

Preparing for OSHA's Proposed Heat Injury & Illness Prevention Standard

OSHA published its proposed Heat Injury and Illness Prevention Standard in August 2024, followed by a public comment period and hearings in 2025. The agency is currently reviewing comments and considering revisions before issuing a final rule. **The standard has not yet been finalized and is not currently enforceable.**

Now is the ideal time to prepare. Employers that begin developing heat illness prevention programs today will be better positioned if a federal standard is adopted and, more importantly, can reduce heat-related injuries and illnesses before they occur.

What Would Employers Need to Do?

If finalized, employers covered by the standard would likely need to:



Provide Drinking Water

Accessible, cool drinking water
Encourage employees to drink regularly



Provide Cooling Areas

Shade or air-conditioned recovery areas
Allow employees to cool down when needed



Implement Rest Breaks

Scheduled or additional breaks during high heat
More frequent breaks as temperatures increase



Train Employees & Supervisors

Recognize signs of heat illness
Emergency response procedures
Proper hydration practices



Develop a Heat Illness Prevention Plan

Identify heat hazards
Establish procedures for monitoring conditions
Outline emergency response protocols



Acclimatize New Employees

Gradually increase workloads
for new and returning employees

Industries Most Likely to be Affected

- Construction
- Landscaping
- Agriculture
- Manufacturing
- Warehousing
- Public Works
- Transportation
- Roofing
- Utilities
- Outdoor recreation

Even employers with indoor operations may be affected if employees work in warehouses, manufacturing facilities, or other areas without climate control