

HEAT

is a serious hazard!

Due to climate change, there are more hot days and higher temperatures. Every year, workers die and many more are hospitalized from heat illnesses. You can protect yourself by getting informed about prevention measures, your rights at work and how to take action.

For indoor workers, employers must provide cool down areas when indoor temperatures reach 82° or more. When indoor temperatures reach 87° or more, employers must find ways to cool the space.

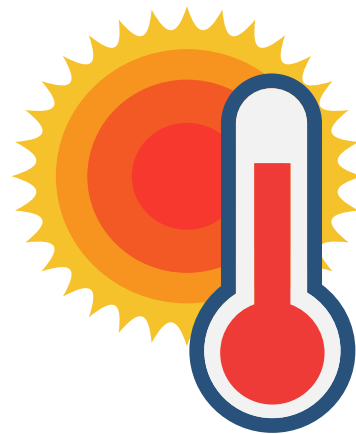


For outdoor workers, employers must ensure shade is available when it's 80° or more. For industries such as agriculture, transportation, and gardening, when it's 95° or more, employers must take additional precautions including giving 10 minute breaks every 2 hours and observing workers in case they develop symptoms.



At work, you can:

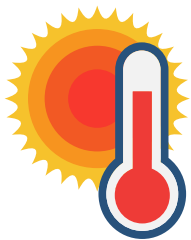
- > Ask your employer for protections – it's your right!
- > Drink small amounts of water – about 1 cup every 15 minutes, before you're thirsty. Before and after work, drink more water and remember caffeine and alcohol can dehydrate you.
- > Take breaks and cool down before you feel sick.
- > Wear light-colored clothing if you work outside.
- > Notify your supervisor when you or your co-workers have symptoms.



Your employer must protect you at work.

For example, your employer must provide:

- > Measures to reduce your exposure to heat: shade, air conditioning, fans, etc.
- > Fresh drinking water (four cups per worker per hour)
- > Places for you to take breaks away from the heat
- > Extra breaks when it's hot or when you feel unwell
- > Time to get used to working in the heat
- > Training on symptoms and the employer's plan to protect you from the heat
- > Medical attention if you need it



You are at higher risk for heat illness if you:

- > Are working during a heat wave
- > Have certain medical conditions or take certain medications
- > Are older or pregnant
- > Are not used to working in the heat

Your body needs time to adapt to the heat

It takes up to two weeks for your body to adapt to the heat. Talk with your supervisor about gradually increasing the number of hours you are exposed to heat at work.



What your employer must do in case of emergency

If a worker has severe symptoms, the employer should get emergency medical attention immediately, try to cool off the worker, and offer water.



Symptoms to address immediately

- > Headache
- > Fatigue or weakness
- > Nausea or dizziness
- > Muscle cramps

If you have these symptoms, tell your supervisor. Drink water and rest in a cool area until you are better.

Symptoms that require emergency medical services

- > High internal body temperature
- > Hot, red and dry skin
- > Confusion, lack of coordination, or aggression
- > Chills or seizures
- > Fainting

If you have these symptoms, your supervisor should arrange for emergency medical services.

What more can you do?

- > Learn about your rights and document what is happening at work.
- > Talk to your supervisor and ask for better protections, if possible with other coworkers.
- > Ask your union, worker center or community organization for help.
- > File a complaint with Cal/OSHA, the agency that enforces health and safety laws for all workers, regardless of immigration status.
- > Refuse to do dangerous work - it's your right!
- > Get involved with campaigns to change the conditions that cause climate change.



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