

Cal/OSHA Passes Indoor Heat Regulation

Article By:

Joshua M. Henderson

Sierra Vierra

On June 20, 2024, the California Occupational Safety and Health Standards Board (Cal/OSHA) unanimously [adopted a new standard for Heat Illness Prevention in Indoor Places of Employment](#). A prior attempt to pass the regulation failed on procedural grounds.

Covered Employers

The new standard will apply to all indoor work areas where the temperature equals or exceeds 82 degrees Fahrenheit when employees are present. However, the standard does not apply to employees who telework from a location of their choosing that is outside the employer's control. In addition, the standard does not apply to "incidental heat exposures" of less than 15 minutes in any 60-minute period when the temperature is about 82 degrees Fahrenheit and below 95 degrees Fahrenheit.

Prisons and certain detention facilities are also exempted from the standard.

Additional requirements under the regulation may apply when the temperature equals or exceeds 87 degrees Fahrenheit.

Employer Obligations

For workplaces subject to the regulations employers will be required to do some or all of the following depending on the heat index at the workplace:

- Provide drinking water. Where drinking water is not plumbed or otherwise continuously supplied, employers shall provide sufficient quantities at the start of the shift to provide one quart per employee per hour of drinking for the entire shift.
- Provide access to cool-down areas which are defined as an indoor or outdoor area that are blocked from direct sunlight and shielded from other high radiant heat sources.
- Assess temperature and heat index and evaluate risk factors of heat illness.
- Establish and maintain accurate records of either the temperature or heat index measurements.

- Use control measures to minimize the risk of heat illness including engineering controls, and administrative controls.
- Develop emergency response procedures and conduct employee training.

The Cal/OSHA Board has requested that the Office of Administrative Law (OAL) expedite its effective date. If this happens the standard will take effect in early **August 2024**. If the rule is not expedited, then it will take effect on **October 1, 2024**.

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