

**Attachment A**

**City of Phoenix 2026  
Heat Response Plan**



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## **Executive Summary**

The Heat Response Plan details the programs and services that Phoenix delivers to residents and visitors to prevent illness, death, and other serious and immediate adverse health outcomes associated with indoor and outdoor heat exposure. Extreme heat impacts the health and quality of life of many community members, with thousands of heat-related illnesses and hundreds of heat-related fatalities reported annually in Maricopa County. Preliminary reporting shows 425 heat-related fatalities in Maricopa County in 2025, indicating that significant public health challenges persist. However, this total represents a reduction of approximately 30% from the prior year and would mark the second consecutive year of declines after more than a decade of consistent increases. The City of Phoenix's Heat Response Plan is revised annually to ensure that Phoenix's approach is adapted to meet evolving community needs in the pursuit of continued improvements in heat-related public health indicators.

The 2026 Heat Response Plan contains 23 specific heat response actions for which the City holds a leadership role, organized into six broad strategies:

1. Equip first responders for effective heat response.
2. Provide publicly accessible cool space and drinking water.
3. Support cool and safe home environments.
4. Support cool and safe mobility and recreation.
5. Implement heat safety measures for workers.
6. Educate the community and engage with partners.

Notable updates to the plan for 2026 include:

1. Modifications to the locations and operations of the 24/7 heat respite center and extended hour cooling centers
2. Building new heat-focused educational resources for City of Phoenix employees
3. Restructuring the City's heat relief assistance program for community partners
4. Expanding outreach efforts to mobile home and senior living communities in partnership with the Red Cross

The 2026 plan draws from lessons learned over the past several years, with expanded services, data-driven adjustments, and stronger partnerships, ensuring enhanced coordination, accessibility, and outreach to protect residents during extreme heat events.

## **Purpose and Planning Process**

The City of Phoenix Heat Response Plan outlines programs and services intended to protect public health and quality of life from the threats of hot weather. Extreme heat is a leading cause of weather-related deaths in the United States and exerts a significant public health burden in Phoenix. The most acute impacts include heat-caused and heat-related fatalities, as well as heat-related illnesses that require emergency medical service and hospital care. Many other health challenges are also known to be related to prolonged, frequent, or severe heat exposure but are not systematically documented. These challenges include cases of heat illness that are unreported, disrupted sleep patterns, and anxiety over high electricity bills.

While everyone is potentially vulnerable to heat-related illness, certain communities account for a disproportionately high share of the public health burden of extreme heat. Public health reports in Arizona point to people experiencing homelessness and substance users at especially high risk of adverse heat-related health outcomes. Studies also show that rates of heat-related illness and/or death are higher in communities that have lower incomes, lower quality housing, a higher prevalence of elderly individuals, a higher prevalence of people of color, and other indicators of social vulnerability.

Managing the public health risks associated with extreme heat is an integral component of hazard preparedness for the City of Phoenix owing to its geographic positioning in the Sonoran Desert. Prolonged, hot summers are a part of the regional climate. However, the experience of summer heat is highly variable between different neighborhoods in Phoenix and between individual residents. Historical development patterns and varying topography across Phoenix lead to neighborhood-to-neighborhood air temperature differences of 10°F or more on summer days. Personal heat exposure is even more variable depending on daily activity patterns and access to air-conditioned spaces. Over time, the severity of summer heat in Phoenix is being amplified beyond background conditions by urban development and global-scale climate change. Summer daytime and nighttime temperatures have increased in the City of Phoenix for several decades and temperatures are projected to continue to rise.

To address the significant, inequitable, and growing public health risks associated with extreme heat, the Phoenix City Council unanimously passed the City's first Heat Response Plan in 2022. This document is the fourth annual update to the Heat Response Plan.

The process to update the Heat Response Plan began in late summer 2025 and was coordinated by an Executive Heat Response Leadership team. This team is comprised of senior staff from Emergency Management, Fire, Public Health, Homeless Solutions, Library, and Heat Response and Mitigation. The Executive Heat Response Leadership team initiated several different types of program evaluation to identify opportunities for improvement toward the goal of preventing heat-associated illness and deaths. Those evaluation activities included a formal after-action analysis of the City's enhanced efforts during summer 2025 and review of operations with city departments and regional stakeholders that operate programs and services relevant to the heat response mission.

The 2026 Heat Response Plan contains 23 specific heat response actions for which the City holds a leadership role, organized into six broad strategies:

1. Equip first responders for effective heat response.
2. Provide publicly accessible cool space and drinking water.
3. Support cool and safe home environments.
4. Support cool and safe mobility and recreation.
5. Implement heat safety measures for workers.
6. Educate the community and engage with partners.

The goal of the Heat Response Plan is to enhance public health and community resilience by alleviating adverse effects of heat. Key performance indicators include:

- Heat-related mortality: Strive for year-over-year reductions in the number of fatalities attributed to heat exposure in the City of Phoenix
- Heat-related illnesses: Strive for year-over-year reductions in the number and severity of medical service calls related to heat exposure in the City of Phoenix.

Confirmed heat-related deaths in Phoenix for the 2025 heat season were approximately 30% lower than totals reported for 2024, marking the second consecutive year of declines. Emergency calls for service for heat-related illnesses to the Phoenix Fire Department increased by approximately 25% from 2024 to 2025.

The City of Phoenix also implements and invests in a wide range of other programs and services that support the goals of the Heat Response Plan but are not specifically activated or emphasized for the heat season, and as such are not listed as actions in this document.

