

# Heat illness resources



**Manuel L.  
Peralta Jr.**

**D**uring the week of March 31, I was provided with a copy of the new USPS Heat Safety Training material. The documents were received through a district in the West Pac Area. By letter dated April 4, 2025, USPS headquarters provided the NALC with a General Interest notice confirming the authenticity of the same materials. As I write this column, I have a few questions that I have posed to management and will update you as the information is received. The materials as provided are helpful in many respects. There are a number of documents that were provided, so I will address a few of them,

highlighting some of the material.

**The first document I want to address is titled “FY25 Heat Illness Prevention Program Final.”** This is a nine-page typed document, which instructs as follows:

This written program documents the procedure necessary to comply with the required elements of the Postal Service’s Heat Illness Prevention Program (HIPP). This document will be reviewed annually to ensure effectiveness and compliance. Copies of this document are available to employees upon request.

The HIPP is triggered during the period of April 1 through October 31 and at any other time when weather reports issued by the National Weather Service (NWS)<sup>1</sup> for a particular work location indicate that the outdoor heat index temperatures are expected to exceed 80 degrees Fahrenheit during the course of a workday or work shift.

Please take a close look at the document to know which responsibilities fall on the shoulders of your local managers and which fall on the shoulders of district and area managers. On page 2 of the material, it spells out training requirements for new employees and refresher training for the employees who had already taken the full formal training in the past. It states:

## **Training**

### **1. Initial**

The Postal Service will require initial completion of an on-line training course on heat stress by all employees in every facility, during employee orientation. This course will discuss the effects of heat on the body, outline the risk factors for heat-related illness, and describe the associated

responses for each. This training will also explain several control measure techniques and safe work practices that can be used to prevent heat-related illness, as outlined in this document.

### **2. Annual Refresher**

Each employee shall receive the Heat Illness and Prevention #2501, refresher training as an annual refresher prior to April 1 each year. Employees who are absent when the refresher training is provided are required to be provided with the training prior to returning to street duties during the period April 1 through October 31.

This document includes planning and expectations as follows:

## **Emergency Planning and Response**

All employees are encouraged to take immediate action if they observe another employee exhibiting signs or symptoms of heat-related illness. Employees should err on the side of caution and immediately call 911 whenever an employee complains of or is observed exhibiting signs of heat-related illness and it is determined medical intervention may be necessary. Other emergency planning and response procedures will include, but are not limited to, the following actions:

- Employees will be trained to recognize symptoms of heat-related illness and taught basic first aid measures related to heat stress as described in the Training section above.
- Employees observed by management exhibiting signs or symptoms of a heat-related illness will be monitored and shall not be left alone or sent home without being provided with emergency medical service.

Please take serious note of the fact that management is training us to err on the side of caution and to call 911 whenever an employee complains of or is exhibiting signs of heat-related illness.

If you are with a co-worker who is exhibiting the signs of heat illness, don’t delay in making a prompt assessment and don’t delay in contacting 911 if necessary. The effects of heat exhaustion or heat stroke may make your co-worker unable to realize that they are in a dangerous situation and, absent your involvement, the situation could turn into a tragedy. Keep an eye on each other.

Page 6 of the materials contains a listing of the necessary Engineering and Administrative Controls, among which we draw your attention to the following:

- ! Potable water sources are available in all facilities and are monitored during regular safety inspections.
- ! An escalation process is put in place to prioritize all requests for HVAC repairs and temporary abatement efforts in postal facilities.

- ! When the HIPP is in effect, supervisors, while performing required street observations, will remind employees to continue to hydrate while on their route, take necessary breaks and to call 911 if they experience heat related illnesses. Supervisors should emphasize these instructions to employees who are newly hired or returning from extended absence of seven or more consecutive days, if known.

Appendix 1 of the material addresses management's additional responsibilities, that is, to make sure everyone receives the necessary training.

There are two HIPP stand-up talks. They are not thorough, so do not rely on them alone:

- Heat Illness Prevention Program—Safety Talk | HIPP—#2068 is contained in the material. Make sure it is given to all employees.
- Heat Illness and Prevention—Annual Refresher—#2501

One of the additional items is a document labeled as FAQs, which include the following examples:

**#3 How often do we do train for the Heat Illness Prevention Program (HIPP)?**

New Employees are required to complete the Heat Stress Recognition and Prevention course during Orientation. Annually all employees are required to receive safety talk 2501 – Heat Illness and Prevention. Prior to April 1st of each year. A pamphlet will also be mailed to every employee annually.

**#13. What is the escalation process for HVAC repairs?**

Facilities and Maintenance have an internal escalation notification for HVAC repairs. No action is necessary from the field. If repairs are not addressed, the HIPP coordinator can contact the Sr. Field Safety and Health specialist for assistance.

**#15. Why do you need a new poster, employee badges and vehicle stickers?**

The wording on the graphic has been updated. Therefore, all three must be replaced with the new 2025 version. On the left side of the image that lists signs for heat exhaustion, the wording “Heavy Sweating” replaced “Excessive Sweating”. On the right side of the image that lists signs for heat stroke, the wording “Excessive sweating or red, hot dry skin” replaced, “No sweating” and “Very high body temperature” replaced “Body temperature above 103°. Red, hot dry skin”.

Lastly, there is an item that will be mailed to your homes. It is a six-page document with a great deal of information. Take the time to read it and preserve it. We will rely on this item for many nuggets of information that will protect our interests.

On the fourth page (as I review the PDF version), there is a detailed explanation of how our bodies react to the heat.

On the last page, there is a summary in a section titled “Stay Safe,” which closes with maintaining good nutrition, getting adequate sleep and, believe it or not, “Take breaks to cool down as needed.”

Most important for our union activists is to approach management and request that these materials be shared with all letter carriers in the form of training through stand-up talks that reach their audience.

Keep an eye on each other, especially the most vulnerable.

Executive Vice  
President

## Should NALC intervene or not? (continued)

*(continued from page 29)*

port of the Postal Service.

There also are circumstances where other unions arbitrate grievances NALC believes are not in the best interest of city carriers to get involved in. In those cases, NALC will choose not to intervene because we do not

want other unions' positions, agreements and remedies to potentially affect city carriers. Staying away from the hearing is sometimes the best option. Whether to intervene, or not, in another union's arbitration case is an important decision.

Whatever decision NALC makes, rest assured that we will always protect the rights of city carriers.