



National Farm Worker Ministry
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Our Mission

National Farm Worker Ministry (NFWM) is a faith-based organization committed to social, economic, and racial justice for farm workers. NFWM educates, equips, and mobilizes member organizations and other faith communities, groups, and individuals to support farm worker-led efforts to improve their living and working conditions.

As people of faith and conscience, we offer our recommendations on the 2025 Proposed heat regulations.

The heat index has steadily climbed in the past five years, people all around are feeling the impact and suffering consequences to this rapid climate change. We recognize that agricultural workers, along with all workers that are required to work outside or in areas with no temperature control accessible, are highly vulnerable to heat stress exposure, and illnesses. These workers often lack health care and can have long lasting effects from heat induced illnesses. According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA.gov) heat induced deaths claimed close to 500 lives in America this past year of 2024.

OSHA's proposed heat regulations will protect workers rights to safe working environments and will save lives of vulnerable workers across the country. NFWM supports the proposed rule, offering recommendations to insure that employers comply with regulations.

Such as:

Provide a role for stakeholders

- Work with farm worker led and ally non profit organizations to facilitate training for employees, to ensure life saving information reaches seasonal or subcontracted employees.
- Work with farm worker led organizations to facilitate routine training on heat stress.
- Foster relationships with farm worker led organizations to complete random routine inspections, to ensure workers needs are being met and no health violations are present.

Continue to collect reliable data on health risks and long lasting impacts.

- Collaborate with Universities to continue ethical academic research on heat stress illnesses and climate change impact on workers.
- Work with stakeholders, and workers to ensure their input is collected.
- Have the CDC track deaths from heat stress, both as a primary cause as well as contributing conditions.

Heat stress trigger breaks

- Enforce mandatory paid breaks every 2 hours when the heat index is at its highest.
- Limit exposure to the sun; shift the worker hours to prevent heat exposure.
- Allow new employees to take mandatory 15 minute breaks every hour for the first weeks to allow the body to get acclimated to heat exposure.
- Breaks should be in a shaded location, if natural shade does not exist, the employer must bring in awnings, tents, shade trucks, or other devices that allow for employees to rest in a cooler location.
- Ensure employers, crew leaders always have portable, cold and filtered water with clean cups to drink from and ice when the heat index is triggered.

Provide material and policy protections for workers in their language.

- Educate employers and employees in a culturally-appropriate language they can read and understand.
- Provide mandatory training on a regular basis, even when the heat index is not an issue.

Emergency Plans

- Ensure that not just employers but supervisors, crew leaders and all employees have access to emergency life saving remedies, such as heat stress kits.
- Employers should provide emergency plans for employees displaying signs or symptoms of heat stress.

Provide safe spaces and places for reporting abuse

- Protect workers from retaliation or intimidation.
- Create applications, platforms or hotlines that employees can report abuse to anonymously.

Our recommendations are to foster relationships between advocacy groups and employers to ensure that there are checks and balances, worker rights are being protected and there is no intimidation or retaliation on workers. Workers have the right to work in safe environments. The hands that feed us deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. NFWM is dedicated to advocating for the essential workers that feed our country.