

Attorney General Raoul Urges OSHA, Congress And President To Protect Workers From Occupational Heat Exposure

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CHICAGO - Attorney General Kwame Raoul joined a coalition of 11 attorneys general urging the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Congress and the Biden administration to protect workers from the dangers of exposure to extreme heat in the workplace.

Raoul and the coalition [petitioned OSHA](#) to implement a nationwide emergency extreme heat standard to take effect this summer to protect workers from heat exposure.

OSHA currently has no occupational heat standard from rising temperatures or intensifying heat waves.

Raoul and the attorneys general also [called on Congress](#) to pass pending legislation directing OSHA to promulgate an interim heat standard while it continues its rulemaking for a permanent standard. Additionally, they [urged the White House](#) to support these efforts to protect the nation's most heat-vulnerable workers.

“Climate change increases the severity of extreme heat, particularly in Illinois for our farmers and construction workers,” Raoul said. “I will continue to advocate for an occupational heat standard to protect vulnerable workers from heat-related illnesses or even death.”

In the petition, Raoul and the coalition remind OSHA that the agency is legally obligated to set an emergency temporary standard if it finds that workers are exposed to a grave danger in the workplace, and an emergency standard is necessary to protect workers from that danger. The potential impacts of extreme heat on vulnerable workers meet these factors for a range of occupations and are particularly evident for farmworkers and construction workers.

The coalition calls on OSHA to fulfill its legal obligation to workers and issue an emergency temporary standard, including a heat exposure threshold and required preventative measures, such as water breaks and shade, for farmworkers and construction workers, at a minimum, by May 1.

In addition, Raoul and the attorneys general are calling on Congress to pass and the White House to sign the Asunción Valdivia Heat Illness, Injury, and Fatality Prevention Act ([H.R. 4897/S. 2501](#)), legislation that would direct OSHA to establish near- and long-term measures to protect workers from extreme heat. The legislation is named for Asunción Valdivia, a farmworker who died of heatstroke after picking grapes for 10 hours in extreme heat.

Joining Raoul in petitioning OSHA and sending letters to Congress and the White House are the attorneys general of Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, the District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania.