

California's New Indoor Heat Protections Now in Effect

California Implements New Workplace Heat Safety Regulations

In response to increasing concerns about worker safety in hot indoor environments, California has introduced new regulations requiring employers to adopt protective measures when workplace temperatures reach specific thresholds. The California Department of Industrial Relations announced these regulations on Wednesday, following approval by the Office of Administrative Law.

New Heat Safety Requirements

The regulations apply to a wide range of indoor workplaces, including restaurants, warehouses, and manufacturing facilities. They mandate that employers provide essential resources such as water, rest breaks, cool-down areas, and training on heat illness prevention when temperatures reach 82°F or higher. These measures aim to mitigate the risk of heat-related illnesses among workers.

Enhanced Measures for Extreme Conditions

When indoor temperatures climb to 87°F, employers are required to take additional steps, “where feasible,” such as implementing work-rest schedules and supplying personal heat-protective equipment. These precautions are crucial in preventing heat stress and ensuring worker safety.

For workplaces where employees wear clothing that hinders heat dissipation or operate in high radiant heat areas, the enhanced safety measures apply starting at 82°F. This distinction highlights the varying risks associated with different work environments and the need for tailored safety protocols.

Implications for Employers and Workers

The new regulations underscore California’s commitment to safeguarding worker health in an era of rising temperatures and more frequent heatwaves. Employers in affected industries must now review and update their safety protocols to comply with the new standards, ensuring that employees are adequately protected from heat-related risks.

These regulations represent a proactive step by California to address the growing concern of heat illness in the workplace. By implementing these measures, the state aims to create safer working conditions for all employees, particularly those in environments prone to high temperatures. As the regulations take effect, both employers and workers will need to collaborate closely to ensure compliance and promote a culture of safety.