



**Somerset  
Council**

# **HS33 Working Outside in the Sun and Extremes of Heat and Cold Policy.**

<b>Organisation</b>	Somerset Council
<b>Title</b>	Working Outside in the Sun and Extremes of Heat and Cold Policy
<b>Author</b>	Jo Coles
<b>Owner</b>	The Corporate Health & Safety Unit
<b>Protective Marking</b>	Official – Unclassified
<b>Primary Legislation</b>	<a href="#">Health and Safety at Work Act 1974</a> <a href="#">Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992</a>

## Policy on a page

Somerset Council (The Council) have a legal obligation to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable that workers carrying out work outside, in extreme heat or cold, must be able to carry out work without a risk to their health and safety. This obligation extends to protecting workers from the effects of solar ultraviolet radiation (SUVR) generated from exposure to sunlight.

The Council understands that there are no legally defined minimum or maximum outside working temperatures. However, The Council will ensure that all reasonably practicable steps are taken to prevent workers being exposed to risk of harm from extremes of heat and cold and SUVR.

The Council will ensure a suitable and sufficient risk assessment is undertaken and that the principles of prevention are applied when implementing any preventive and protective measures for persons required to work outside in extreme heat or cold and where prolonged exposure to the SUVR may exist.

The Council will ensure that Health and Safety Representatives (HSR's) and workers, including the workers at risk and those with health conditions and disabilities are consulted when assessing the risk to workers' health. Both personal and environmental factors shall be considered when assessing the risk.

This document and associated guidance will be available to: **All Elected Members, Somerset Council Staff, 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Contractors, Secondees and Volunteers.**

### Key Messages

- This Policy does not incorporate indoor working environments where specific thermal comfort obligations apply. This is covered in the HS20 Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare Policy.
- Risk relating to working outside in extremes of temperature incorporate acute and chronic health risks from excess exposure to solar ultraviolet radiation (SUVR).
- The law does not state specific minimum or maximum outside working temperatures. Risk relating to working outdoors must be assessed by undertaking a suitable and sufficient risk assessment.

**This “policy on a page” is a summary of the detailed policy and guidance documents, please ensure you read, understand, and comply with the arrangements stated.**

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## Responsibilities

<a href="#">Somerset Council</a>	<a href="#">Directors and Delegated Senior Managers</a>
<a href="#">Service Managers and those with direct line management responsibilities</a>	<a href="#">Employees</a>
<a href="#">Corporate Health and Safety Unit (CHSU)</a>	<a href="#">Appendix 1 – Supporting Guidance</a>

### Somerset Council will ensure:

- That adequate and appropriate resources, both physical and financial are provided to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable that the health of employees is not adversely affected from exposure to extreme levels of temperature when undertaking work outside.

### Directors and Delegated Senior Managers will ensure:

- All aspects of this Policy are implemented within their area of control.

### Managers will ensure:

- All aspects of this Policy are implemented into their area of control.
- A suitable and sufficient risk assessment is completed in consultation with workers and their representatives.
- Working habits and current practices are reviewed periodically and (where necessary) changed, to control the risks.
- Both personal and environmental factors are considered when assessing risks to workers' health arising from working in hot or cold environments and in the sun.
- Suitable and appropriate personal protective equipment is provided to protect workers from extremes of heat, cold and SUVR.
- Where employees are at risk from SUVR, ensure appropriate sun protection including:
  - Sun protective clothing
  - Sun protective hats
  - Sunscreen at least Factor 15<sup>1</sup> (Applied regularly in accordance with manufacture recommendations)
- Environmental conditions and the health and safety of workers are monitored when work involves prolonged or repeated exposure to heat, cold or SUVR.

