

Occupational Requirements Survey

Visual Overview for Environmental Conditions

Environmental conditions refer to the various tangible or concrete hazards or difficulties that are in the vicinity of workers, and describe surroundings or conditions experienced by workers as they perform critical tasks. The use of personal protective equipment (PPE) is identified for occupations with exposure to hazardous contaminants; moving mechanical parts; heights; and loud noises. If exposure is not completely mitigated by PPE, the duration of the day workers are exposed to these conditions is captured.

This document offers a general overview and basic descriptions of the environmental conditions that are collected and published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) for the Occupational Requirements Survey (ORS).

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Extreme cold

Exposure to non-weather related temperatures that are:

- 40 degrees or colder if the exposure is 2/3 or more of the workday
- 32 degrees or colder if the exposure is for less than 2/3 of the workday



Extreme heat

Exposure to non-weather related temperatures that exceed:

- 85 degrees in a humid atmosphere
- 90 degrees in a dry atmosphere



Hazardous contaminants

Exposure to a substance that negatively affects the respiratory system, eyes, skin or other living tissue via inhalation, ingestion, or contact.



Heavy vibrations

Exposure to a shaking object or surface that causes a strain on the body or extremities.



Heights

Exposure to possible bodily injury from falling.



Humidity

Non-weather related exposure to conditions where the air contains a high amount of water or water vapor and the atmosphere is oppressive.



Noise intensity level

The noise intensity level to which the worker is exposed in the job:

Quiet



Moderate



Loud



Very loud



Outdoors

Job requires work outdoors with workers unprotected and exposed to the elements. This does not include the commute to or from work.



Proximity to moving mechanical parts

Operation of or proximity to moving materials, mechanical parts, settings, or any moving objects (most commonly moving machinery or equipment) that could cause bodily harm.



Wetness

Any non-weather related contact with water or other liquids.