Examples of those related initiatives include:

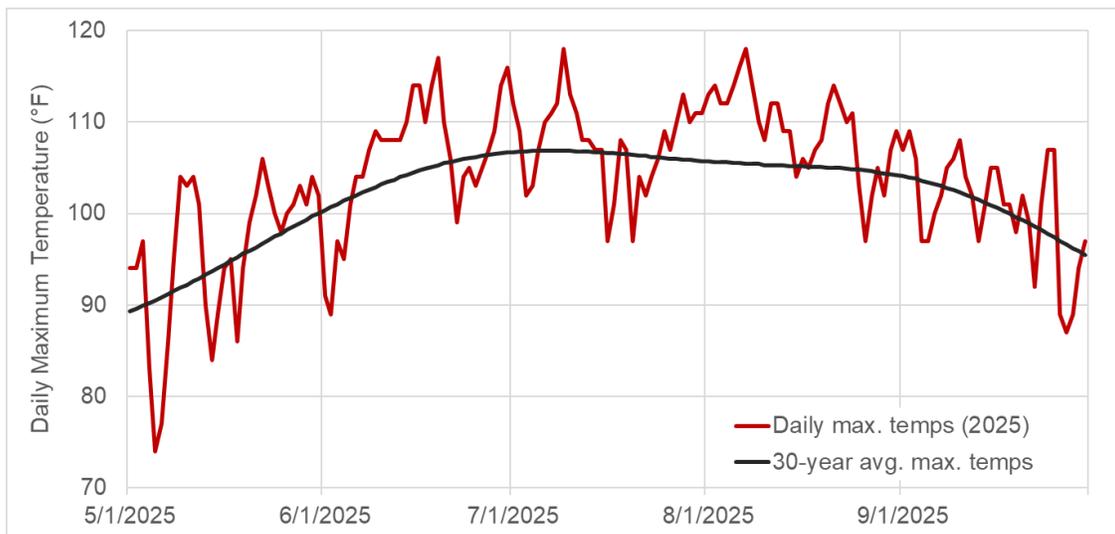
- Investments in affordable housing units and shelter beds
- Operation of housing repair and weatherization programs
- Installation of shade structures at transit stops and in the public right of way
- Increases in urban tree canopy
- Actions proposed in the Shade Phoenix Plan, Energy Access Plan, Climate Action Plan, and other municipal plans.

# Weather and Climate Assessment

The City of Phoenix Heat Response Plan defines May through September as the operational season for heat response efforts. In 2025, programs operated during this time period as planned with no early activation or extension of programming timelines.

## Heat Season 2025 Review

The 2025 Heat Season was among the most severe in Phoenix’s history. By many metrics, the 2025 heat season ranked 4<sup>th</sup> hottest all-time, behind only 2024, 2023, and 2020. Temperatures at Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport hit at least 110°F on 37 days and there were 31 days with National Weather Service Extreme Heat Warnings in effect. Daily highs exceeding 115°F were recorded five times, including a seasonal high of 118°F on July 9 and August 7. Nighttime temperatures failed to drop below 90°F at Sky Harbor on 23 days, including a seasonal high overnight low of 95°F on July 10. August was the hottest month of the summer and was the month with temperatures farthest above the climatological average, with daytime highs exceeding normals by more than 4°F. The figure below shows daily high temperatures from the 2025 heat season as compared to climatological normals, and the table provides a month-by-month summary of daily average high and low temperatures.



Month	2025 Avg. High	Normal Avg. High*	2025 Rank**	2025 Avg. Low	Normal Avg. Low*	2025 Rank**
May	95.6°F	94.5°F	34	71.2°F	69.5°F	12
June	106.2°F	104.2°F	16	80.9°F	78.6°F	10
July	107.6°F	106.5°F	12	86.2°F	84.5°F	8
August	109.3°F	105.1°F	4	87.1°F	83.6°F	5
September	100.5°F	100.4°F	30	79.8°F	78.1°F	5
Heat Season (May – Sept.)	103.8°F	102.1°F	6	81.1°F	78.9°F	3

\*per the official 1991–2020 U.S. Climate Normals adopted by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

\*\*out of 130 recorded years; 1 indicates hottest on record

## Climate Data for Planning

The table below presents weekly averages, ranges, and probabilities of exceedance based on 2016–2025 observations from Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport. Statistics are based on the previous ten years rather than the official 30-year normals established by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to ensure that the most recent observations are used and to acknowledge non-stationarity in regional temperature trends. Data are presented for each week of the 2026 Heat Season starting on May 1; October data are included to support decision-making regarding potential extensions of the operational period beyond September 30.