- Health surveillance or medical screening is considered, and where required, provided for staff who have special requirements due to pregnancy, certain illnesses, disabilities and/or maybe taking medication.
- Provide information, training, and instruction to workers to enable workers to recognise the early symptoms of heat-related illness or hypothermia in themselves and others.
- Information, training, and instruction is provided to workers on acute and chronic adverse effects of sun exposure and how to manage and protect themselves from exposure.
- Where possible schedule work outside, to minimise exposure to heat, cold and SUVR.
- Where possible, formal systems of work are introduced to limit exposure, e.g., flexible working patterns, job rotation.
- Sufficient breaks, shelter and accessible cold drinking water and hot drinks are provided.
- Safe work procedures in relation to managing risk associated with working outside in hot and cold environments are developed and implemented.
- Ensure that incident reports are recorded when employees raise concerns or report ill health effects associated with working in the sun or extremes of heat and cold.
- Comply with requirements of the Heatwave Plan for England: Somerset Delivery Framework, and Cold Weather Plan for England: Somerset Delivery Framework, including, where necessary reviewing relevant risk assessments. The latest version is available through the Civil Contingency Unit (CCU) [InfoCCU@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:InfoCCU@somerset.gov.uk).

Every individual's skin is different and some employees with sensitive skin can receive allergic reactions to some types of sunscreens, therefore, where an agreement is made between a manager and employee, sunscreen can be purchased by the employee and the cost to be authorised by the manager. The employee must be refunded the cost on production of receipts.

### **Employees will ensure:**

- That incidents and hazards arising from exposure to excessive heat, cold and SUVR whilst working outside are reported.
- Any symptoms as a result of exposure to excessive heat, cold and SUVR in themselves or other workers are reported.
- Compliance with all reasonable instruction given to protect against adverse H&S conditions from exposure to thermal risk and SUVR.

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- Ensure all personal protective equipment (PPE) provided by The Council is worn and maintained, including sunscreen and other PPE to protect against exposure to SUVR.
- They are able to recognise warning signs if their health is being affected by work in extreme heat, cold and in the sun.

### **The Corporate Health and Safety Team will ensure:**

- Timely, accurate advice and support to managers and employees in relation to working in hot and cold temperatures and SUVR.
- Provide guidance and information in relation to eliminating and mitigating risk associated with exposure to extreme temperatures and SUVR.
- Maintain and communicate this policy.
- Review this policy at intervals not exceeding 3 years.

## **Appendix 1 – Supporting Guidance**

### **Schools**

Volume 4 – [Guidance for schools](#) gives comprehensive guidance on Sun Protection for School Children.

### **Guided Walks and Outdoor Activities**

All staff involved in organising and running guided walks/activities for members of the public are to inform them of the appropriate sun protection to take before commencing the walk/activity.

### **Outdoor Working**

Managers responsible for managing work-related activities which involve outdoor working should refer to the HSE '[Temperature in the workplace](#)' and '[Skin at work: Outdoor workers and sun exposure](#)' guidance for further information.

Managers and employees are welcome to contact the [Health and Safety team](#) for specific advice and guidance.

## Governance Arrangements

### Policy Compliance

If any employee is found to have breached this policy, they may be subject to Somerset Council's disciplinary procedure.

### Policy Governance

The following table identifies who within Somerset Council is Accountable, Responsible, Informed or Consulted with regards to this policy. The following definitions apply:

- **Responsible** – the person(s) responsible for developing and publishing the policy.
- **Accountable** – the person who has ultimate accountability and authority for the policy.
- **Consulted** – the person(s) or groups to be consulted prior to final policy implementation.
- **Informed** – the person(s) or groups to be informed after policy implementation.

<b>Responsible</b>	Corporate Health & Safety Unit
<b>Accountable</b>	Chief Executive
<b>Consulted</b>	LGR JNF Union Group, LGR H&S Sub-Workstream, Health, Safety and Wellbeing Steering Group (HSWSG)
<b>Informed</b>	All members, employees, contractors (on request), volunteers & 3 <sup>rd</sup> parties (on request).

### Review and Revision

This policy will be reviewed as it is deemed appropriate, but no less frequently than every 36 months. Policy review will be undertaken by rolling programme established by the CHSU and agreed by the Health, Safety, and Wellbeing Steering Group.

### Version History

Revision Date	Author	Version	Description of Revision
	Jo Coles	V1.0	New policy - draft

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## Document Notification

Approval	Name	Date
Corporate H&S Advisor		
Director of HR and Chair of HSWSG		
HR Policy Committee		

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