



## **Principal Investigator and Laboratory Supervisor Health and Safety Legal Obligations**

According to the [California Labor Code Sections 6423 to 6436](#), an “employer” is defined as ‘every officer, management official, or supervisor having direction, management, control, or custody of any employment, place of employment, or any other employee.’ In the laboratory setting at UCSF, the direct employer is generally the Principal Investigator and/or laboratory supervisor. The Labor Code requires the employer to ensure Health and Safety compliance of the employees they supervise. Failure of an employer to ensure compliance with Health and Safety regulations can ultimately, result in Cal-OSHA violations, civil penalties, criminal charges and jail time as summarized from below:

- An employer who is found guilty of willfully violating a safety order or standard and causing the death of or serious injury to an employee may be punished by up to 1 year jail time or a fine of up to \$100,000 or both.
- The following violations are punishable by up to a \$15,000 fine or 1 year jail time or both:
  - Repeatedly violating a safety order or standard
  - Failing to report a death
  - The failure to comply with or refusal to comply with a safety standard or order after being cited by Cal-OSHA so that there continues to exist a real or apparent hazard to employees
  - Causing anyone else to be guilty of any of the above

The UCSF Office of Environment Health and Safety (EH&S) supports compliance activities for UCSF leadership, Principal Investigators, and Laboratory Supervisors in an effort to ensure that the university and all faculty, staff, students, affiliates, volunteers and visitors have a safe and healthy workplace.

It is important that you understand your legal responsibility for compliance with health and safety regulations. Please contact your [EH&S Specialist](#) for assistance in ensuring your laboratory is in compliance with all Cal-OSHA mandated health and safety requirements, you and your staff are appropriately trained, and that you understand health and safety resources that are available to you at UCSF.