

88.5 Occupational safety and health standards.

1. Promulgation of rules.

a. As soon as practicable following July 1, 1972, the commissioner shall by rule, adopt and promulgate those occupational safety and health standards, which would result in improved safety or health for employees; provided, that the commissioner shall adopt no such standard unless the same has been adopted and promulgated as a permanent standard by the secretary in accordance with the procedures set forth in the federal law. In the event that any such federal standard is subsequently amended, modified, repealed, or substituted by a new standard, the commissioner shall, within ninety days, review such amendment, modification, repeal or substitution, and take such action with respect to the state standards, including the repeal or substitution of the same, as will conform the state standards to those federal standards then in effect.

b. Before adopting, modifying, or revoking any standard by rule pursuant to this section, the commissioner shall hold a public hearing on the subject matter of the proposed adoption, modification, or revocation. An interested person may appear and be heard at the hearing, in person or by agent or counsel. The provisions of this section are in addition to the requirements of chapter 17A.

c. Notwithstanding other provisions of this section, upon or following July 1, 1972, the commissioner may adopt as interim standards those standards adopted by the secretary in conformance with section 6(a) of the federal law, provided that any such standard so adopted shall cease to be effective on April 28, 1973, unless the commissioner shall have initiated the procedures for adopting a permanent standard in conformance with and following the procedures set forth in this section, in which case the interim standard shall remain in effect pending the adoption of the permanent standard. In the event that any such federal interim standard is subsequently amended, modified, repealed, or substituted by a new interim standard, the commissioner shall, within thirty days, review such amendment, modification, repeal or substitution, and take such action with respect to the state interim standards, including the repeal or substitution of the same, as will conform the state interim standards to those federal interim standards then in effect.

2. *Toxic materials and other harmful physical agents.* The commissioner, in promulgating standards dealing with toxic materials or harmful physical agents under this subsection, shall set the standard which most adequately assures, to the extent feasible, on the basis of the best available evidence, that no employee will suffer material impairment of health or functional capacity even if such employee has regular exposure to the hazard dealt with by such standard for the period of the employee's working life. Development of standards under this subsection shall be based upon research, demonstrations, experiments, and such other information as may be appropriate, but in any event shall conform with the provisions of subsection 1 of this section. In addition to the attainment of the highest degree of health and safety protection for the employee, other considerations shall be the latest available scientific data in the field, the feasibility of the standards, and experience gained under this and other health and safety laws. Whenever practicable, a standard promulgated shall be expressed in terms of objective criteria and of the performance desired.

3. Temporary variances.

a. Any employer may apply to the commissioner for a temporary order granting a variance from a standard or any provision thereof promulgated under this section. Such temporary order shall be granted only if the employer files an application which meets the requirements of paragraph "b" of this subsection and establishes that the employer is unable to comply with the standard by its effective date because of unavailability of professional or technical personnel or of materials and equipment needed to come into compliance with the standards or because necessary construction or operation of the facilities cannot be completed by the effective date, that the employer is taking all available steps to safeguard the employer's employees against the hazards that are covered by the standard, and that the employer has an effective program for coming into compliance with this standard as quickly as practicable. Any temporary order issued under this paragraph shall prescribe the practices, means, methods, operations, and processes which the

employer must adopt and use while the order is in effect and state in detail the employer's program for coming into compliance with the standard. Such a temporary order may be granted only after notice to employees and an opportunity for a hearing, provided that the commissioner may issue one interim order to be effective until a decision is made on the basis of the hearing. No temporary order may be in effect longer than the period needed by the employer to achieve compliance with the standard, or one year, whichever is shorter except that such an order may be renewed not more than twice so long as the requirements of this paragraph are met and an application for renewal is filed at least ninety days prior to the expiration date of the order. No interim renewal of an order may remain in effect for longer than one hundred and eighty days.

b. An application for a temporary order under this subsection shall contain:

- (1) A specification of the standard or portion thereof from which the employer seeks a variance.
- (2) A representation by the employer, supported by representations from qualified persons having firsthand knowledge of the fact represented, that the employer is unable to comply with the standard or portion thereof and a detailed statement of those reasons therefor.
- (3) A statement of the steps the employer has taken and will take (with specific dates) to protect employees against the hazard covered by the standard.
- (4) A statement of when the employer expects to be able to comply with the standard and what steps the employer has taken and what steps the employer will take (with dates specified) to come into compliance with the standard.
- (5) A certification that the employer has informed the employer's employees of any application by giving a copy thereof to their authorized employee representative, posting a statement giving a summary of the application and specifying where a copy may be examined at the place or places where notices to employees are normally posted, and by other reasonably appropriate means as may be directed by the commissioner.
- (6) A description of how employees have been informed shall be contained in the certification. The information to employees shall also inform them of their right to petition the commissioner for a hearing.

4. *Labels, warnings, protective equipment.* Any standard promulgated under this section shall prescribe the use of labels or other appropriate forms of warning as are necessary to insure that employees are apprised of all hazards to which they are exposed, relevant symptoms and appropriate emergency treatment, and proper conditions and precautions of safe use or exposure. Where appropriate, such standard shall also prescribe suitable protective equipment and control or technological procedures to be used in connection with such hazards and shall provide for monitoring or measuring employee exposure at such locations and intervals, and in such manner as may be necessary for the protection of employees. In addition, where appropriate, any such standard shall prescribe the type and frequency of medical examinations or other tests which shall be made available, by the employer or at the employer's cost, to employees exposed to such hazard in order to most effectively determine whether the health of such employee is adversely affected by such exposure. The results of such examinations or tests shall be furnished to the commissioner, and if released by the employee, shall be furnished to the employee's physician and the employer's physician.

