



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Public Health
250 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02108-4619

KATHLEEN E. WALSH
Secretary

ROBERT GOLDSTEIN, MD, PhD
Commissioner

Tel: 617-624-6000
www.mass.gov/dph

MAURA T. HEALEY
Governor

KIMBERLEY DRISCOLL
Lieutenant Governor

ADVISORY

To: Massachusetts Correctional Facility Environmental Health & Safety Officers
From: Steven Hughes, Director, Community Sanitation Program
Date: June 13, 2023
Re: Heat Related Illness and Preventative Measures for Correctional Facilities

Hot temperatures outside can lead to potential health concerns due to elevated temperatures inside. Since many correctional facilities do not have air conditioning, correctional officers and inmates should be provided with steps that can help reduce the risk of heat-related illness when indoor temperatures become a concern. Recognizing that different facilities have different limitations, operational considerations and building design, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's Bureau of Environmental Health offers guidance for preventing, identifying, and treating heat related illness. Of these, providing drinking water and maximizing the building's designed ventilation are within the reach of each facility and are regulatory requirements.

- Drinking water, including bottled water if necessary, should always be accessible to maintain hydration.
- Ice should be made available as needed.
- Ensure proper utilization of existing mechanical or natural ventilation design/systems.
- Fans should be provided in areas that may not have adequate ventilation.
- Inmates should have increased opportunity to shower.
- Windows that get late morning and/or afternoon sun should be tinted.
- Access to the lowest floor and open common areas should be made available.
- Additional outdoor recreational time for inmates should be provided if shaded areas are present.
- Priority housing (in cooler areas) should be made available for heat sensitive, at-risk, or newer inmates who may be less familiar with, or acclimated to, the facility.
- Correctional officers should be provided additional breaks and options to wear lighter uniforms.
- Priority locations in cooler areas should be made available for new correctional officers who may be less familiar with, or acclimated to, the facility.
- Training should be provided for correctional officers about the signs, symptoms and increased risk factors for heat related illness, e.g., old age, obesity, hypertension, asthma, mental illness, and medication use.

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health anticipates conducting 2 virtual heat related illness trainings for Environmental Health and Safety Officers, Facility Management Staff and Medical Staff during the last week of June.

Heat related illnesses include heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke. Listed below are further details on the signs and symptoms of each, and what you should do if you see someone in distress from the heat. Additional information is available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/warning.html>

Signs of Heat Cramps	You Should	Go to the Hospital if:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heavy sweating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Give them water or sports drink</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The person has a history of heart problems
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muscle pain or spasms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell them to stop exerting themselves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cramps last longer than 1 hour
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have them wait for cramps to go away 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The person is on a low sodium diet

Signs of Heat Exhaustion	You Should:	Go to the Hospital if:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lots of sweating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Give them water</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The person is throwing up
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fast/weak pulse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move them to a cool place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The person is getting worse
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nausea/vomiting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loosen their clothes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Symptoms last longer than 1 hour
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headache/dizziness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply cool wet towels or cloths on the person 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fainting 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muscle cramps 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cold, pale clammy skin 		
Signs of Heat Stroke	You Should:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fast strong pulse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CALL 911 – this is a medical emergency. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High body temperature (above 103⁰F) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply cool cloths to the person 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move them to a cool place 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dizziness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wait until clearance from a medical professional BEFORE you give them anything to drink 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red, hot, dry or damp skin 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headache 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Losing consciousness 		