

16 States Pass Needlestick Legislation

- ❑ **Alaska.** Safer needles bill passed during the past year.
- ❑ **California.** In 1998, Service Employees International Union locals in California succeeded in passing the first safer needle law in the country. This historic legislation requires the use of safer needles in all hospitals and other health care facilities and has become a model for legislation in other states. The state of California estimates its safer needle law will save over \$100 million a year by reducing the need to test and treat injured and infected workers.
- ❑ **Connecticut.** Safer needles bill passed during the past year.
- ❑ **Georgia.** The state's Senate and House unanimously approved Georgia's safer needle bill before sending it to the governor's desk. Signed on April 20, 2000, the bill requires the state's Department of Public Health to come up with a safer needle standard by Jan. 1, 2001.
- ❑ **Maine.** Safer needles bill passed during the past year.
- ❑ **Maryland.** Safer needles bill passed during the past year. A second safer needle bill that would amend the state's bloodborne pathogens standard was signed by the governor this year.
- ❑ **Massachusetts.** Rules enacted in August 2000 require hospitals to establish rules for the use of devices that will minimize the risk of injury from needlestick and sharps. Hospitals must also set up effective procedures to identify and select new devices, and maintain sharps injury logs that identify devices involved in any incident.
- ❑ **Minnesota.** After it passed the state senate with a vote of 61-1, Gov. Jesse Ventura signed Minnesota's safer needle law on April 10, 2000.
- ❑ **New Hampshire.** Gov. Jeanne Shaheen signed a safer needle law on May 26, 2000, after a mentally ill, HIV-positive patient stabbed an emergency department technician with a needle containing the patient's own blood at a Manchester hospital on April 4.
- ❑ **New Jersey.** Signed into law by Gov. Christine Todd Whitman on Jan. 4, 2000, New Jersey's safer needle legislation requires health care facilities to begin using safer needle systems within 12 months.
- ❑ **New York.** The governor signed a bill on Nov. 1, 2000, that requires the use of safer sharps and needles in all health care settings.
- ❑ **Oklahoma.** Safer needles bill passed during the past year.
- ❑ **Ohio.** Safer needles bill passed during the past year.
- ❑ **Tennessee.** Safer needles bill passed over the past year.
- ❑ **Texas.** Safer needles bill passed during the past year.
- ❑ **West Virginia.** Legislation signed in April 2000 requires the creation of a needlestick injury prevention program, including the recording of every "sharps" injury, in all public and private health care facilities. In addition, the division of health was required to propose new rules by July 1, 2000, that would require facilities, as a condition of licensure, to use needleless systems or other engineering controls to prevent needlestick injuries.

There is action on this issue pending in the following 10 areas: **Illinois, Pennsylvania, Florida, Washington, Rhode Island, Michigan, Indiana, Vermont, Iowa, and the District of Columbia.**

Source: Service Employees International Union, Washington, DC.