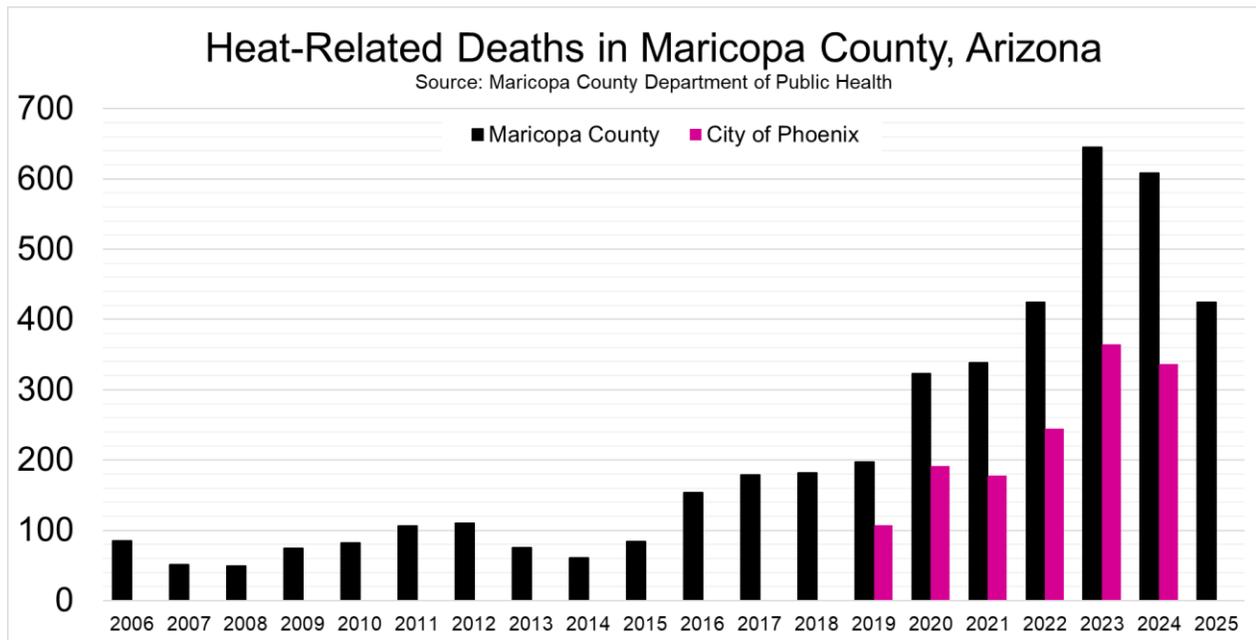
Week	Date	Daily High Temperatures				Daily Low Temperatures		
		Average (°F)	Highest (°F)	100°F or above*	110°F or above*	Average (°F)	Highest (°F)	90°F or above*
1	5/1	92.7	108	19%	0%	67.0	76	0%
2	5/8	93.5	106	30%	0%	68.3	81	0%
3	5/15	95.4	105	31%	0%	70.8	82	0%
4	5/22	96.1	108	36%	0%	70.2	79	0%
5	5/29	101.1	113	67%	6%	75.1	87	0%
6	6/5	104.9	115	86%	13%	78.8	87	0%
7	6/12	106.4	118	89%	31%	79.7	91	9%
8	6/19	108.1	119	94%	37%	82.1	92	11%
9	6/26	108.2	116	97%	40%	83.9	95	13%
10	7/3	109.9	118	100%	57%	86.5	95	26%
11	7/10	109.7	118	96%	59%	88.0	95	43%
12	7/17	108.2	119	97%	34%	87.3	97	37%
13	7/24	107.2	119	87%	51%	85.7	95	31%
14	7/31	108.1	118	91%	49%	85.9	93	31%
15	8/7	106.5	118	91%	27%	85.3	94	21%
16	8/14	106.4	117	86%	33%	84.0	93	19%
17	8/21	105.4	115	89%	27%	83.3	92	11%
18	8/28	106.1	117	90%	19%	84.6	93	10%
19	9/4	105.4	116	87%	21%	83.5	93	4%
20	9/11	103.2	113	71%	4%	80.0	90	1%
21	9/18	99.2	109	53%	0%	76.6	85	0%
22	9/25	98.0	117	49%	7%	74.5	88	0%
	10/2	95.9	113	29%	6%	71.4	86	0%
	10/9	92.0	108	19%	0%	68.6	81	0%
	10/16	90.7	105	11%	0%	66.0	75	0%
	10/23	88.3	100	3%	0%	63.6	76	0%

\*Probabilities of exceedance indicate the percent of days within the given week that temperatures have reached the indicated temperature over the past decade.

## Health Assessment

Heat-related deaths are tracked in Maricopa County by the Maricopa Department of Public Health (MCDPH), in partnership with the Maricopa County Office of the Medical Examiner. Heat-related deaths include those that are directly attributable to heat exposure (heat-caused deaths) and those where heat played a contributing role but was not the primary cause of death (heat-contributed deaths). The Maricopa County heat-health system is widely recognized as a national and international best practice. Heat-related deaths have been recorded using consistent methods since 2006.

Heat-related deaths have increased considerably in Maricopa County since 2014. Particularly large year-over-year increases were evident from 2015 to 2016 (+83%), 2019 to 2020 (+62%), and 2021 to 2022 (+25%). Another large increase is evident from 2022 to 2023, with an increase of more than 47% to the record high of 625 cases in Maricopa County that was recorded that year. However, heat-related deaths have declined in Maricopa County for each of the last two years, including a decline of approximately 30% from the 608 cases confirmed in 2024 to 425 confirmed cases in 2025 (as of 12/31/2025; 9 cases remain under investigation). City-specific totals for 2025 will be released by MCDPH at later date.



