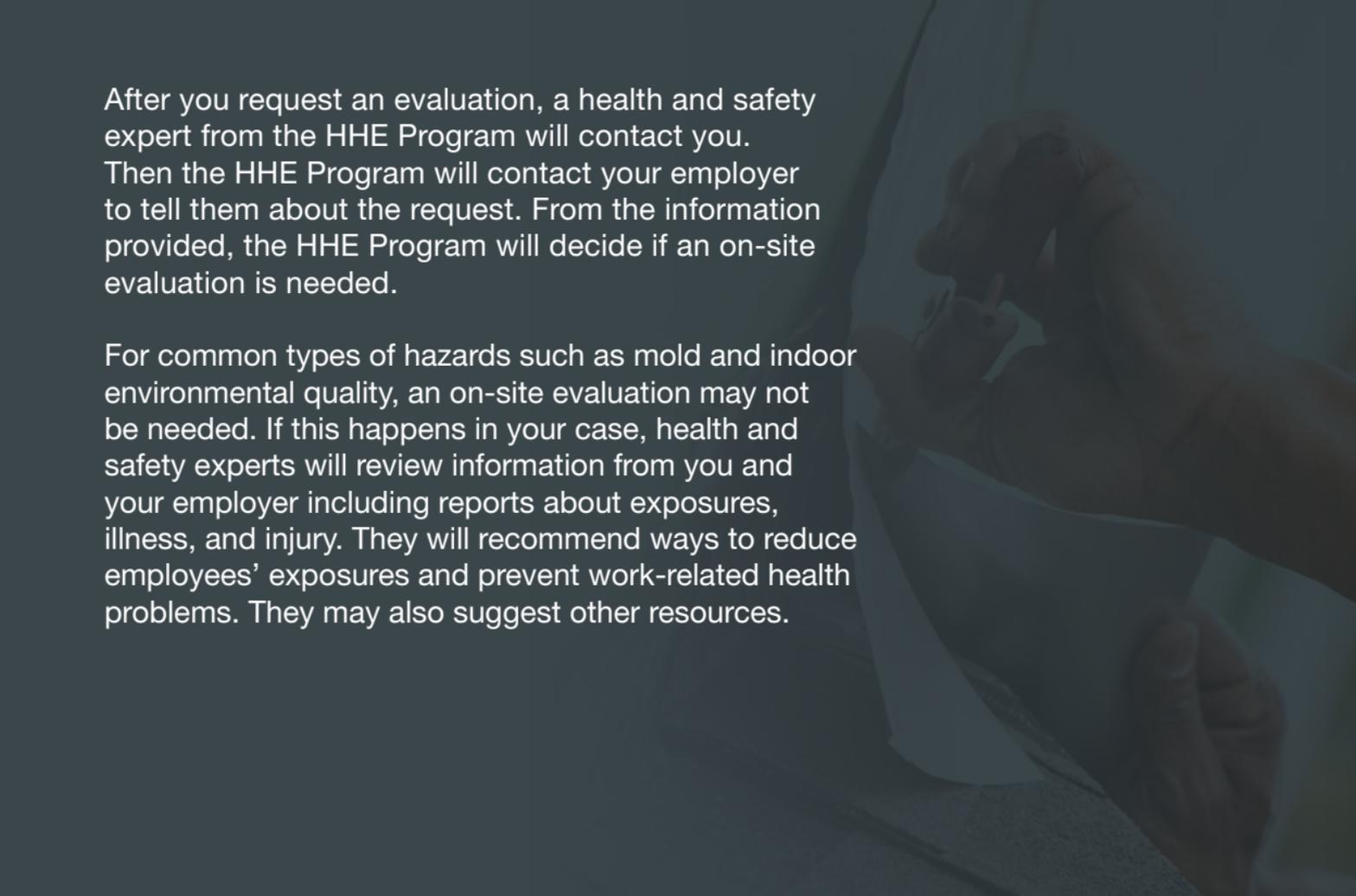
As provided by federal law, the HHE Program protects personal information it gets from records, forms, or interviews. Federal law prohibits employers from retaliating or punishing employees for making HHE requests or cooperating with the HHE Program.

**If you have any questions about how your identity and information will be protected, contact the HHE Program at [HHERequestHelp@cdc.gov](mailto:HHERequestHelp@cdc.gov) or 513-841-4382.**

# What Happens After You Request a Health Hazard Evaluation?



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A person wearing a white lab coat is shown from the chest up, holding a clipboard and a pen. The person is standing in a dimly lit room, possibly a laboratory or office. The background is dark and out of focus.

