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News Release

U.S. Department of Labor Cites Hackensack Meridian Health in North Bergen, New Jersey, For Failing to Protect Employees from Coronavirus

NORTH BERGEN, NJ – The U.S. Department of Labor’s Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has cited Hackensack Meridian Health Residential Care Inc. OSHA issued two serious citations and one other-than-serious violation for failing to protect employees from exposure to the coronavirus at its North Bergen, New Jersey, facility. OSHA proposed a penalty of \$28,070 for the violations.

Based on a coronavirus-related inspection, OSHA cited Hackensack Meridian Health for a serious violation for failure to provide respirators to resident-care employees for a period of time in March 2020. Employees were caring for residents who were exhibiting symptoms of coronavirus. OSHA also cited the employer for failure to conduct respirator fit testing, effective training and compliant medical evaluations, during the period after the employer began providing respirators to the employees and requiring their use. OSHA cited one other-than-serious violation for the facility’s failure to establish a fit-test record for qualitative fit tests.

“Employers must take appropriate steps to protect the safety and health of their employees during the pandemic,” said OSHA Area Director Kris Hoffman, in Parsippany, New Jersey. “OSHA will continue to field and respond to complaints and take steps needed to address unsafe workplaces, including vigorous enforcement action for all standards that apply to the coronavirus, as warranted.”

OSHA guidance details proactive measures employers can take to protect workers from the coronavirus, such as social distancing measures and the use of physical barriers, face shields and face coverings when employees are unable to physically distance at least 6 feet from each other. OSHA guidance also advises that employers should provide safety and health information through training, visual aids, and other means to communicate important safety warnings in a language their workers understand.

The company has 15 business days from receipt of the citation and penalty to comply, request an informal conference with OSHA’s area director or contest the findings before the independent Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission.

Employers with questions on compliance with OSHA standards should contact their local OSHA office for guidance and assistance at 800-321-OSHA (6742). [OSHA’s coronavirus response webpage](#) offers extensive

resources for addressing safety and health hazards during the evolving coronavirus pandemic.

Under the [Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970](#), employers are responsible for providing safe and healthful workplaces for their employees. OSHA's role is to help ensure these conditions for America's working men and women by setting and enforcing standards, and providing training, education and assistance. For more information, visit <https://www.osha.gov>.

The mission of the Department of Labor is to foster, promote and develop the welfare of the wage earners, job seekers and retirees of the United States; improve working conditions; advance opportunities for profitable employment; and assure work-related benefits and rights.

