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[4163–18–P

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

[Docket No. CDC-2026-1882, NIOSH-366]

National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) Center for Occupational Robotics Research (CORR); Request for Information

AGENCY: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

ACTION: Request for information.

SUMMARY: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), in the Department of Health and Human Services, requests public input on research priorities and prevention needs related to humanoid robots in workplaces. Through its Center for Occupational Robotics Research (CORR), NIOSH conducts research and provides scientific leadership to improve the safety, health, and well-being of workers who use, wear, or work near robots. NIOSH seeks information on workplace applications, human-robot interaction, performance measurement and validation, and ways to prevent injuries and illnesses throughout design, deployment, and use. This request is for information-gathering purposes only and does not propose new regulations, requirements, or policies.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before [INSERT DATE 90 DAYS FOLLOWING PUBLICATION].

ADDRESSES: Submit comments by either of the following methods:

• *Federal eRulemaking Portal: https://www.regulations.gov.* Follow the instructions for submitting comments.

• *Mail:* NIOSH Docket Office, Robert A. Taft Laboratories, MS C-34, 1090 Tusculum Avenue, Cincinnati, Ohio 45226-1998.

Instructions: All written submissions received in response to this document must include the agency name and docket number (CDC-2026-1882 NIOSH-366) for this activity. All relevant comments, including any personal information provided, will be posted without change to *https://www.regulations.gov.* Do not submit comments by email.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Emily Haas, 626 Cochran Mills Rd. Pittsburgh, PA 15236; Telephone (412) 386-4627 (this is not a toll-free number); Email NIOSHregs@cdc.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

NIOSH established the Center for Occupational Robotics Research (CORR) in 2017 to address the safety of workers who use, wear, or work near robots. CORR works with partners to monitor robot-related injury trends; evaluate robotic technologies as potential sources of, and interventions for, work-related injuries and illnesses; develop risk profiles; identify and conduct research; support consensus safety standards; and develop best practices, guidance, and training for safe human-robot interaction. CORR's portfolio includes traditional industrial robots as well as collaborative and mobile robots, wearable robotics and powered exoskeletons, remotely controlled or autonomous vehicles and drones, and other emerging robotic technologies. Additionally, NIOSH's Center for Direct Reading and Sensor Technologies (CDRST) informs research and guidance related to selecting, evaluating, using, and interpreting direct-reading and sensor technologies for occupational safety and health. This expertise may be relevant to questions about robot-mounted sensors, workplace monitoring, worker-worn sensors, alarm performance,

sensor data quality, and the interpretation and use of those data. Current and recent NIOSH work includes:

- Surveillance of robot-related injury claims and studies of how robot motion and design can affect perceived safety, trust, workload, worker behavior, and task performance
- Human-robot interaction studies including robot-arm and mobile-robot studies that examine how movement speed, trajectory, design, and interaction geometry shape perceived safety, trust, workload, worker behavior, and task performance.
- Various approaches to visibility, separation, and collision avoidance
- Research in application areas such as construction that also considers how changing work conditions, sensing, communication, software, and work organization can affect safe implementation.

NIOSH is exploring occupational safety and health applications of humanoid robots. Humanoid robots may combine bipedal or other human-like mobility with manipulation, perception, remote operation, autonomous functions, and software that can be updated or adapted. These characteristics may create questions that are not fully answered by experience with fixed industrial robots or other established robot types. NIOSH is interested in evidence about both potential worker-safety benefits and potential hazards, including how robot capabilities, work organization, and workplace conditions affect risk. Please consider addressing these questions or provide other comments you deem relevant.

1) What tasks could humanoid robots perform, and how might their safety risks and benefits differ from those of other robots?

2) How might humanoid robots affect workers' awareness, trust, workload, training, and safety behaviors?
3) What hazards should be prioritized, and what injury, near-miss, or exposure data would help identify risks to workers?
4) What tests or measures are needed to assess humanoid robot safety in realistic work conditions?
5) What factors help or hinder organizations in adopting and sustaining effective safety practices for humanoid robots?
6) How could sensors or wearables support worker safety around humanoid robots?
7) Which robot design features and safety controls should be prioritized?
8) What research, standards, or partnerships should NIOSH prioritize to support safe human-robot interaction?

John J. Howard,

Director, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,

Department of Health and Human Services.

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