MCDPH produces comprehensive annual reports that detail key risk factors and characteristics of heat-associated deaths, including demographic information, details about housing status, air conditioning availability, and indications of drug/alcohol use. The preliminary report for the 2025 heat season has not yet been released, but the current MCDPH Dashboard shows that county-wide risk factors for heat-related death remain generally consistent with prior years. Among the key metrics as of December 31, 2025:

- 52% of reported deaths were heat-caused and 48% were considered heat-contributed. Heat-caused deaths are those in which heat was directly involved in the sequence of conditions causing deaths.
- 74% of heat-related deaths were among males.
- 58% of heat-related deaths were among persons 35–64 years of age
- 73% of heat-related deaths had an outdoor place of injury
- Among indoor heat-related deaths, 89% occurred in a home where air conditioning was present, but was turned off or not functioning
- People experiencing homelessness accounted for 48% of heat-related deaths
- Substance use was involved in 64% of deaths; this ratio is a modest increase from the prior three-year average of 57%

Another key lesson learned from MCDPH and Arizona State University (ASU) analysis of heat-associated death and illness data is that *serious health impacts from heat are not confined to only the hottest summer days*. While the hottest days do bring the highest risk of heat-associated death and illness, cases begin to be seen at temperatures that would be considered mild by most Phoenixians. In 2025, 37% of heat-related deaths in Maricopa County occurred on days with the HeatRisk was designated by the National Weather Service as Major or Extreme, and 63% of deaths occurred on days when the HeatRisk was designated as Moderate, Minor, or None. These findings imply that a seasonal approach to heat management, rather than one only focused on intermittent “heat waves” is necessary.

## **Heat Response Programs and Services**

In 2026, the City of Phoenix will take the lead or play a significant role in operating 23 heat response programs and services. This comprehensive portfolio comprises a mix of ongoing programs continuing from previous years, revised existing programs, and new initiatives. The responsibility and support for these programs and services, encompassing budget and staffing needs, are distributed across more than 15 different City departments and functions. While many actions in the plan continually evolve and improve from year to year, there are four notable updates for 2026:

1. Modifications to the locations and operations of the 24/7 heat respite center and extended hour cooling centers (Actions 2.2 and 2.3)
2. Building new heat-focused educational resources for City of Phoenix employees (Action 2.8)
3. Restructuring the City's heat relief assistance program for community partners (Action 2.9)
4. Expanding outreach efforts to mobile home and senior living communities in partnership with the Red Cross (Action 3.4)

The subsequent pages feature an inventory of all programs and services organized by strategy, presented in table format. Following the table, a short narrative is provided for each action to provide a more complete perspective of the components of the Heat Response Plan.

<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Actions</b> (* denotes actions with notable updates for 2026)	<b>Lead Depts.</b>
<b>Equip First Responders for Effective Heat Response</b>	1.1 Activate summer heat protocols including cold immersion techniques	FIRE
	1.2 Equip Homeless Outreach Teams with Cooling Resources	OHS, OHRM, OPH
<b>Provide Publicly Accessible Cool Space and Drinking Water</b>	2.1 Designate City Facilities as Heat Relief Network Cooling Centers	LIB, OHRM
	*2.2 Offer Extended Hours at City of Phoenix Cooling Centers	LIB, OHS, OEM, OHRM, OPH
	*2.3 Operate a 24/7 Respite and Navigation Center	OHS, OEM, OHRM, OPH
	2.4 Designate City Facilities as Heat Relief Network Hydration Stations	PRD, HSD, OHRM
	2.5 Operate Safe Outdoor Space	OHS
	2.6 Provide Shade and Cooled Rest Areas at The Key Campus	OHS
	2.7 Expand Smart Chilled Drinking Water in Public Spaces Initiative	INNOV
	*2.8 Improve Heat Response Educational Resources for City Employees	OHRM, HR
	*2.9 Provide Heat Relief Supplies to Community Partners	OHRM
<b>Support Cool and Safe Homes</b>	3.1 Promote and Enforce Cooling Ordinance for Rental Housing Units	NSD, HSD, COMMS
	3.2 Provide Emergency Utility Assistance	HSD
	3.3 Offer Low-flow Water Services Program	WSD
	*3.4 Deploy Heat Outreach Teams to Mobile Home and Senior Communities	OHRM
<b>Support Cool and Safe Mobility and Recreation</b>	4.1 Deploy Outreach Teams to Select Trailheads	PRD, OHRM, FIRE
	4.2 Close Select Trailheads on Extreme Heat Warning Days	PRD
	4.3 Attend Community Events to Share Heat Safety Resources	OHRM
<b>Implement Heat Safety Measures for Workers</b>	5.1 Annually Update Heat Safety Plans in City Departments	HR
	5.2 Promote and Enforce Heat Safety Ordinance for City Contractors	FIN, LAW, HR, OHRM
<b>Educate the Community and Engage with Partners</b>	6.1 Operate a Comprehensive Heat Response Public Education Campaign	COMMS
	6.2 Improve Engagement Strategies for People Who Use Substances	OPH, OHRM, OHS, COMMS
	6.3 Participate in Cross-Agency Work Groups and Research Initiatives	OHRM, OEM

Department key: OHRM – Office of Heat Response and Mitigation; COMMS – Communications; VOL – Volunteer Programs; OAC – Arts and Culture; HSD – Human Services; HR – Human Resources; NSD – Neighborhood Services; OPH – Public Health, OEM – Office of Emergency Management; PWD – Public Works Department; PRD – Parks and Recreation Department; WSD – Water Services Department; PTD – Public Transit Department; LRT – Light Rail Transit; OHS – Office of Homeless Solutions; FIN – Finance Department; INNOV – Office of Innovation.

**STRATEGY 1:  
EQUIP FIRST RESPONDERS FOR EFFECTIVE HEAT RESPONSE**



**▶ Activate Summer Heat Protocols Including Cold Immersion Techniques**

**Action 1.1**

The City of Phoenix Fire Department continues to respond to all heat-related calls in which the safety, health, or lives of residents are threatened during our summer months. The Fire Department's life-saving measures for heat emergencies include ice and cold-water immersion, chilled intravenous therapy, and other innovative strategies to reduce case severity. The Fire Department Heat Stress Management Standard Operating Procedure (MP 206.19) provides a robust framework for minimizing the effects of heat stress on first responders, which would have a cascading adverse impact on the community. The framework focuses on health assessments, rest, hydration, and temperature regulation for personnel exposed to high temperatures. Protective directives are implemented when temperatures exceed 105°F, deploying additional resources and implementing enhanced rehabilitation measures. Training exposures comply with ADOSH guidelines, further ensuring personnel's well-being.

