

Physical Agents

Temperature Conditions - Legislation

On this page

[What does the legislation state about temperature conditions at work?](#)

[What does the legislation require?](#)

[Where can I find more information?](#)

What does the legislation state about temperature conditions at work?

In some cases, legislation provides a range of acceptable temperatures for specific circumstances. In other cases, occupational health and safety jurisdictions use the Threshold Limit Values® for heat stress or cold stress as published by the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists (ACGIH). Some Canadian jurisdictions have adopted these TLVs as occupational exposure limits and others use them as guidelines.

What does the legislation require?

A summary of legislation concerning temperature is provided below. **This list does not cite the exact text of each section.** In all cases, consult with your jurisdiction to confirm what legislation applies in your situation, and that the most current legislation is applied. Where temperature is not specifically regulated, employers must follow good practices to ensure a safe workplace. Each occupational health and safety jurisdiction in Canada includes a “general duty clause” in its legislation. This clause places a duty on the employer to ensure that the health and safety of the employees are protected while they are working.

A list of contact information for all [Canadian occupational health and safety jurisdictions](#) is available.

Table 1
Canadian health and safety regulations with respect to thermal conditions in the workplace

Jurisdiction	Regulation	Temperature (This list does not cite the exact text of each section)
Canada, Federal	Canada Occupational Health and Safety Regulations	Section 9.9: personal service room and food preparation area: 18°C minimum/29°C maximum NOTE: personal service room means a change room, toilet room, shower room, lunch room, living space, sleeping quarters or a combination thereof Section 14.9(2): motorized materials handling equipment, operators' compartment: 26°C maximum Section 16.10(2)(b) First aid room: 21°C to 24°C
National Joint Council (Public Service Canada)	Occupational Health and Safety Directive	Section 2.2 Environmental Conditions: Ideal range between 20-26°C. Temperatures between 17°C and 20°C and above 26°C can be uncomfortable, and occupancy in each of those extremes should not exceed 3 hours daily or 60 hours annually. Humidex 40°C maximum (as measured at workstation)
British Columbia	Occupational Health and Safety Regulations	Heat: Sections 7.27 to 7.32: current ACGIH TLVs® Cold: Sections 7.33 to 7.38: current ACGIH TLVs®
Alberta	Guidelines	
Saskatchewan	Occupational Health and Safety Regulations	Section 6-7: Thermal conditions: Provide and maintain measures to protect workers, and offer reasonable thermal comfort to workers
Manitoba	Workplace Safety and Health Regulation	Section 4.12: Thermal Stress: current ACGIH TLVs® for heat and cold exposure Section 4.13: Thermal Conditions – indoor workplaces: appropriate to work being done
Ontario	Guidelines	The Ministry of Labour, Training, and Skills Development fact sheet on heat stress refers to the Threshold Limit Values (TLVs) for Heat Stress and Heat Strain published by the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists (ACGIH). These values are based on preventing

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		workers' core body temperatures from rising above 38°C.
	Construction Projects Regulations	Section 260(3)(d): Change room for underground workers, 27°C minimum Section 357(7): Medical locks, minimum of 18°C Section 380 (2): Air lock used for people, maximum of 27 °C. Also see Section 384: No work at temperatures greater than 27°C and when the temperature at the entrance to the service shaft is above ground, nor, 38 °C maximum
	Industrial Establishment Regulations	Section 129. Enclosed workplace, minimum of 18°C.
Quebec	Regulation respecting occupational health and safety	Sections 116 to 120: Heating Environment – Appropriate temperature considering the work being done. Section 118: Lunch rooms - minimum temperature of 20 °C (but does not apply to facilities used as offices) Sections 121 to 124: Heat Stress Schedule IV: Standards of Temperature in Establishments. Minimum depends on work being done (e.g., heavy work 12°C; light work 20°C) Schedule V: Evaluation of Heat Stress – Outlines work/rest schedule and Wet Bulb-Globe Temperature (WBGT) equations. Section 154: Change rooms minimum - temperature of 20 °C
New Brunswick	General Regulations	Section 21: In an enclosed place of employment, minimum depends on work being done (e.g., heavy work 12°C; light work 20°C) Section 22: Extremes of Temperature: 2016ACGIH TLVs® for heat and cold exposure

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Nova Scotia	Workplace Health and Safety Regulation	Section 2.1 and 2.3: current ACGIH TLVs® for heat and cold exposure (physical agents)
Prince Edward Island	General Regulations	Section 11.10 and 11.11: In an enclosed place of employment, the minimum depends on work being done (e.g., heavy work 12°C; light work 20°C). Exceptions apply. Section 11.9: relative humidity in an office environment must be minimum of 30% Section 42.1: Extremes of temperature - current ACGIH TLVs® for heat and cold exposure
Newfoundland and Labrador	Occupational Health and Safety Regulations	Section 44: Reasonable and consistent with the nature and degree of work performed, as established by current ACGIH TLVs® Section 566: Refuge station to be at minimum 10°C
Northwest Territories	Occupational Health and Safety Regulations	Section 74: Thermal conditions. Appropriate to nature of the work, effective protection of worker health and safety, and reasonable thermal comfort
	Mine Health and Safety Regulations	Sections 9.57 to 9.62: Program required when thermal conditions and nature of work can cause distress. 1994-1995 ACGIH TLVs®.
Nunavut	Occupational Health and Safety Regulations	Section 74: Thermal conditions. Appropriate to nature of the work, effective protection of worker health and safety, and reasonable thermal comfort
	Mine Health and Safety Regulations	Sections 9.57 to 9.62: Program required when thermal conditions and nature of work can cause distress. 1994-1995 ACGIH TLVs®.
Yukon Territory	Occupational Health and Safety Regulations	Section 5.75: Conditions specific to tower cranes
	Occupational Health	Section 9: Thermal environment. Reasonable and appropriate to the work performed.

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Jurisdiction	Regulation	Temperature (This list does not cite the exact text of each section)
	Regulations	Section 12: Heat Stress

Where can I find more information?

Please see the following OSH Answers documents:

- [Temperature Conditions - Cold](#)
- [Cold Environments - General](#)
- [Cold Environments - Working in Cold](#)
- [Cold Environments - Health Effects and First Aid](#)
- [Temperature Conditions - Hot](#)
- [Hot Environments - Health Effects and First Aid](#)
- [Hot Environments - Control Measures](#)
- [Humidex Rating and Work](#)
- [Thermal Comfort for Office Work](#)

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