5. *Emergency temporary standards.* The commissioner shall provide for an emergency temporary standard to take immediate effect if the commissioner determines that employees are exposed to grave danger from exposure from substances or agents determined to be toxic or physically harmful or from new hazards and if such emergency temporary standard is necessary to protect the employees from such danger. Such emergency standard shall cease to be effective and shall no longer be applicable after the lapse of six months following the effective date thereof unless the commissioner has initiated the procedures provided for under this chapter, for the purpose of promulgating a permanent standard as provided in subsection 1 of this section in which case the emergency temporary standard will remain in effect until the permanent standard is adopted

and becomes effective. Abandonment of the procedure for such promulgation by the commissioner shall terminate the effectiveness and applicability of the emergency temporary standard.

6. *Permanent variance.* Any affected employer may apply to the commissioner for a rule or order for a permanent variance from a standard promulgated under this section. Affected employees shall be given notice of each such application and an opportunity to participate in a hearing. The commissioner shall issue such rule or order if the commissioner determines on the record, after opportunity for an inspection where appropriate and a hearing, that the proponent of the variance has demonstrated by a preponderance of the evidence that the conditions, practices, means, methods, operations, or processes used or proposed to be used by an employer will provide employment and places of employment to the employer's employees which are as safe and healthful as those which would prevail if the employer complied with the standard. The rule or order so issued shall prescribe the conditions the employer must maintain, and the practices, means, methods, operations, and processes which the employer must adopt and utilize to the extent that they differ from the standard in question. Such a rule or order may be modified or revoked upon application by an employer, employees, or by the commissioner on the commissioner's own motion, in the manner prescribed for its issuance under this subsection at any time after six months from its issuance.

7. *Special variance.* Where there are conflicts with standards, rules, or regulations promulgated by any federal agency other than the United States department of labor, special variances from standards, rules, or regulations promulgated under this chapter may be granted to avoid such regulatory conflicts. Such variances shall take into consideration the safety of the employees involved. Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, and with respect to this subsection, any employer seeking relief under this provision must file an application with the commissioner and the commissioner shall forthwith hold a hearing at which employees or other interested persons, including representatives of the federal regulatory agencies involved, may appear and, upon the showing that such a conflict indeed exists, the commissioner may issue a special variance until the conflict is resolved.

8. *Priority for setting standards.* In determining the priorities for establishing standards under this section, the commissioner shall give due regard to the urgency of the need for mandatory safety and health standards for particular industries, trades, crafts, occupations, businesses, workplaces or work environments.

9. *Product safety.* Standards promulgated under this chapter shall not be different from federal standards applying to products distributed or used in interstate commerce unless such standards are required by compelling local conditions and do not unduly burden interstate commerce. This provision does not apply to customized products or parts not normally available on the open market, or to optional parts or additions to products which are ordinarily available with such optional parts or additions.

10. *Judicial review before enforcement.* The provisions of the Iowa administrative procedure Act, chapter 17A, shall apply to judicial review of standards issued under this section. Notwithstanding any provision of the Iowa administrative procedure Act, chapter 17A, to the contrary, a person who is aggrieved or adversely affected by a standard issued under this section must seek judicial review of such standard prior to the sixtieth day after such standard becomes effective. All determinations of the commissioner shall be conclusive if supported by substantial evidence in the record as a whole.

11. *Fire fighters clothing and equipment.* The commissioner shall establish standards and promulgate rules for protective helmets, boots, fire coats, trousers, gloves, work uniforms and may set standards for any other protective clothing or equipment which shall be worn or used by fire fighters within the state. In establishing these standards, the commissioner shall consider the standards of or proposed by the national fire protection association, the international association of fire fighters and any federal agency which may have such standards. The commissioner shall provide a copy of the standards, rules and any changes thereto to each fire department operating in this state. The standards established and the rules promulgated hereunder shall apply to protective clothing and equipment worn or used by every fire fighter in the state, provided that the standards and rules shall be advisory rather than mandatory for volunteer fire departments.

The standards promulgated by the commissioner under the provisions of this subsection shall be effective for all equipment purchased after January 1, 1979. All equipment for which standards are established under the provisions of this subsection shall meet the standards promulgated under the provisions of this subsection prior to January 1, 1981.

12. *Railway sanitation and shelter.* A railway corporation within the state shall provide adequate sanitation and shelter for all railway employees. The commissioner shall adopt rules requiring railway corporations within the state to provide a safe and healthy workplace. The commissioner shall enforce the requirements of this section upon the receipt of a written complaint.

[C66, 71, § 88A.1188A.13; C73, 75, 77, 79, 81, § 88.5]

86 Acts, ch 1245, § 521; 88 Acts, ch 1042, §1; 93 Acts, ch 180, § 54; 94 Acts, ch 1023, §84; 2001 Acts, ch 24, §25; 2002 Acts, ch 1119, §10; 2003 Acts, ch 44, §114