

OSHA Increasing Fines for Violations

June 21, 2016

Penalties assessed against employers for OSHA workplace health and safety violations will be adjusted for inflation under a law passed by Congress.

On Nov. 2, 2015, Congress passed the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015, which requires federal agencies, including OSHA, to adjust their civil money penalties based on inflation. Congress directed that the updated penalty amounts apply to all penalties proposed or assessed after Aug. 1, 2016.

A serious citation or violation currently has a maximum penalty of \$7,000, which will increase to \$12,500. The maximum penalty for a willful violation will increase from \$70,000 to \$125,000.

State plan programs like Michigan OSHA (MIOSHA), California OSHA (CalOSHA), etc., will adopt the increased penalties because they must be "at least as effective as" the federal OSHA program.