



LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN



WEATHER-RELATED & HIGH HEAT RISK CONSIDERATIONS

Chiefs of Police are encouraged to review and implement the newly released *Weather-Related Risk Mitigation Strategies* sample policy now available in the Accreditation Plus Sample Policy Portal. Weather-related hazards, particularly high-heat conditions, present a foreseeable risk to officers assigned to field operations, traffic posts, special events, training, emergency response, and other outdoor or exposed work assignments.

High heat deserves special attention because officers often work for extended periods in direct sunlight or humid conditions while wearing uniforms, ballistic body armor, duty belts, and other equipment that can increase physical strain and limit the body's ability to cool itself. These conditions may contribute to dehydration, heat exhaustion, heat stroke, fatigue, impaired decision-making, and an increased risk of injury.

Maintaining a written heat-risk program also supports a department's efforts to meet the New Jersey PEOSH General Duty Clause, which requires public employers to provide a workplace free from recognized hazards that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm.

The policy also addresses other environmental hazards, including severe storms, lightning, high winds, heavy rain, snow, ice, extreme cold, sun exposure, ticks, poison ivy, and similar outdoor risks that may affect officer safety, wellness, and operational readiness.

The policy provides guidance on the following areas:

- Weather monitoring, hazard identification, and pre-assignment risk assessment.
- High-heat precautions, including hydration, rest and recovery, cooling opportunities, and recognition of heat-related illness.
- Supervisor and employee responsibilities for reporting concerns, monitoring conditions, adjusting assignments, and responding to signs of illness or distress.
- Planning considerations for special events, traffic details, emergency response, training, and other extended outdoor assignments.
- Protective measures for severe weather, lightning, extreme cold, sun exposure, ticks, poison ivy, and other environmental hazards.
- Training, documentation, after-action review, and periodic program review to support compliance and continuous improvement.

Implementation of this new sample policy will help departments strengthen officer safety, improve supervisory accountability, reduce preventable weather- and fatigue-related injuries, and demonstrate a proactive approach to heat, environmental, and fatigue risk management. The newly released *Weather-Related Risk Mitigation Strategies* Sample Policy is available in the [Law Enforcement Accreditation Plus Portal](#).

Chiefs should also address fatigue as part of the department's overall risk management strategy. Fatigue can intensify the effects of heat and other environmental stressors by reducing awareness, judgment, reaction time, and operational safety. Agencies are encouraged to implement the *Fatigue Management* Sample Policy available in the Accreditation Plus Sample Policy Portal and review the Law Enforcement Bulletin entitled *Fatigue: Critical Risk and Mitigation Strategies*, available in [MSI Law Enforcement Bulletins](#).

If you have any questions, please contact your Law Enforcement Risk Control Consultant.