

CALIFORNIA

Cal/OSHA Approved New Indoor Heat Standard

On June 20, 2024, the Occupational Safety and Health Standards Board (OSHSB) at the California Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA) adopted the California Code of Regulations, Title 8, [section 3396](#), Heat Illness Prevention in Indoor Places of Employment Standard aimed at protecting workers from excessive heat indoors. The Office of Administrative Law (OAL) approved the new standard on **July 23, 2024**, and the new regulation took effect immediately.

Indoor Heat Standard Requirements

The new indoor heat standard applies to most indoor workplaces, such as restaurants, warehouses, and manufacturing facilities. For indoor workplaces where the temperature equals or exceeds **82 degrees Fahrenheit** it requires that employers take steps to protect workers from heat illness. Some requirements include:

- Employers implement engineering controls (e.g., air conditioning, increased ventilation, evaporative coolers, cooling fans) to reduce the temperature and heat index of the indoor workplace to below:
 - **87 degrees Fahrenheit** when employees are present; or
 - **82 degrees Fahrenheit** in areas where employees work in high-radiant heat or must wear protective clothing that restricts heat removal;
- Employees have access to fresh, pure, suitably cool, and free drinking water and “cool-down” areas that are maintained below **82 degrees Fahrenheit**.
- Provide personal heat-protective equipment to minimize the risk of heat illness (e.g., cooling vests, water-cooled garments, personal cooling systems)
- Employers implement effective emergency response procedures (e.g., contacting emergency medical services, providing basic first aid and monitoring employees exhibiting signs of heat illness).

Under the new heat standard, California employers are required to protect indoor workers from excessive heat.

- Employees are closely observed:
 - For the first 14 days when acclimating to a work area with a temperature or heat index that reaches 87 degrees Fahrenheit (or 82 degrees Fahrenheit in high-radiant heat areas or when wearing clothing that restricts heat removal); and
 - During a heat wave where no engineering controls are in use; and
- Employers maintain a written [heat illness prevention plan](#) and provide training to both workers and supervisors.

Exceptions

The heat standard does not apply to:

- Places of employment where employees are teleworking from a location of the employee's choice, which is not under the control of the employer;
- Local and state correctional facilities;
- Emergency operations directly involved in protecting life or property; and
- Incidental heat exposure where a worker is exposed to temperatures at or above 82 degrees Fahrenheit and below 95 degrees Fahrenheit for less than 15 minutes in any 60-minute period (however, this exception **does not** apply to vehicles without effective and functioning air conditioning or shipping or intermodal containers during loading, unloading or related work).

Resources

[Cal/OSHA Comparison Chart of Indoor and Outdoor Heat Illness Prevention Standards](#)

[Cal/OSHA Sample Written Heat Illness Prevention Plan for Indoor and Outdoor Places of Employment](#)

[Cal/OSHA Indoor Heat Illness Prevention FAQ](#)