# Restaurant Heat Safety for [Company Name]

The purpose of the heat safety program is to implement work practices and procedures that will protect workers who are exposed to high temperatures that can result in health problems such as heat cramps, heat rashes, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke.

* Heat exhaustion: At high temperatures, the body circulates great amounts of blood to the skin in an effort to eliminate heat through perspiration. As a result, less blood is circulated to the body's vital organs, including the brain. Heat exhaustion can lead to dizziness, blurred vision, nausea, and eventual collapse. If not treated promptly by lowering the person's body temperature, a person suffering from heat exhaustion could suffer brain damage.
* Even more serious than heat exhaustion is heat stroke. During heat stroke, the body stops sweating, making it impossible to dissipate heat. The body temperature may rise to a dangerously high level in a short time and cause death.

Employees working in kitchen environments can be exposed to high temperatures. For example, a worker cooking in front of hot grills can be exposed to temperatures that can reach 105 °-110 ° Fahrenheit. Exposure to excessive heat may lead to heat exhaustion, heat stroke, and possible death.

## Employer Responsibilities

* Keep cooking areas as cool as possible. Workers get hotter and more stressed during rush periods in crowded restaurants.
  + Use air conditioning, general ventilation, spot cooling fans, evaporative cooling and local exhaust ventilation at points of high heat production.
* Encourage workers to drink plenty of water.
* Acclimatize, or gradually introduce, employees to hot environments. This allows the body to build up a tolerance to high temperatures. This process usually takes about two weeks.
* Job rotate employees where plausible away from tasks that require exposure to heat during an entire shift.
* Train supervisors and leads on the symptoms and treatment of heat illnesses.

*Excessive Heat Exposure - Symptoms and Treatment*  
  
**Heat exhaustion**symptoms include dizziness, lightheadedness, weakness, blurred vision, and nausea.

* **Treatment**: You must lower the employee's body temperature to prevent the progression of symptoms.
  + Immediately remove employee from the hot environment and give cool water to drink.
  + Lay the person on his or her back and raise the legs. If the person is sick to his or her stomach, lay him or her on their side. If the person does not feel better in a few minutes, call for emergency help.

**Heat stroke** symptoms include severe headache, mental confusion, loss of consciousness, flushed face, and hot, dry, skin, with no sweating. If someone has stopped sweating, seek emergency medical attention immediately.

* **Treatment:** Get emergency medical help. You must try to lower the employee's body temperature while waiting for medical help to arrive. Provide a cool environment, remove excessive clothing, and wet and fan the workers' skin.

## Employee Responsibilities

* Wear cool, comfortable, breathable clothing like cotton.
* Inform your co-workers if you are not feeling well.
* Recognize and be able to treat the early symptoms of heat illness.
* Take a break from the hot environment to allow your body to cool down. Walk in coolers provide an opportunity for relief in older buildings with improper air ventilation.
* Do not drink alcoholic beverages or beverages that contain caffeine while working in hot environments. These beverages make the body lose water and increase the risk of heat illnesses.
* Drink plenty of water.
* Observe any safety procedures or wear any protective equipment (such as gloves, mitts, protective aprons) provided for your use while working in hot environments.