

A yellow triangle pointing downwards, located to the left of the 'BLOGS' header.

BLOGS

Workplace Safety

Proposed OSHA Rule Hopes to Turn Down the Heat

On August 30, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) published a proposed new rule aimed at addressing the adverse effects of heat in the workplace. The proposed rule – titled Heat Injury and Illness Prevention in Outdoor and Indoor Work Settings – is intended to create a national workplace standard addressing prevention of heat-related illness, injury and death.

The proposed rule, should it be finalized, would apply to both indoor and outdoor work in general industry, construction, agriculture and maritime workplaces. There are a number of exceptions to the proposed rule, including short term exposure (less than 15 minutes in any 60-minute period), work at indoor sites of less than 80°F, telework, and indoor sedentary work. OSHA estimates that the proposed rule would affect over 35 million workers.

Covered employers would be required to develop a plan to evaluate and control heat hazards, to monitor heat exposure, to respond to heat illness and emergency, and to provide employee training. The proposed rule would also require certain actions if a Heat Trigger was exceeded. The first trigger, set at a heat index of 80°F, would require such actions as providing cool water and break areas with cooling measures and also allowing paid rest breaks if needed to prevent overheating. The second trigger, set at a heat index of 90°F, would require, among other things, mandatory 15-minute paid rest breaks at least every two hours and a system for observing employees for signs of overheating.

As noted, this is currently a proposed rule, not a final rule. OSHA has invited public comment, with a deadline of December 30, 2024. The full proposed rule, including a summary Fact Sheet and information about providing comments can be found at <https://www.osha.gov/heat-exposure/rulemaking>.

Related People

Brian Woolley

Senior Counsel

Kansas City

816.460.5621

brian.woolley@lathropgpm.com

Related Services

[Employment & Labor](#)