

An Bille um Shábháilteacht, Sláinte agus Leas ag an Obair (Adhaimsir), 2026

Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Extreme Weather) Bill 2026

Mar a tionscnaíodh

As initiated

[No. 103 of 2026]



AN BILLE UM SHÁBHÁILTEACHT, SLÁINTE AGUS LEAS AG AN OBAIR (ADHAIMSIR), 2026
SAFETY, HEALTH AND WELFARE AT WORK (EXTREME WEATHER) BILL 2026

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AN BILLE UM SHÁBHÁILTEACHT, SLÁINTE AGUS LEAS AG AN OBAIR (ADHAIMSIR), 2026
SAFETY, HEALTH AND WELFARE AT WORK (EXTREME WEATHER) BILL 2026

Bill

entitled

An Act to amend the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 to make further provision for the protection of the safety, health and welfare of employees in the event of extreme weather, to protect employees against penalisation for making a reasonable decision not to attend at, or travel to, a place of work during extreme weather, to require the Health and Safety Authority to collect and publish information relating to the impact of extreme weather on the safety, health and welfare of persons at work, to amend the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007, and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Oireachtas as follows:

Amendment of Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 – Insertion of section 20A

1. The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 is amended by the insertion of the following section after section 20—

"Extreme weather: hazard identification, risk assessment and safety statement

20A. (1) In this section—

"extreme weather"—

(a) means weather conditions that by reason of their severity or duration or the nature of the work or workplace, give rise to a risk to the safety, health or welfare of persons at work, and

(b) includes but is not limited to conditions in respect of which Met Éireann has issued a Status Orange or Status Red weather warning for the area in which the place of work is located;

"Met Éireann" means the Irish National Meteorological Service;

"outdoor place of work"—

(a) means a place of work, or any part thereof, that is not fully enclosed within a permanent building structure and in which persons are required to carry out work, and

(b) includes construction sites, agricultural land, forestry operations, ports and quay areas, outdoor retail and market areas, sports and recreational facilities, and utility infrastructure sites;

"weather-sensitive work activity" means any work activity the safe performance of which is materially affected by the occurrence of extreme weather, having regard to the nature of the work, the location of the place of work, the equipment used, and the classes of persons engaged in the activity.

(2) Without prejudice to the generality of section 19, every employer shall, as part of the risk assessment required by that section—

(a) identify and assess the specific risks to the safety, health and welfare of employees arising from exposure to extreme weather at the place of work, having regard to—

(i) whether the place of work is, in whole or in part, an outdoor place of work,

(ii) the nature and duration of each weather-sensitive work activity carried out at the place of work,

(iii) the vulnerability of particular classes of employee to weather-related harm, including new or inexperienced employees, pregnant employees, employees with relevant health conditions, and employees required to work in isolated locations,

(iv) the likelihood and severity of the extreme weather conditions to which persons at the place of work may be exposed, including excessive heat, severe cold, high wind, lightning, flooding, ice, and snow,

(v) the cumulative or combined effect of two or more simultaneous weather hazards,

(vi) the adequacy of existing control measures in the event of extreme weather, and

(vii) the times of day, seasons of the year, and shifts or patterns of work during which exposure to extreme weather risk is greatest,

and

(b) review the risk assessment under paragraph (a) not less than once in every period of 12 months and, in any event, immediately upon the occurrence of—

(i) a significant change in the weather-sensitive work activities carried out at the place of work,

(ii) a material change in the classes of persons engaged in work at the place of work,

(iii) any accident or dangerous occurrence arising from or

contributed to by extreme weather at the place of work, or

(iv) a severe weather event in respect of which Met Éireann issued a Status Red weather warning for the area in which the place of work is located.

(3) Without prejudice to the generality of section 20, every employer shall ensure that the safety statement prepared under section 20 includes—

(a) the specific risks identified and assessed under subsection (2), together with the protective and preventive measures to be applied in the event of extreme weather at the place of work,

(b) an extreme weather response plan, appropriate to the nature of the workplace, setting out—

(i) the arrangements for monitoring weather forecasts and warnings issued by Met Éireann, and the person or persons responsible for doing so,

(ii) the criteria, including by reference to Met Éireann warning status where applicable, that will trigger suspension, modification, or cessation of weather-sensitive work activities,

(iii) the procedures for the safe and orderly suspension, modification, or cessation of such activities, including where necessary the evacuation or temporary relocation of employees,

(iv) the arrangements for the provision of adequate shelter, rest, heating, cooling, hydration and, where appropriate, personal protective equipment appropriate to the weather hazard,

(v) the procedure for communicating extreme weather warnings and the response plan to all employees, including temporary, fixed-term, agency, and contractor employees, in a form that is comprehensible to them,

(vi) the procedure for resumption of normal work activities following the abatement of extreme weather, and

(vii) the name and job title of the person or persons having responsibility for implementing the extreme weather response plan,

and

(c) a record of each occasion on which the extreme weather response plan is activated, stating the nature and Met Éireann status of the weather event, the response measures taken, and any injuries or dangerous occurrences that arose.

(4) In preparing the risk assessment under subsection (2) and the safety statement under subsection (3), an employer shall have particular regard to the specific vulnerability of an outdoor place of work, the elevation and exposure of the place of work, and the working patterns applicable therein.

