



SOSC Heat Index Safety Guidelines

Safety for all athletes, Unified partners, coaches, volunteers, officials, and staff is the primary concern when determining a course of action to follow.

Decisions to delay, relocate, postpone, reduce, suspend, or cancel training and/or competition should be based on the current or forecast heat index and the conditions at the activity site. Special consideration should be given when high heat occurs with poor air quality, direct sunlight, limited air movement, artificial turf or other heat-radiating surfaces, heavy exertion, protective equipment, or limited access to shade and cooling.

The heat index combines air temperature and relative humidity to describe how hot conditions feel. The responsible SOSC staff member, Local Program Coordinator, Event Director, or Head Coach should check a recognized weather source before the activity and monitor conditions during the activity. The chart below identifies when additional precautions or required actions apply. A more protective response should be used whenever participant symptoms, or site conditions create additional concern.

SUSPEND OUTDOOR ACTIVITY | 103 & ABOVE

MODIFY ACTIVITY | 90 – 102

CAUTION | 80 – 89

STANDARD PRECAUTIONS | BELOW 80

Precautionary Range 1: When the heat index reaches 80–89°F, training and competition may proceed with caution. Local Program Coordinators, Head Coaches, Event Directors, and Staff will monitor conditions and take measures to protect participants. Water must be readily available, and additional hydration and shade or cooling opportunities should be provided at least every 30 minutes. Extra attention should be given to participants who are new, returning, less acclimatized, wearing heat-retaining equipment, or otherwise at increased risk.

Precautionary Range 2: When the heat index reaches 90–102°F, training and competition will be modified to accommodate participant safety. Reduce intensity and continuous exertion; provide hydration and cooling breaks at least every 15–20 minutes; increase substitutions and recovery time; and shorten games, practices, rotations, or event blocks. Local Program Coordinators, Head Coaches, Event Directors, and Staff should consider moving the activity indoors, changing the start time, postponing, or canceling based on access to shade or air conditioning, activity length, participant condition, surface temperature, equipment, and other site conditions.

Suspension Range: When the heat index reaches 103°F or above, outdoor training and competition will not begin or will be suspended. Participants will be moved to a shaded or cooled area. Activity may resume only after the heat index falls below 103°F and the responsible SOSC leader confirms that adequate water, cooling, medical support, communication, and other required controls are in place. If conditions will not allow a timely and safe restart, the activity will be postponed or canceled.

Heat Illness Response: Any participant showing dizziness, headache, weakness, nausea, muscle cramps, unusual fatigue, confusion, staggering, collapse, seizure, slurred speech, loss of consciousness, or other concerning symptoms must stop activity immediately and be moved to cooling. Suspected heat stroke is a medical emergency: call 911 and begin rapid cooling while emergency assistance is on the way. Do not leave the participant alone or send the participant home without appropriate evaluation.

Important: Any coach, official, medical volunteer, or SOSC staff member may immediately stop an individual's participation because of heat-related symptoms or safety concerns. The responsible SOSC leader or medical lead may pause or suspend the entire activity. This guideline supplements SOSC's Emergency Action Plan and Air Quality Safety Guidelines. The most protective applicable requirement will govern.