



COOLING CENTER CHECKLIST FOR TRIBES

As temperatures increase during summer, community members become more vulnerable to extreme heat. Tribes can set up cooling centers to provide an escape from the heat for their people.

Cooling centers are air-conditioned community buildings like libraries or gymnasiums open to the public and accessible to people with disabilities. If your Tribe is setting up cooling centers, here are some things to keep in mind:



Make Sure Air Conditioning is Reliable

- Cool, flowing air helps reduce the risk of heat exhaustion and heat stroke



Provide Cool Water

- Water cools and rehydrates the body



Provide Salty Snacks & Healthy Food Options

- Salt helps the body retain water and reduce the risk of heat exhaustion and heat stroke and fruit helps provide added moisture.



Station First Aid/Responders on the Scene, or Notify Them About the Center

- When first responders know about a cooling center, they can respond more quickly to medical emergencies if they are not already on the scene.



Give Out Hats, Misters, and Sunscreen if Possible

- These protect the skin and body from the dangerous effects of the summer sun.



Communicate Locations and Hours Clearly

- Avoid wasted travel and frustrated community members by having the cooling centers open and staffed during the hottest part of the day with hours clearly posted and announced on social media and other platforms.



Prevent the Spread of COVID-19

- Encourage social distancing, provide vaccine opportunities, and use air filtration systems if possible.



Heat Exhaustion & Heat Stroke



Heat Exhaustion:

- When the body has lost too much water. Can lead to heat stroke.
- What to look for: heavy sweating, dizziness, nausea, and cramping
- What to do: move to a cooler place, drink water, and seek medical attention if symptoms last longer than one hour.

Heat Stroke:

- When the body can no longer lower its temperature. Can be fatal if left unaddressed.
- What to look for: headache, nausea, disorientation, and fast pulse.
- What to do: SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION, and in the meantime, use damp cloths to lower body temperature.

It is advised not to give someone suffering from heat stroke water without medical assistance because they may be too disoriented to swallow and run the risk of choking.

