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OSHA to introduce more durable and secure outreach trainer and student cards

WASHINGTON - The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is introducing more durable and secure completion cards for its Outreach Training Program, including 10-hour and 30-hour voluntary safety classes. The new cards are intended to reduce fraud and improve efficiency.

OSHA has created 10- and 30-hour basic safety courses tailored to construction, maritime, and general industry, as well as 15-hour classes for disaster site workers. They cover the basics of workers' rights and OSHA protections, and describe how to identify, avoid and prevent workplace hazards. The courses are not required by OSHA, although some cities and employers do require workers to complete them. More than 830,000 students were trained under this program in fiscal year 2015.

The classes are taught by independent consultants authorized by OSHA and trained through the OSHA Training Institute (OTI) Education Centers. At the conclusion of each course, students receive completion cards, which are currently printed on paper.

After February 29, completion cards will be made of a more durable card stock – like a credit card – with authorizing logos, a watermark when copied, and a QR code for authentication.

Trainer cards will include trainer name, trainer ID number, expiration date, and OTI Education Center where the trainer was authorized. Student cards will have student name, trainer name, date of issue, and

the OTI Education Center which produced the card.

The OTI Education Centers will maintain an electronic database of authorized trainers and students who have completed the 10- and 30-hour classes. This will allow employers and workers to authenticate their card with the use of a QR code on each card. OTI Education Centers will charge $8 each for the new cards, compared to $5 for the current paper cards.

Workers who already have 10-hour and 30-hour cards do not need to change over to the new cards. They may choose to purchase a new card by contacting the trainer who conducted the class, but only if the course was taken within the past three years. The new cards will be issued for in-person training sessions only. Online courses will continue to be offered by authorized providers, but students who complete online training will continue to receive paper cards at this time.

The cards are expected to reduce fraud because their more durable stock will be more difficult to copy. Also each worker card will have verifiable information, including ways to contact the trainer who conducted the course. They are expected to increase efficiency because the new process will reduce the number of days it takes to request and process cards.

For more information on OSHA's voluntary Outreach Training Programs, visit https://www.osha.gov/dte/outreach/index.html.

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