TARGET POPULATION	CITYWIDE
LEAD DEPARTMENT(S)	FIRE
RESOURCES / MORE INFO.	<a href="https://www.phoenix.gov/fire/publications/standard-operating-procedures">https://www.phoenix.gov/fire/publications/standard-operating-procedures</a>

**▶ Equip Homeless Outreach Teams with Cooling Resources**

**Action 1.2**

The Office of Homeless Solutions deploys outreach teams year-round for proactive engagement with people experiencing homelessness and to assist in providing transportation and connection to homeless services. During the heat season, outreach teams are equipped with heat relief kits to distribute to community members in need, including water, hats, cooling towels, and other essential supplies. Staff also receive information about publicly available cooling resources to share during their engagements. In the 2025 heat season, 1,579 people benefitted from this program, which is supported by a three-year grant from the Gila River Indian Community.

TARGET POPULATION	PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS
LEAD DEPARTMENT(S)	OHS, OHRM
RESOURCES / MORE INFO.	N/A

**STRATEGY 2:  
PROVIDE PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE COOL SPACE AND DRINKING WATER**



**► Designate City facilities as Heat Relief Network Cooling Centers Action 2.1**

The regional Heat Relief Network is coordinated by the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) and consists of Respite Centers, Cooling Centers, Hydration Stations, and Donation Sites. Cooling Centers are indoor, air-conditioned locations that also offer hydration. 17 City of Phoenix Library locations served as Cooling Centers throughout the 2025 Heat Season and the City will continue this commitment in 2025. All participating City facilities are listed on a publicly accessible web map and directory hosted by MAG.

TARGET POPULATION	CITYWIDE
LEAD DEPARTMENT(S)	LIBRARY, OHRM
RESOURCES / MORE INFO.	<a href="https://azmag.gov/Programs/Heat-Relief-Network">https://azmag.gov/Programs/Heat-Relief-Network</a>

**► Offer Extended Hours at City of Phoenix Cooling Centers Action 2.2**

**Updated for 2026.** Participating facilities in the regional Heat Relief Network typically provide services coincident with their normal hours of business operation. This model creates gaps in network availability, particularly in the late afternoon and evening hours, as well as on weekends. To address this deficiency, the City of Phoenix will extend the hours of one Cooling Center—Cholla Library—to 9pm each day of the week and add capacity from noon to 9pm on Sundays throughout the heat season. This location was selected to address elevated heat-health risks along the I-17 corridor north of downtown Phoenix, as a complement to the City’s investment in heat respite locations in the downtown core. Similar to the 2025 heat season, full library services will be offered at Cholla Library during the extended operating hours, with additional staffing support provided by Community Bridges, Inc.

TARGET POPULATION	CITYWIDE
LEAD DEPARTMENT(S)	LIB, OHS, OEM, OHRM, OPH
RESOURCES / MORE INFO.	N/A

► **Operate 24/7 and Extended Hour Respite and Navigation Centers**

**Action 2.3**

**Updated for 2026.** To further improve the capacity of the regional Heat Relief Network, the City of Phoenix will operate one 24/7 Heat Respite and Navigation Center for the entire heat season as well as a second site with afternoon and evening hours. These locations will serve as safe, cool indoor spaces for refuge from the heat and provide water. They will also provide resources for people experiencing homelessness including navigation and transportation, to help people access a wide range of other City of Phoenix services. The locations were chosen based on analysis of public health and community vulnerability data as well as operational capabilities. This year, the City will again offer 24/7 heat respite at 20 W. Jackson St. and additional availability at the Justa Center, located at 1001 W. Jefferson St. Both locations are in downtown Phoenix in the primary hotspot for heat-related 911 calls citywide. Both of these sites will have staffing and security support from the Office of Homeless Solutions, Community Bridges, Inc., and the Phoenix Police Department.

TARGET POPULATION	CITYWIDE
LEAD DEPARTMENT(S)	OHS, OEM, OHRM, OPH
RESOURCES / MORE INFO.	N/A

► **Designate City Facilities as Heat Relief Network Hydration Stations**

**Action 2.4**

The regional Heat Relief Network is coordinated by the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) and consists of Respite Centers, Cooling Centers, Hydration Stations, and Donation Sites. Hydration Stations are indoor or outdoor locations that offer bottled water and may offer other heat relief resources. All City of Phoenix senior centers, community centers, and swimming pools served as Hydration Stations during the 2025 Heat Season and the City will continue this commitment in 2026. All participating City facilities are listed on a publicly accessible web map and directory hosted by MAG.

TARGET POPULATION	CITYWIDE
LEAD DEPARTMENT(S)	PRD, HSD, OHRM
RESOURCES / MORE INFO.	<a href="https://azmag.gov/Programs/Heat-Relief-Network">https://azmag.gov/Programs/Heat-Relief-Network</a>

► **Operate the Safe Outdoor Space**

**Action 2.5**

The Safe Outdoor Space at 1537 W. Jackson St. is a key component in the city’s strategy to address homelessness around the Key Campus. It is designed as an alternative for those not yet ready for indoor shelter and provides a safer, shaded environment with essential services to aid individuals in ending their homelessness. The unique property offers both outdoor and cooled indoor spaces. The operation of the Safe Outdoor Space aligns with recommendations from the 2020 Strategies to Address Homelessness Plan.

