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# Executive Order Halts OSHA Rulemaking

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A broad executive order issued in the first days of the Trump administration has indefinitely delayed a number of changes to safety standards proposed by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. The order prohibits federal administrative agencies from proposing or finalizing new rules, and directs them to withdraw rules sent for publication in the Federal Register.

This order had an immediate effect on a number of OSHA rules, most prominently the proposed heat injury and illness standard. This rule would require employers to develop a plan to address employee exposure to high heat and humidity by providing breaks, cooling areas, drinking water, and other measures. The order also affects OSHA's proposed revisions to its emergency response requirements. The order does not directly impact rule development in progress where no proposed regulations have been issued.

The Trump administration announced its intent to eliminate a wide range of federal regulations, at one point asserting that 10 rules would need to be repealed to offset any new regulation. OSHA may simply abandon work performed in the prior administration to adopt new safety standards, and may revisit rules adopted during that time, such as the "walkaround" rule that allows third parties to participate in OSHA investigations in some circumstances. These deregulatory measures may prompt some states with their own OSHA enforcement plans to adopt standards addressing perceived safety hazards if they conclude that national rules will not be forthcoming.

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