Agency

Occupational Safety & Health Administration

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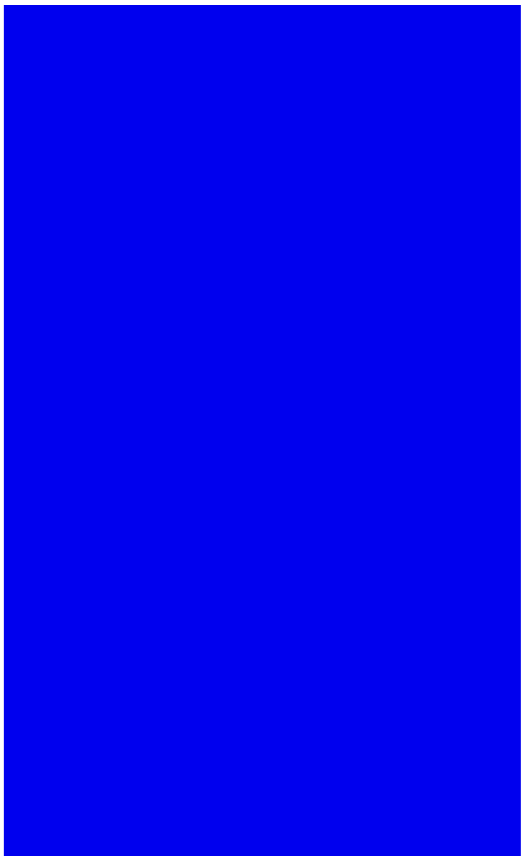