(5) An employer shall bring to the attention of employees who carry out weather-sensitive work activities—

(a) the relevant parts of the safety statement relating to extreme weather,

(b) any extreme weather warning issued by Met Éireann in respect of the area in which the place of work is located, and

(c) any trigger criteria or response procedures that apply to the employee's work activities,

and shall do so before the commencement of any period of work during which extreme weather has been forecast or is occurring.

(6) Every employer shall ensure that any contractor or self-employed person carrying out work at the employer's place of work is informed of the extreme weather response plan and the trigger criteria applicable to the place of work, and shall require the contractor or self-employed person to comply with those criteria as a condition of engaging in weather-sensitive work activities at that place of work.

(7) The Authority may, in accordance with section 60, issue a code of practice specifying the risk assessment methodology, protective measures, and response procedures appropriate to different categories of workplace and weather-sensitive work activity for the purposes of this section.".

Amendment of section 27 of Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005

2. Section 27(3) of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 is amended—

(a) in paragraph (e), by the substitution of "this Act," for "this Act, or",

(b) in paragraph (f), by the substitution of "the danger, or" for "the danger.", and

(c) by the insertion of the following paragraph after paragraph (f)—

"(g) making a reasonable decision not to attend at, or not to travel to, his or her place of work during a period of extreme weather (within the meaning of section 20A), including but not limited to severe storm, flood or extreme heat, where the employee reasonably believed that such attendance or travel would give rise to a risk to his or her safety, health or welfare.".

Amendment of Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 – Insertion of section 34A

3. The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 is amended by the insertion of the following section after section 34—

"Collection and publication of information relating to extreme weather

34A. (1) The Authority shall collect, compile and analyse statistics and other information relating to—

(a) the occurrence of extreme weather (within the meaning of

section 20A) affecting places of work,

(b) accidents, dangerous occurrences and personal injuries arising from, or contributed to by, extreme weather at places of work, and

(c) the impact of extreme weather on the safety, health and welfare of persons at work, including on any classes of employee particularly vulnerable to weather-related harm.

(2) The Authority shall publish, not less than once in every year, a report on the statistics and information collected under subsection (1), and may do so as part of a report prepared under section 51.

(3) In performing its functions under this section, the Authority may consult with, and request relevant information from, Met Éireann (within the meaning of section 20A), the Health Service Executive and such other public bodies as it considers appropriate.

(4) The Authority shall, on request, make available the statistics and information collected under subsection (1) to the Minister, the Minister for Health and the Health Service Executive.".

Amendment of Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007

4. Regulation 7 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007 (S.I. No. 299 of 2007) is amended by the insertion of the following paragraph after paragraph (c)—

"(ca) for indoor work, a maximum temperature of 24°C, so far as is reasonably practicable, is achieved and maintained at every workstation,".

Short title, collective citation and construction and commencement

5. (1) This Act may be cited as the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Extreme Weather) Act 2026.

(2) This Act and the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Acts 2005 to 2014 may be cited together as the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Acts 2005 to 2026 and shall be construed together as one Act.

(3) This Act comes into operation on such day or days as, by order or orders made by the Minister for Enterprise, Tourism and Employment, may be fixed therefore, either generally or with reference to any particular purpose or provision and different days may be so fixed for different purposes and different provisions.

An Bille um Shábháilteacht, Sláinte agus Leas ag an Obair (Adhaimsir), 2026

BILLE

(mar a tionscnaíodh)

dá ngairtear

Acht do leasú an Achta um Shábháilteacht, Sláinte agus Leas ag an Obair, 2005 chun socrú breise a dhéanamh maidir le sábháilteacht, sláinte agus leas fostaithe a chosaint i gcás na hadhaimsire, do chosaint fostaithe ar phionósú mar gheall ar bhreith réasúnach a thabhairt gan freastal in áit oibre, nó gan taisteal go dtí áit oibre, le linn na hadhaimsire, dá cheangal ar an Údarás Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta faisnéis i ndáil le tionchar na hadhaimsire ar shábháilteacht, sláinte agus leas daoine ag an obair a bhailiú agus a fhoilsiú, do leasú na Rialachán um Shábháilteacht, Sláinte agus Leas ag an Obair (Feidhm Ghinearálta), 2007, agus do dhéanamh socrú i dtaobh nithe gaolmhara.

Na Seanadóirí Nessa Cosgrove, Laura Harmon, Malcolm Noonan, Patricia Stephenson, Ailís-Máire Ní Uiginn, Eibhlín Ní Fhloinn, Conor Murphy, Críostóir Mac Aindriú, Joanne Collins, Maria McCormack agus Póilín Nic an Tuile a thug isteach,

3 *Samhain,* 2026

Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Extreme Weather) Bill 2026

BILL

(as initiated)

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An Act to amend the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 to make further provision for the protection of the safety, health and welfare of employees in the event of extreme weather, to protect employees against penalisation for making a reasonable decision not to attend at, or travel to, a place of work during extreme weather, to require the Health and Safety Authority to collect and publish information relating to the impact of extreme weather on the safety, health and welfare of persons at work, to amend the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007, and to provide for related matters.

Introduced by Senators Nessa Cosgrove, Laura Harmon, Malcolm Noonan, Patricia Stephenson, Alice-Mary Higgins, Eileen Flynn, Conor Murphy, Chris Andrews, Joanne Collins, Maria McCormack and Pauline Tully,

3*rd November,* 2026

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