HIV is not just a health problem. HIV and AIDS have had a major impact on workers, their families, enterprise performance and national economies.

HIV has led to loss of life and livelihood for millions. Its effects are concentrated among women and men of working age (15-49).

Persistent stigma and discrimination on the basis of HIV status hinder effective prevention efforts and lead to violations of human rights at work.

Recommendation No. 200: Its broad scope protects every worker

All workers are protected by the new labour standard, including:

- Workers in all sectors of economic activity in the formal and informal economies;
- Persons in training and interns, job applicants, job seekers and laid-off workers;
- Armed forces and uniformed services.

The rights established in Recommendation No. 200 are not restricted to persons living with HIV. They extend to all workers, their families and their dependants.

“Dr Christoforos Mallouris, Global Network of People living with HIV (GNP+)”

Governments can take action to:

- Develop and implement national policies and programmes on HIV and AIDS and the world of work, in collaboration with employers’ and workers’ organizations & persons living with HIV;
- Collaborate with the national AIDS authorities to integrate workplace policies and programmes into national AIDS strategies;
- Integrate HIV into other relevant national schemes;
- Train labour inspectors, judges and magistrates and set up mechanisms to monitor the policies.

Employers can take action to:

- Develop workplace policies and programmes for workers and their families, including contractual workers;
- Facilitate access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support through their own mechanisms or through relevant partnerships;
- Develop HIV programmes for supply chains and set up public-private partnerships (PPP) to expand HIV programmes;
- Promote HIV education and training at all levels.

Trade unions can take action to:

- Collaborate with governments and employers in the development of workplace policies and programmes at national, sectoral and enterprise levels;
- Promote awareness of HIV and AIDS through education and training among their affiliates;
- Participate in HIV workplace committees and play an active role in the implementation of policies and programmes;
- Engage with affiliates and sectoral unions to expand the programme and to cover workers in the informal economy.
The International Labour Organization (ILO) considers every workplace as an opportunity to engage in social dialogue and promote decent work throughout the world.

The ILO contributes to improving the living and working conditions of millions of workers by assisting governments, employers’ and workers’ organizations in developing, adopting and giving effect together to international labour standards that protect human rights at work.

With regard to HIV and AIDS, the ILO is working in close collaboration with the other cosponsors of UNAIDS to respond to the HIV pandemic.

For more information:


Contact the ILO: iloaids@ilo.org

First International Labour Standard on HIV and AIDS

The ILO Recommendation concerning HIV and AIDS and the World of Work, 2010 (No. 200)

Prevent HIV,
Protect Human Rights at Work.

The ILO is the specialized agency of the United Nations which is mandated to establish international labour standards and has worked for the advancement of social justice since 1919.

“Recommendation No. 200 constitutes an unequivocal commitment by the ILO constituency of member States and the representatives of employers and workers, in close collaboration with organizations of people living with HIV and partner international organizations, in particular UNAIDS, to tap into the immense contribution that the world of work can make to ensuring universal access to prevention, treatment, care and support.”

Juan Somavia, Director-General, ILO

“Workers are the lifeblood of the economy and must be protected. The new ILO standard will bring us one step closer to our goal of universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support.”

Michel Sidibé, Executive Director, UNAIDS

“With Recommendation No. 200 we can harness the strength of the world of work and optimize workplace interventions to significantly improve the protection of human rights. Let’s work together to implement this Recommendation. It will be a major contribution to making the dream of an AIDS-free generation a reality.”

Dr. Sophia K. Kisting, Director, ILO Programme on HIV/AIDS and the World of Work

Set up HIV workplace policies and programmes. Relevant, correct and timely information can save lives.