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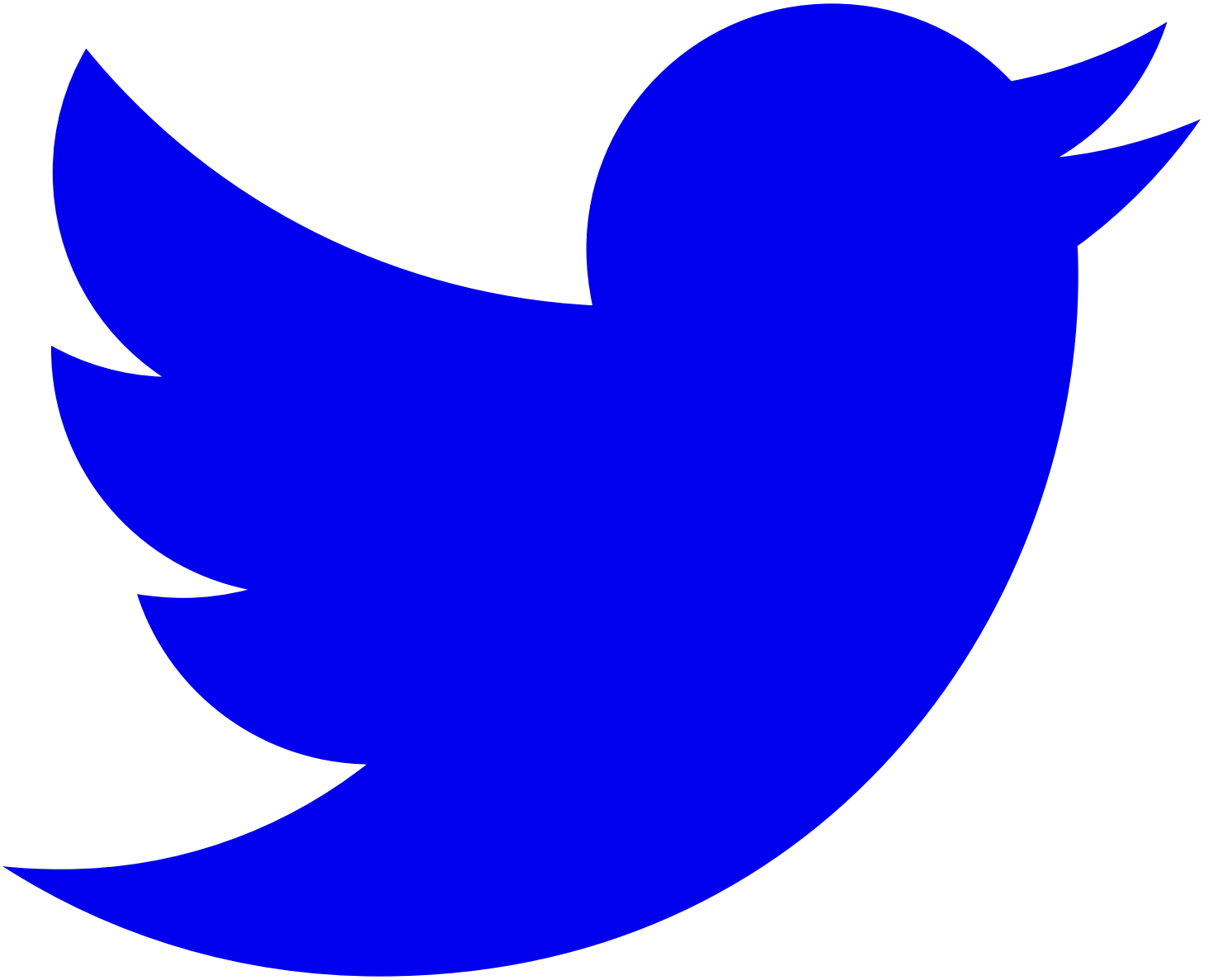
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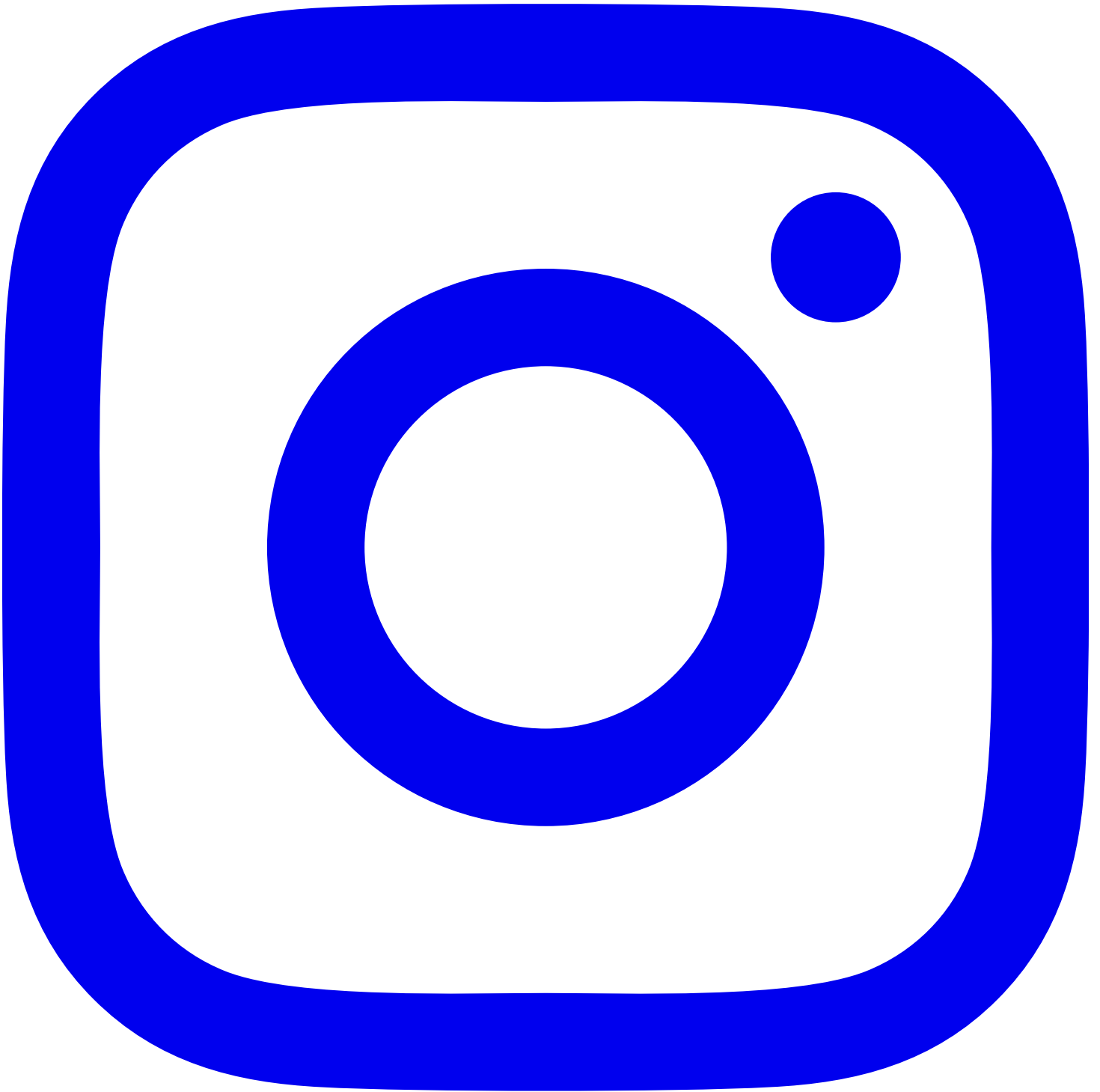