TARGET POPULATION	PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS
LEAD DEPARTMENT(S)	OHS
RESOURCES / MORE INFO.	N/A

► Provide Shade and Cooled Rest areas at The Key Campus

Action 2.6

Multiple City of Phoenix investments made over the past several years are providing shade and cooled space to individuals experiencing homelessness at the Key Campus. These investments include shade structures and evaporative coolers that are activated on the Campus during the heat season. Phoenix coordinated and funded the construction of a cooling tower at the center of the Campus that became operational in 2025.

TARGET POPULATION	PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS
LEAD DEPARTMENT(S)	OHS
RESOURCES / MORE INFO.	N/A

► Expand Smart Drinking Water in Public Spaces Initiative

Action 2.7

Access to chilled drinking water is a fundamental need for health and well-being. This project expands access to chilled drinking water in high-density areas of the city, with locations near public transportation stops and hubs, City buildings, and public spaces. The project takes a data-driven approach to understand the needs of the Phoenix community and identify optimal locations. Each unit has a remote monitoring system to provide usage data and alerts for system issues and potential leaks. The initiative includes partners, including Downtown Phoenix Inc. and HandsOn Greater Phoenix, as well as community members to support the upkeep and sustainability of each unit. As of early 2026, 11 units have been installed with four additional units to be installed later in the calendar year. To date, the initiative has delivered the equivalent of more than 270,000 single-use plastic bottles of water to residents, without the plastic waste. The project won an IDC North America Smart Cities Award in 2025.

TARGET POPULATION	CITYWIDE
LEAD DEPARTMENT(S)	OFFICE OF INNOVATION
RESOURCES / MORE INFO.	<a href="https://www.phoenix.gov/administration/departments/innovation/chilled-drinking-water-initiative.html">https://www.phoenix.gov/administration/departments/innovation/chilled-drinking-water-initiative.html</a>

► Improve Heat Response Educational Resources for City Employees

Action 2.8

**Updated for 2026.** A new training program is being developed for staff members who support City of Phoenix Heat Relief Network sites. The training, which will be delivered through the PHXYou platform, will help build employee awareness of the full suite of heat relief programs and resources available to the public. This content includes information about programs and tools offered by city departments as well as local partners. The training program is being collaboratively developed with input from ten city departments. A pilot version of the training program will be launched for the 2026 heat season, with feedback from the pilot used to enhance the program for widespread implementation in 2027. This action is supported by a FEMA Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities Grant.

TARGET POPULATION	EMPLOYEES
LEAD DEPARTMENT(S)	OHRM, HR
RESOURCES / MORE INFO.	N/A

**Updated for 2026.** Dozens of community organizations participate in the regional Heat Relief Network, expanding options available for city residents to access cool space, drinking water, and important programs and services. These organizations participate in regional heat relief efforts on a voluntary basis, often absorbing additional costs to do so with no or very limited financial resources. The City of Phoenix has been offering heat relief assistance programs to these organizations since 2022. Last year, 18 local organizations received supplies including hats, electrolytes, sunscreen, reusable water bottles, and lip balm with a total allocation of more than \$100,000. In 2026, the heat relief assistance program is being restructured with new formal contracts for a heat relief supply provider and distribution manager to improve program efficiency. All participating organizations must be registered with the regional Heat Relief Network with operations in the City of Phoenix.

TARGET POPULATION	CITYWIDE
LEAD DEPARTMENT(S)	OHRM
RESOURCES / MORE INFO.	N/A

**STRATEGY 3:  
SUPPORT COOL AND SAFE HOMES**



**► Promote and Enforce Cooling Ordinance for Rental Housing Unit**

**Action 3.1**

The Neighborhood Services Department enforces the City’s cooling ordinance, which sets minimum temperature requirements for cooling systems in all single- and multi-family rental housing units. Each unit must be able to safely cool all livable rooms to 86°F when using evaporative cooling and 82°F when using air conditioning. The Human Services Department oversees a Landlord-Tenant education program that helps parties understand their rights and responsibilities concerning this ordinance and the Arizona Residential Landlord-Tenant Act. The City actively promotes these and related programs throughout the heat season. In 2025, Neighborhood Services completed 200 service calls related to enforcement of the cooling ordinance.

TARGET POPULATION	RENTERS
LEAD DEPARTMENT(S)	NSD, HSD, COMMS
RESOURCES / MORE INFO.	<a href="https://www.phoenix.gov/nsdsite/Documents/NPD%20Documents/Cooling%20Ordinance%20Flyer.pdf">https://www.phoenix.gov/nsdsite/Documents/NPD%20Documents/Cooling%20Ordinance%20Flyer.pdf</a>

**► Provide Emergency Utility Assistance**

**Action 3.2**

The Human Services Department operates the City’s utility assistance program for residents, which aids in covering costs for electricity, water, and gas services. Assistance is provided through federal, state, and local utility assistance funding initiatives. Funding is provided on a first-come, first-served basis; however, those who meet emergency criteria will be prioritized for consideration if funding is available. Priority will be given to households with children under 24 months, individuals aged 60 and older, or those with special medical needs. The Human Services Department staff offer case management services, education, and utility provider coordination to help residents to effectively manage their finances, enroll in appropriate utility plans, and advocate to prevent disconnection or facilitate reconnection of utility services when appropriate.

The utility assistance program operates year-round and is promoted as a heat response strategy during the heat season. In 2025, 59% of financial assistance was provided during the heat season and 57% of total households were served during the heat season, with the most assistance provided and households served occurring in September.