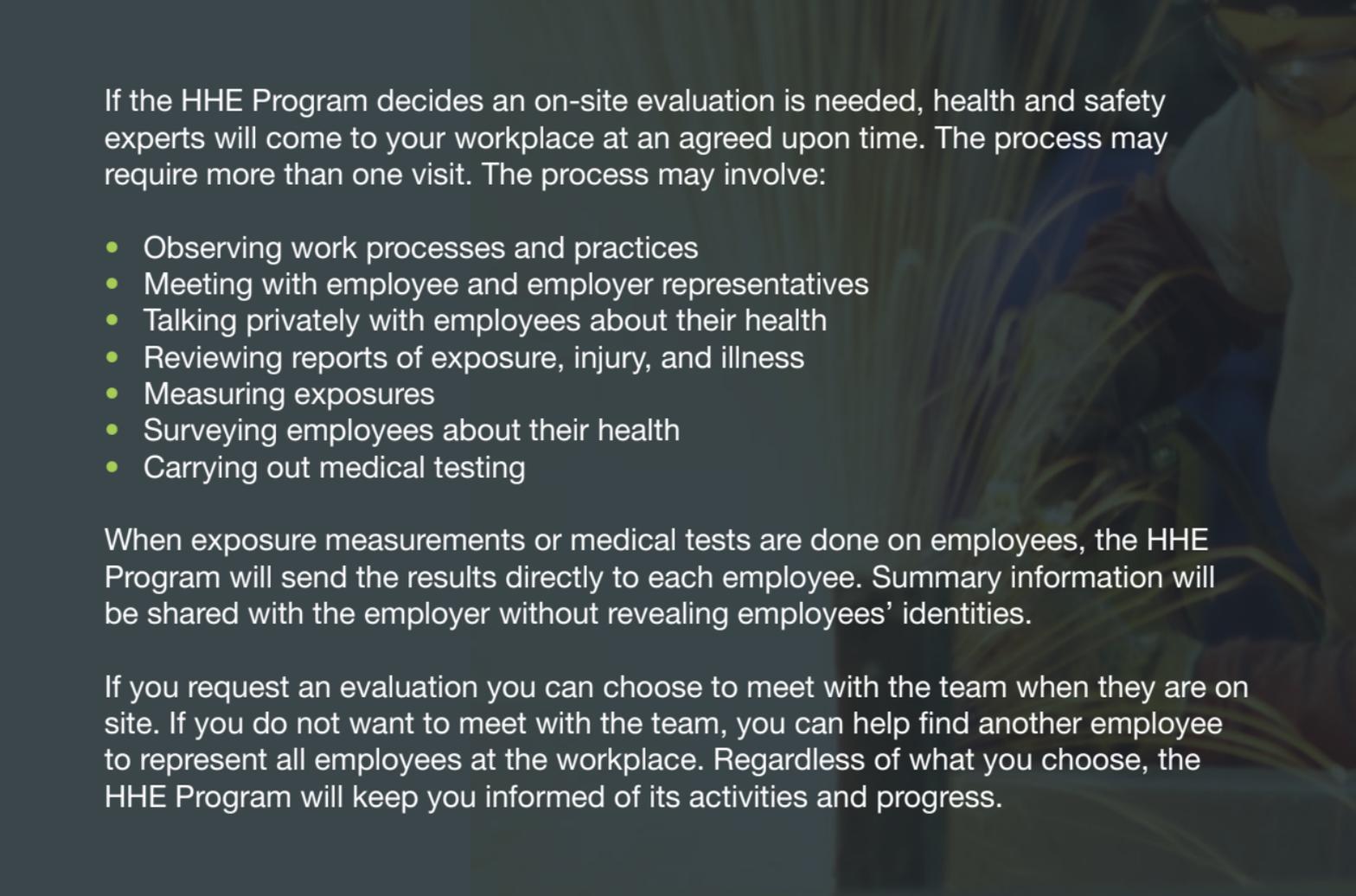
After you request an evaluation, a health and safety expert from the HHE Program will contact you. Then the HHE Program will contact your employer to tell them about the request. From the information provided, the HHE Program will decide if an on-site evaluation is needed.

For common types of hazards such as mold and indoor environmental quality, an on-site evaluation may not be needed. If this happens in your case, health and safety experts will review information from you and your employer including reports about exposures, illness, and injury. They will recommend ways to reduce employees' exposures and prevent work-related health problems. They may also suggest other resources.

# What Happens During an On-Site Evaluation?



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If the HHE Program decides an on-site evaluation is needed, health and safety experts will come to your workplace at an agreed upon time. The process may require more than one visit. The process may involve:

- Observing work processes and practices
- Meeting with employee and employer representatives
- Talking privately with employees about their health
- Reviewing reports of exposure, injury, and illness
- Measuring exposures
- Surveying employees about their health
- Carrying out medical testing

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 evaluation 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 Health Hazard Evaluation?



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## The Report

After the evaluation is done, the HHE Program will send you and your employer a report that will tell you what the HHE Program did and what was 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 shares its reports with other federal agencies and the reports become part of the public record. The HHE Program posts its reports on its website where the reports are available to everyone for free. This allows other facilities to learn from the findings. The reports do not include your name or the name of the business, agency, or organization where you work.

## The Follow Up

For on-site evaluations, after the report is released, the HHE Program will invite you or another employee representative to ask questions and share your thoughts about the evaluation. Later, the HHE Program will send you surveys by mail to get your opinion about your experience and give you a chance to describe actions taken in your workplace since the evaluation. 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.

# How Do You Request a Health Hazard Evaluation?



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The form to request an evaluation can be found at  
<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/hhe/request.html>.

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

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

 1-513-841-4382

 [HHERequestHelp@cdc.gov](mailto:HHERequestHelp@cdc.gov)

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Health Hazard  
Evaluation Program

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

To receive NIOSH 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](mailto:cdcinfo@cdc.gov)  
or visit the NIOSH website  
<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/>.

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