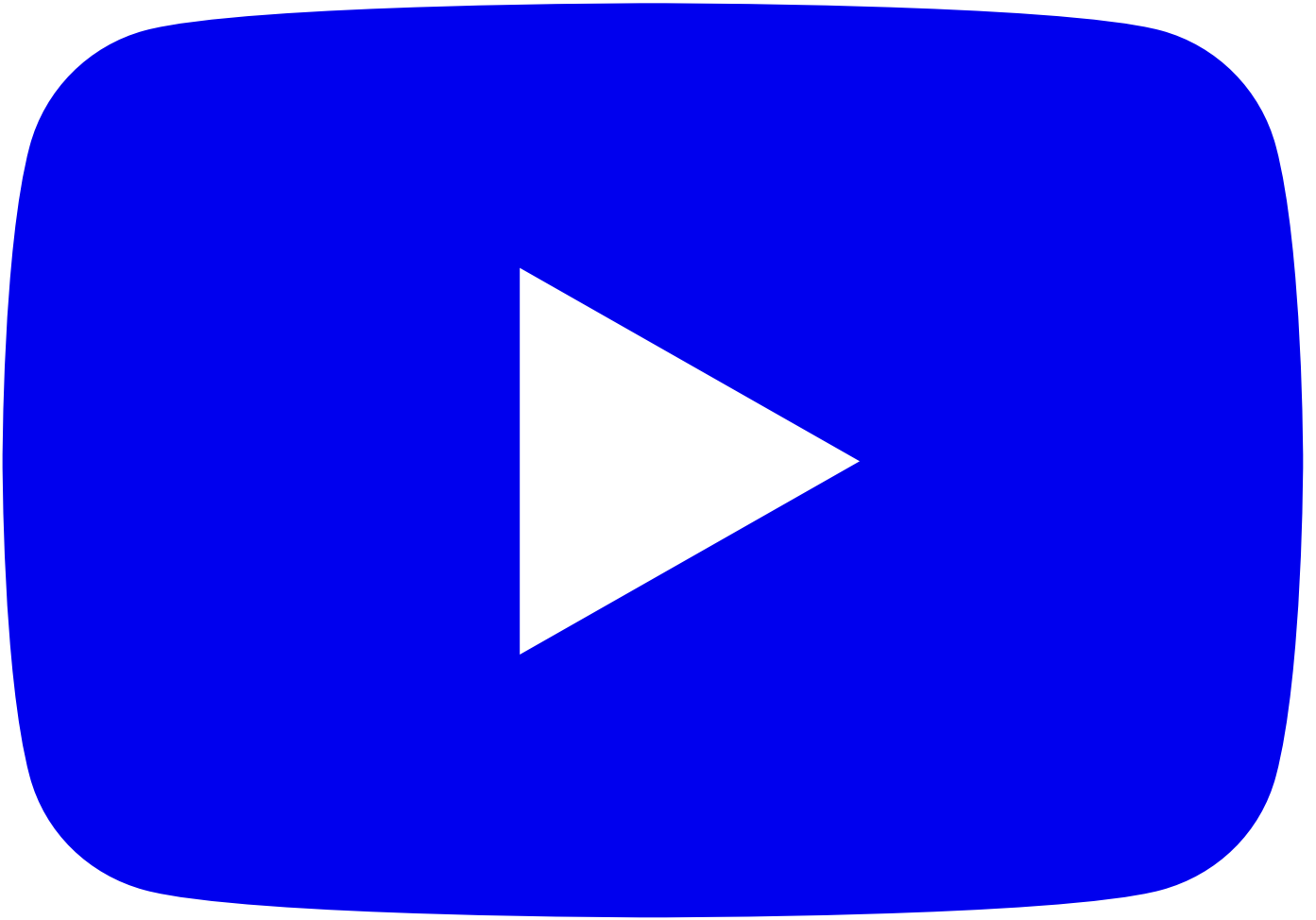
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