TARGET POPULATION	CITYWIDE
LEAD DEPARTMENT(S)	HSD
RESOURCES / MORE INFO.	<a href="https://www.phoenix.gov/humanservices">https://www.phoenix.gov/humanservices</a>

► Offer Low-Flow Water Service Program

Action 3.3

The Water Services Department is continuing its innovative Low-Flow Water Service Program. This program provides a vital lifeline for customers experiencing difficulty paying their water bills, offering essential water services for up to three months. By ensuring continued access to water for basic needs, such as hydration, while residents work to resolve challenges with bill payment, the City strives to alleviate financial burdens during the heat season.

TARGET POPULATION	CITYWIDE
LEAD DEPARTMENT(S)	WSD
RESOURCES / MORE INFO.	<a href="https://www.phoenix.gov/waterservices">https://www.phoenix.gov/waterservices</a>

► Deploy Heat Outreach Teams to Mobile Home and Senior Communities

Action 3.4

**Updated action for 2026.** The City will partner with the Red Cross and the Arizona Mobile and Manufactured Homeowners Association to coordinate a volunteer-led outreach program for residents of mobile and manufactured homes as well as seniors. The partnership will focus on educating residents about available resources and promoting heat safety. In 2025, this effort included five outreach campaigns that engaged 445 residents, with the support of 38 participating volunteers. Staff and partners are seeking to expand efforts for 2026 in coordination with the Neighborhood Services and Human Services Departments and Offices of Public Health and Sustainability.

TARGET POPULATION	MOBILE HOME RESIDENTS, SENIORS
LEAD DEPARTMENT(S)	OHRM
RESOURCES / MORE INFO.	N/A

**STRATEGY 4:  
SUPPORT COOL AND SAFE MOBILITY AND RECREATION**



**► Deploy Outreach Teams to Select Trailheads Action 4.1**

From May through September, the City of Phoenix supports the “Take a Hike. Do it Right.” campaign with outreach teams deployed to promote safe hiking practices and reduce heat-related illnesses and rescues. Volunteers from the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and Park Stewards are stationed every Saturday and Sunday from 7–10 a.m. at entrances to trails that have higher rates of heat-related illnesses and/or those where rescue operations are more technically complex, including trails at Camelback Mountain, Piestewa Peak, and South Mountain. Volunteers provide heat safety education, hydration resources, and distribute cooling supplies such as water, electrolytes, and towels. Last year, 265 volunteers contributed more than 800 service hours and recorded 17,300 engagements. The program also made new infrastructure investments in 2025 to make ice immediately accessible at select locations to support Phoenix Fire during mountain rescues.

TARGET POPULATION	HIKERS
LEAD DEPARTMENT(S)	PRD
RESOURCES / MORE INFO.	N/A

**► Close Select Trailheads on Extreme Heat Warning Days Action 4.2**

The Parks and Recreation Board established the Trail Heat Safety Program in 2021 to reduce risks for hikers and first responders during extreme heat. The program restricts access to select trails when the National Weather Service issues an Extreme Heat Warning. In March 2025, the board expanded the program to restrict access to three trails at South Mountain Park / Preserve: Holbert Trail, Mormon Trail, Hau ‘pal Loop Trail, and the National Trail from Pima Canyon Trailhead, while keeping more than 100 miles of trails open.

TARGET POPULATION	HIKERS
LEAD DEPARTMENT(S)	PRD
RESOURCES / MORE INFO.	<a href="https://www.phoenix.gov/parks/trails/take-a-hike-do-it-right">https://www.phoenix.gov/parks/trails/take-a-hike-do-it-right</a> to receive alerts

**► Attend Community Events to Share Heat Safety Resources Action 4.3**

The Office of Heat Response and Mitigation will help raise awareness of heat response initiatives by supporting requests to participate in community gatherings and outreach events throughout the heat season. Staff will provide an information booth and engage with attendees to raise awareness about heat safety measures, distribute educational materials, and provide guidance on accessing community cooling resources.

TARGET POPULATION	CITYWIDE
LEAD DEPARTMENT(S)	OHRM
RESOURCES / MORE INFO.	N/A

**STRATEGY 5:  
IMPLEMENT HEAT SAFETY MEASURES FOR WORKERS**



**▶ Annually Update Heat Safety Plans in City Departments**

**Action 5.1**

The Human Resources Safety & Worker’s Compensation Division has developed written Heat Injury and Illness Prevention Plans with departments whose employees face heat safety dangers during their work duties. These plans work to minimize or eliminate employee exposures to heat related hazards that may lead to serious injuries, illnesses or death. The plans outline each department’s safety controls and policies to mitigate heat-related hazards, procedures to follow should a heat-related illness or injury occur and training to ensure employees are familiar with their department’s plan.

TARGET POPULATION	CITY EMPLOYEES
LEAD DEPARTMENT(S)	HR
RESOURCES / MORE INFO.	N/A

**▶ Promote and Enforce Heat Safety Ordinance for City Contractors**

**Action 5.2**

In April 2024, the City Council adopted a heat safety ordinance that applies to businesses that have contractual, leasing, or licensing relationships with the City of Phoenix. The ordinance requires these businesses to have compliant heat safety plans that ensure appropriate measures to protect employees are in place. At the time of ordinance adoption, the City Council also directed staff to create an advisory committee to guide the implementation of the ordinance. The advisory committee was formed in early summer 2024 and submitted recommendations to the City Manager in September 2025 to guide the implementation of the ordinance into the future.

