

Extreme temperatures in the workplace

There is no legal maximum or minimum working temperature.

But by law, employers have a 'duty of care' to make sure working temperatures are reasonable for their staff. This includes at the workplace and [working from home](#).

This means if extreme temperatures are expected, employers should:

- make plans for keeping staff comfortable and safe
- carry out health and safety risk assessments
- remove or reduce any risks found

For example, depending on if it's hot or cold, employers could:

- relax any dress code so staff can wear more suitable clothing, while still following rules on personal protective equipment (PPE)
- allow extra breaks for staff to get hot or cold drinks
- provide extra heating or cooling equipment, such as portable heaters, fans or air conditioning units

By law, employers must carry out health and safety risk assessments for all women of child-bearing age, including anyone who's [pregnant, breastfeeding or just had a baby](#). If a risk cannot be avoided or removed, the employer must suspend the person on full pay until the risk has ended or been removed.

When doing risk assessments, employers must include those with health conditions or [disabilities](#) that can be affected by extreme temperatures. They should talk with the employee and agree on a suitable solution. For example, adjusting their working hours or having an air-conditioning unit by their desk.

What a reasonable working temperature is

Although there's no legal maximum or minimum working temperature, health and safety guidance is that a reasonable temperature should usually be at least 16°C. If much of the work involves a lot of physical effort, it's 13°C.

What is reasonable also depends on the working environment and type of work. For example a bakery, office, warehouse or cold storage could all reasonably be expected to have varying temperatures.

If extreme weather affects staff getting to work

Sometimes, extreme weather might disrupt employees getting to work. For example, if snow stops trains running.

[Find out more about disruption getting to work](#)

Get more advice and support

If you have questions about working temperatures:

- [contact the Acas helpline](#)
- [find more guidance from the Health and Safety Executive \(HSE\)](#)