



**THE EMPLOYER'S GUIDE TO  
WORKPLACE HEARING  
CONSERVATION & OSHA COMPLIANCE**

**Everything You Need to Know to Protect  
Employees and Meet OSHA Standards**

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# WHY HEARING CONSERVATION MATTERS

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## Did You Know?

- Noise-Induced Hearing Loss (NIHL) is one of the most common occupational illnesses but is usually preventable.
- OSHA mandates hearing conservation programs for noise levels  $\geq 85$  dB(A) over 8 hours.
- Businesses that fail to comply face fines up to \$15,000 per violation.

*Many HR Directors struggle with rigid, impersonal compliance solutions that disrupt operations and fail to prioritize employee engagement. A streamlined, adaptable hearing conservation program can make a real difference in compliance and workforce health.*





# THE SCIENCE OF HEARING LOSS & WORKPLACE PERFORMANCE

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## HOW NOISE-INDUCED HEARING LOSS (NIHL) HAPPENS

1. High noise damages hair cells in the inner ear
2. Damage accumulates over time → Permanent hearing loss
3. Communication & productivity suffer
4. Higher risk of workplace accidents

### Workplace Impact:

- 31% of employees with untreated hearing loss report lower job performance
- Increased miscommunication & safety risks
- Hearing loss = long-term disability claims & higher healthcare costs

*Many large-scale hearing service providers focus on compliance checkboxes rather than employee well-being. A solution that truly supports workers' health ensures fewer long-term issues and liability concerns.*



# THE BUSINESS CASE FOR HEARING CONSERVATION

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## HEALTHY HEARING IS GOOD FOR BUSINESS!

- **Reduced Workers' Compensation Claims** – Hearing loss claims cost \$70,000+ per case
- **Improved Employee Productivity** – Employees with untreated hearing loss are 5X more likely to leave
- **OSHA Compliance Avoids Penalties** – Violations can result in fines of \$15,000 - \$150,000
- **Lower Healthcare & Insurance Costs** – Reduces long-term medical claims

*Cost-conscious HR Directors need a hearing conservation partner that optimizes compliance while reducing long-term risks—one that focuses on proactive solutions rather than just meeting the bare minimum regulatory requirements.*

# Understanding OSHA Hearing Conservation Requirements

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## Key Employer Responsibilities

- **Noise Monitoring & Risk Assessment** – Identify hazardous noise levels
- **Audiometric Testing (Hearing Screenings)** – Baseline & annual tests required
- **Hearing Protection Devices (HPDs)** – Provide and enforce their use
- **Training & Education** – Annual training on risks & prevention
- **Recordkeeping & Compliance Documentation** – Maintain noise exposure & testing records

## Avoid These Common Violations:

- Not conducting proper noise assessments
- Failing to provide annual audiometric testing
- Inadequate recordkeeping and documentation

*EHS Directors often find that outsourced hearing programs can be slow, bureaucratic, and difficult to schedule. A flexible, mobile-based approach ensures that compliance is met with minimal disruption to operations.*

# Common Workplace Noise Levels & Risk Assessment

Workplace Activity/Tool	Noise Level (dB)	OSHA Action Required?
Office Environment	40-60	None
Heavy Traffic	85	Hearing conservation program
Forklifts & Factory Work	90	Hearing protection
Chainsaws & Jackhammers	105-120	Double protection recommended
Firearms & Jet Engines	130-140	Immediate hearing damage risk

**Rule of Thumb:** *If you have to shout to talk to someone three feet away, your workplace noise exceeds 85 dB.*

*Many providers rely on rigid scheduling that does not accommodate dynamic workplace environments. Partnering with a team that adapts to your business's unique needs ensures seamless compliance.*





# Step-by-Step Guide to Implementing a Conservation Program

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## 1. CONDUCT A NOISE RISK ASSESSMENT



- Use sound level meters or hire a specialist
- Identify high-risk areas & equipment

## 2. SET UP AUDIOMETRIC TESTING



- Baseline hearing tests for new hires
- Annual tests to monitor changes
- Partner with certified audiologists

## 3. PROVIDE & ENFORCE HEARING PROTECTION



- Offer OSHA-approved earplugs & earmuffs
- Train employees on proper fit & use

## 4. EDUCATE EMPLOYEES



- Annual training on risks & protection
- Interactive workshops & incentives

## 5. MAINTAIN RECORDS & STAY COMPLIANT



- Track noise exposure levels
- Keep test records for at least 2 years



### AUDIOLOGIST RECOMMENDATION

*Traditional solutions often provide generic compliance without real employee engagement. A hearing conservation partner that integrates training and real-time feedback can improve long-term adoption & protection.*



# EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT & BUILDING A SAFETY CULTURE



## GETTING EMPLOYEES TO ACTUALLY WEAR HEARING PROTECTION

1. **Make it personal:** Share real-world hearing loss stories
2. **Incentives work:** Reward proper PPE use
3. **Use tech:** Mobile apps to monitor noise exposure
4. **Lead by example:** When managers wear protection, employees follow

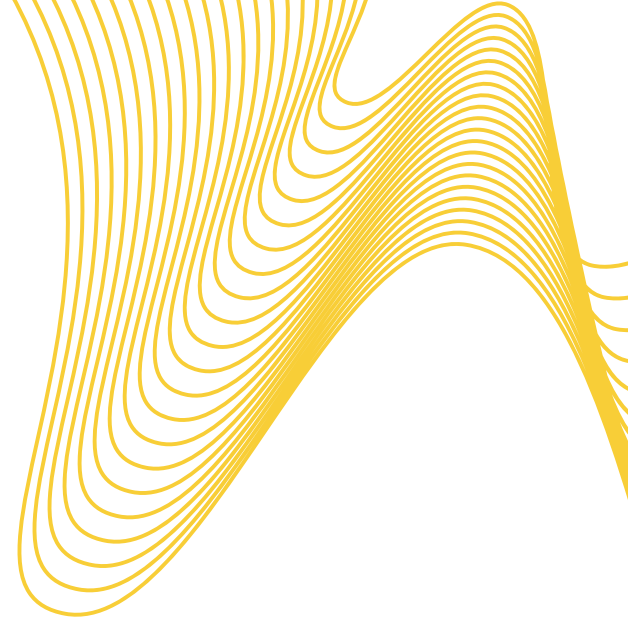
***Want 100% employee compliance?***  
*Try a "Hearing Protection Challenge"*

*Employee buy-in is key. Most hearing programs lack the engagement factor, leading to low compliance rates. A hearing conservation program that integrates motivation and accessibility makes a significant difference.*



## Meet Dr. Emma Durazzo

Dr. Emma, Co-Founder of Anywhere Audiology® & OccHearing is committed to promoting hearing wellness & employee well-being. With expertise in hearing conservation & OSHA compliance, she delivers personalized solutions to create safer, healthier workplaces.



# OSHA Compliance Readiness Checklist

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## DOES YOUR WORKPLACE MEET OSHA'S HEARING CONSERVATION STANDARDS?

- We conduct noise exposure assessments annually.
- We provide free hearing protection to employees.
- We conduct annual hearing screenings
- We train employees at least once per year
- We maintain compliance records





# Get Expert Help Today!

Want to ensure full compliance and protect your employees?  
Book a free consultation today!

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