The Division of Occupational Safety and Health administers and enforces the 1973 Occupational Safety and Health Act of North Carolina, a broadly inclusive law which applies to most private sector employment in the State and to all agencies of state and local government. North Carolina currently conducts one of 26 state-administered occupational safety and health programs in the nation. The Occupational Safety and Health Division, through its East and West Compliance Bureaus, conducts approximately 5,000 inspections a year. The division conducts investigations of complaints made by workers, investigations of work-related accidents and deaths, general schedule inspections of randomly picked firms, and follow-up inspections of firms previously cited for OSHA violations. Inspection schedules are coordinated through the Planning, Statistics and Information Management Bureau. Worker complaints about unsafe or unhealthy working conditions should be made in writing to the Occupational Safety and Health Division or by using our online complaint form.

In addition to enforcing state OSHA safety and health standards, the North Carolina program offers free services to the 200,000 private and public employers under its jurisdiction through its Consultative Services Bureau, and educational and engineering assistance through its Education, Training, and Technical Assistance Bureau. By making full use of these non-enforcement services, employers may bring their establishments into full compliance with OSHA standards. Employers may contact the bureaus to receive free aid, including technical assistance or on-site visits. The North Carolina Occupational Safety and Health standards parallel the federal OSHA standards. The North Carolina standards may be more strict than the federal standards, but they may not be less strict. Serious violations of OSHA standards can result in monetary fines; dates by which the violations must be abated accompany the citations.

The 1986 General Assembly enacted into law a new program requiring the registration and inspection of housing provided to migrant agricultural workers. Beginning in 1990, everyone who owns migrant housing must notify the Department of Labor about the housing 45 days before migrants are to arrive, and the Agricultural Safety and Health Bureau of the OSH Division will conduct a pre-occupancy inspection of the housing. Migrant housing must meet the OSHA standards plus
specific standards for heat, fire protection, and kitchen sanitation. Migrant housing which does not meet the standards can subject owners to fines and abatement requirements.