



Attorney Advises What Employers Must do to Keep Workers Safe

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Courtney Leyes was interviewed by *Memphis Daily News* on August 8, 2015. The article “Attorney Advises What Employers Must do to Keep Workers Safe” discussed how although the Federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration, or OSHA, doesn’t have specific standards for how employers should deal with the heat at work, they do require a plan be in place.

“It’s really relevant in this area where we have an obligation as employer to keep a safe workplace that even includes your construction and any outdoor workplace as well,” said Courtney.

“They are to provide this generally safe work environment under OSHA,” Courtney said. “You can’t just say they’ll drink water. You have to make sure that you have these standard breaks and you are enforcing those breaks. In Tennessee you are required to give workers breaks anyway after a certain amount of time.”

“If it’s going to be out for more than an hour or two, it depends on what time of day it is,” Courtney said. “But if nobody’s coming within an hour or two and it’s starting to get really hot in the office, I would send your employees home and see who can telework from home.”

Courtney’s firm represents owners of warehouses, distribution centers and manufacturing companies on both sides of the Mississippi state line, some with air conditioning and others without.

“If you’re in the red and you have a warehouse that is not air-conditioned, then you may want to call off the day or schedule essential activities early in the morning or reschedule for a day where it’s better,” she said.

“I think employers would have to be even more vigilant in monitoring employees,” Courtney said. “Maybe allowing them a trailer where they have air conditioning to take a break, or getting in their trucks and turning on the air conditioning and cooling down. If there’s not any shade, taking frequent breaks or rescheduling that type of work, if possible, around times when the heat index is not as high.”

To read the full article, please visit [*Memphis Daily News*](#).

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