

Weather and work: how climate change relates to workers' rights

December 8, 2022, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. EST

Nathanson Centre, Osgoode Hall Law School

(August 23 version)

The fight against climate change is multifaceted as it involves transcending borders and involves many different stakeholders. Workers who complete their work obligations in the outdoors will be impacted by climate change in a more severe manner as the increase in extreme weather will make dangerous work even more so. The tragic death of a 24-year-old UPS driver from suspected heat stroke¹ makes this issue more urgent and dire. Workers are not just facing the usual threats and dangers of outside work but now also face an increased chance of death on the job due to heat and heat-related issues. Workers who work outdoors are not the only ones impacted, as office workers will face the consequences of climate change as well but likely less so. As weather will bring more heat domes, flooding, and wildfires to Canada there must be government action taken that recognizes the unique position workers face in relation to climate change. These issues are not limited by national borders as climate change is an international issue. Women are particularly impacted by these issues and climate refugees tend to be along gender and racial lines. Poverty is another factor in the creation and continuation of climate migration while recognizing that those least able to afford to move are likely the very ones who *need* to move. New worker protections must be codified into law and extralegal mechanisms before climate change makes work life even more hazardous.

¹ Esteban Chavez Jr., California, June 25, 2022. <<https://abc7news.com/california-ups-driver-dies-signs-of-heatstroke-esteban-chavez-heat-related-deaths/12023790/>>.

Workshop schedule (draft)

10 - 10:30 a.m. Opening Remarks

Konstantia Koutouki (UMontreal)

Vanisha Sukdeo (Osgoode)

10:30 - 11:45 a.m. Environmental Focus

Konstantia Koutouki (UMontreal)

Jason MacLean (UNB Law)

Asma Atique (Osgoode)

Harpreet Kaur (UNDP)

11:45 - 12 p.m. BREAK

12 - 1:15 p.m. Panel of practising lawyers (mix of labour & employment and
environmental law)

Justine Lindner (Partner, McCarthy Tetrault)

Paula Boutis (Aird & Berlis)

Daria (Dasha) Peregoudova (Aird & Berlis)

1:15 - 2:15 p.m. Lunch

2:15 - 3:30 p.m. Labour and governance

Ravi Malhotra (Ottawa Law) (on Zoom)

Larry Cata Backer (Penn State)

PM Vasudev (Ottawa Law)

3:30 - 3:45

BREAK

3:45 - 5 p.m.

Vanisha Sukdeo (Osgoode)

Marta Castilho (York University)

Angelika Maldonado (Amazon Labor Union)

5 - 6 p.m.

Closing speaker: Benjamin J. Richardson (Tasmania)