TARGET POPULATION	WORKERS
LEAD DEPARTMENT(S)	HR, LAW, FINANCE, OHRM
RESOURCES / MORE INFO.	N/A

**STRATEGY 6:  
EDUCATE THE COMMUNITY AND ENGAGE WITH PARTNERS**



**► Operate a Comprehensive Heat Response Public Education Campaign** **Action 6.1**

The City will continue to increase the reach of public messaging related to heat response in 2026 through a comprehensive multimedia public education campaign. The goal of the campaign is to maximize community awareness of heat safety information and available resources. The campaign includes both print and digital channels and is updated each year. Resources are made available in both English and Spanish and target heat-vulnerable populations as well as the community at large. In 2025, thousands of pamphlets were distributed to community partners, multiple newsletters included heat safety information, resources were promoted on bus shelters and billboards as well as other advertising venues, and more than 300,000 impressions were earned on social media. Additionally, staff will proactively pursue media coverage and participate in requested media interviews to further build public awareness of heat safety strategies and resources. In 2025, the Communications Office coordinated more than 100 stories from local, national, and international outlets related to the City’s Heat Response Plan and programs.

TARGET POPULATION	CITYWIDE
LEAD DEPARTMENT(S)	COMMS
RESOURCES / MORE INFO.	<a href="https://www.phoenix.gov/pio/summer">https://www.phoenix.gov/pio/summer</a>

**► Improve Engagement Strategies for People Who Use Substances** **Action 6.2**

The Office of Public Health, in partnership with the Communications Office and Offices of Heat Response and Mitigation and Homeless Solutions, will continue efforts to improve heat related outcomes for people who use drugs and alcohol. Substance use was a factor in approximately 57% of heat-related fatalities across Maricopa County between 2022 and 2024. Efforts in 2026 will include the continuation of heat outreach and expanding education on the risks of substance use and heat as well as overdose signs, symptoms, and response. Training modules for staff and volunteers supporting heat relief sites as well as the public will be updated and published. In addition, staff will develop and implement heat risk messaging and communication tools in partnership with overdose and disease prevention agencies supporting people who use drugs. Existing partnerships that will be leveraged for this work are the City’s Public Health and Harm Reduction Working Group, Health Advisory Executive Committee, Community Mental Health, Wellness, Public Health, and Safety Task Force, and the Phoenix Substance Use Coalition Collaborative.

TARGET POPULATION	SUBSTANCE USERS
LEAD DEPARTMENT(S)	OPH, OHRM, OHS, COMMS
RESOURCES / MORE INFO.	<a href="https://www.phoenix.gov/healthsite/Pages/Naloxone.aspx">https://www.phoenix.gov/healthsite/Pages/Naloxone.aspx</a>

▶ **Participate in Cross-Agency Work Groups and Research Initiatives**

**Action 6.3**

The City will continue to participate in and lead heat response initiatives across a wide range of governance scales to ensure that resources are deployed as effectively as possible. Phoenix was a member of multiple county- and state-level coordination teams in the 2025 heat season and participated in pre- and post-season statewide meetings coordinated by the Arizona Department of Health Services. City staff will continue to serve on the steering committee for the Arizona Heat Resilience Research and Data Work Group, which meets monthly throughout the year. Staff are also actively engaged with the Ten Across Network, which facilitates peer-to-peer learning among sustainability and resilient professionals across the American Sun Belt. Staff will also facilitate the City’s engagement with research initiatives that offer high potential for benefitting regional heat response efforts.

TARGET POPULATION	CITYWIDE
LEAD DEPARTMENT(S)	OHRM

## **Acknowledgments**

The City of Phoenix appreciates the efforts of all community partners who are working to reduce the adverse impacts of extreme heat. The organizations listed below participate in actions listed in the Heat Response Plan, have provided guidance on the City's heat response strategies, or have published plans and reports from which the Heat Response Plan draws content and inspiration.

### **City of Phoenix Mayor and Council Offices**

Office of Mayor Kate Gallego  
Office of Ann O'Brien, District 1  
Office of Jim Waring, District 2  
Office of Debra Stark, District 3  
Office of Laura Pastor, District 4  
Office of Betty Guardado, District 5  
Office of Kevin Robinson District 6  
Office of Anna Hernandez, District 7  
Office of Vice Mayor Kesha Hodge Washington, District 8

### **City of Phoenix Departments and Functions**

Arts & Culture, Aviation, City Manager's Office, Communications, Environmental Programs, Fire, Heat Response and Mitigation, Emergency Management, Homeless Solutions, Housing, Human Resources, Human Services, Innovation, Library, Light Rail Transit, Neighborhood Services, Parks and Recreation, Police, Public Health, Public Transit, Public Works, Sustainability, Volunteer Programs, and Water Services.

### **Local, Regional, and National Partners**

AllThrive365, Arizona Department of Health Services, Arizona Faith Network, Arizona Heat Resilience Work Group, Arizona Public Service, Arizona State University, Bloomberg Associates, C40 Cool Cities Network, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Community Bridges, Inc., Crisis Response Network, Healthy Giving Council, Justa Center, Keys to Change, Maricopa Association of Governments, Maricopa County Department of Emergency Management, Maricopa County Department of Public Health, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Weather Service Phoenix Forecast Office, Nature Conservancy Arizona Healthy Cities Program, Phoenix Community Emergency Response Team, Phoenix Parks Foundation, Phoenix Parks Stewards, Phoenix Revitalization Corporation, Red Cross, Salt River Project, Sustainable Cities Network, UMOM, University of Arizona, Valley Metro, and Valley of the Sun United Way.

### **Funding Partners**

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