

Fact Sheet

Heat Stress: Your Rights

Heat stress is a health and safety hazard that can cause heat related illness and aggravate existing medical conditions.

The indoor environment at your workplace should be kept between 18 to 26 degrees Celsius, and a fresh cool supply of drinking water must be accessible to people whenever they require it.

What to do if air conditioning fails

If there is a breakdown in the air conditioning where the work environment cannot be controlled to reduced temperature and/or humidity, a number of measures should be introduced:

- » You should contact your manager or supervisor and inform them of the problem
- » Portable air conditioners or fans should be provided
- » Drink water to prevent dehydration. Feeling thirsty indicates that dehydration is already occurring. Avoid tea and coffee, and drinks with a high salt or caffeine content (such as energy drinks).
- » If the temperature reaches above 36°C the workplace should close, staff should be directed home and no loss of pay should be incurred

- » Rotate tasks within the workplace i.e. between hot and cool areas
- » Long periods of standing should be avoided. Tasks requiring long periods of standing should be rotated with tasks that can be performed while seated, or regular rest periods introduced.
- » Regular rest breaks should be taken
- » Recognising and arranging reduced work rates and pace during hot conditions.

Regular Breaks

When the temperature exceeds 26 degrees Celsius the following rest breaks should occur within each hour.

Break Duration	Temperature °C
5 min	27-30
10 min	30-32
20 min	34-36
Stop work	>36