

Rest Break Schedule Options for Heat Illness Prevention

OAR 437 Division 2 • Division 3 • Division 4 • Division 7



OSHA | Oregon
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Department of Consumer
and Business Services

High heat practices — Rest break schedules overview of options A, B, and C

New adopted rules, effective June 15, 2022, require heat relief for workers, including three specific options for heat illness prevention rest break schedules. This applies whenever an employee performs work activities, whether in indoor or outdoor environments, where the heat index (apparent temperature) equals or exceeds 90 degrees Fahrenheit.

HEAT ILLNESS PREVENTION

To protect the health and safety of employees from heat-related illnesses arising from a hazardous combination of environmental and metabolic heat, employers should be aware of workers' activity level. Workload can be classified as rest, light, moderate, heavy, or very heavy. Rest breaks must be based on this information, unless you choose Option C – as it has already calculated the heaviest workload.

Employers **MUST** develop and implement a written rest break schedule that protects employees exposed to a heat index equal to or greater than 90 degrees Fahrenheit. There are three options, and you must stay within

whichever option you choose, as you cannot mix elements of the options. **Choose either option A, B, or C:**

OPTION A (Considerations below AND Table 1)

When the heat index is 90 degrees Fahrenheit or greater, implement a written heat illness prevention rest break schedule that addresses all of these elements:

- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) being used
- Work clothing adding to heat retention
- Relative humidity and whether work is indoors or outdoors
- Intensity of the work being performed

Also consider the effects of working in direct sunlight.



These elements should be the basis of the decisions for determining the appropriate rest interval and duration, but it must not be less than a 10-minute break every two hours when the heat index is 90 degrees Fahrenheit or greater; and a 15-minute break every hour when the heat index is 100 degrees Fahrenheit or greater. Based on the assessment of the elements, the rest break and interval may need to be longer or more frequent than the base minimum requirements.

Table 1. Minimum employer-designed heat illness prevention rest break schedule, upon which the aforementioned elements must be applied:

Heat index (°F)	Rest break durations and intervals
90 or greater	10 minutes every two hours
100 or greater	15 minutes every hour

OPTION B

Follow the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) work-rest schedule using the considerations in [Appendix A](#) of the rule. Note: This option uses temperature as its base, and humidity calculations must be added, whereas the remainder of rules under 437-002-0156 or 437-004-1131 use heat index.

OPTION C (Table 2)

This option uses the information contained in the NIOSH work-rest schedule at the heaviest workload calculation; no additional considerations must be made – just follow the table.

Table 2. Minimum simplified rest break schedule:

Heat index (°F)	Rest break durations and intervals
90 or greater	10 minutes every two hours
95 or greater	20 minutes every hour
100 or greater	30 minutes every hour
105 or greater	40 minutes every hour

No matter what option employers choose, heat illness prevention rest breaks are required only during the specified heat index, and may be provided concurrently with any other meal or rest period required by policy, rule, or law, if the timing of the preventive rest break coincides with the otherwise required meal or rest period.

You should also consider the effects of working in direct sunlight when deciding which plan to implement.

More information

[Oregon OSHA Heat Stress materials](#)



WORKERS

Your employer cannot retaliate against you for reporting any workplace health or safety concern or violation; for more information on your rights, scan this QR code or visit [OSHA.Oregon.gov](https://www.osha-osha.gov)

The Technical Section of Oregon OSHA produced this fact sheet to highlight health and safety programs and rules. The information is intended to supplement the rules and provide best practices to employers.