**EXAMPLE HEAT CHECK-IN SCRIPT**

**IMPORTANT:** May be used as-is, or modified for organization and community needs. This example script provides general information about supporting individuals who are at increased risk during heat events but **does not constitute legal or medical advice**. Organizations are encouraged to seek legal guidance regarding their specific context and whether there are potential risks associated with performing check-in services or providing supports during heat events.

**INTRODUCTION**

Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. I work for\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

I am [visiting or calling] to check in and see how you are doing in this heat. Is now an okay time to talk?

**Check community member’s contact information:**

Name:

Current residential address (full address so you can inform 9-1-1, if needed):

Phone number:

**Check emergency contact’s information, if available:**

Name:

Relation to client:

Phone number:

**NOTES:**

**CHECK THE PERSON**

**Are you experiencing any of the following symptoms? (Possible Heat Exhaustion)**

* Heavy sweating
* Dizziness
* Nausea or vomiting
* Rapid breathing and heartbeat
* Body temperature over 38C (100F) if measured
* Headache
* Difficulty concentrating
* Muscle Cramps
* Extreme Thirst
* Dark Urine and decreased urination

**NONE OF THE SYMPTOMS ABOVE:** move on to **CHECK THE SPACE** (section below)

**YES TO ANY SYMPTOMS ABOVE:** continue.

**Are you experiencing any of the following symptoms? (Possible Heat Stroke)**

* Fainting or decreased consciousness
* Confusion
* Lack of coordination
* Very hot and red skin
* Body temperature over 39 C (102 F) if measured

**NONE OF THE SYMPTOMS ABOVE:** follow steps below for **POSSIBLE HEAT EXHAUSTION**.

**YES TO ANY SYMPTOMS ABOVE:** follow steps below for **POSSIBLE HEAT STROKE.**

**POSSIBLE HEAT EXHAUSTION**

* Recommend or help them move to a cooler location.
* Recommend or give them water or fluids.
* Recommend cooling their body with a cool shower, bath or wearing wet clothes.
* Move onto **CHECK THE SPACE** (below) but if they develop symptoms of possible heat stroke, STOP, call 9-1-1 and follow steps for possible heat stroke.

**POSSIBLE HEAT STROKE**

* **MEDICAL EMERGENCY: Call 9-1-1 or seek medical attention.**
* Recommend or help them move them to a cooler location **urgently**.
* Recommend immediately cooling their body with a cool shower, bath or wearing wet clothes.
* If symptoms worsen, call back to update 9-1-1
* Continue to watch them until 9-1-1 arrives.
* If possible, move to **CHECK THE SPACE** (below) while awaiting 9-1-1 and supporting the community member.

**CHECK THE SPACE**

**Is the indoor temperature high (over 26°C or 78°F)?**

**YES: Indoor temperature is high**

* Explain that extreme heat can be life threatening, especially for people at higher risk from heat:
  + - Older adults, especially over 60 years
    - People with schizophrenia, depression, anxiety disorders or dementia
    - People who live alone
    - People with pre-existing health conditions such as diabetes, heart disease or respiratory disease
    - People with substance use disorders, including alcohol
    - People with limited mobility
    - People experiencing homelessness or who are marginally housed
    - People who are pregnant
* Can they use air conditioning or other cooling to drop their indoor temperature to under 26C or 79F?
  + **YES:** Move on to **PROVIDE EDUCATION** and **WRAP UP** sections. Unless they have symptoms of possible heat stroke.
  + **NO:** Recommend they go to a cooler space and help them make a plan.
  + **Do they have barriers to accessing cool spaces?** Brainstorm options or recommend they call 8-1-1. If they are unable or not willing to go to a cooler space, increase the frequency of checks and provide education (see **PROVIDE EDUCATION** section). If they develop symptoms of possible heat stroke, call 9-1-1 and follow steps for possible heat stroke. Take notes on barriers, to use in future follow-up calls and program planning:
    - * No transportation
      * Mobility challenges
      * Do not feel safe
      * Other (add to notes):

**UNSURE: Assess the indoor temperature**

Are there risk factors for high heat in the living space and building?

* No air-conditioning or heat pump
* Higher floor of building
* Live directly under the roof
* South and/or west facing windows (sun on windows during hot times)
* Large-size windows
* Single pane windows
* No outside shade on windows
* No evening cross breeze (e.g. Can’t open windows)
* Lack of neighbourhood trees and other green features

More of these risk factors may lead to higher indoor temperatures and higher risk for heat-related illness. Even with no risk factors, spaces may still be dangerously hot. Does the space seem hot or could it become hot later in the day?

* **YES**: follow steps for **“YES: Indoor temperature is high”** (above).
* **No**: follow steps for **“NO: Indoor temperature is lower**” (below).

**NO: Indoor temperature is lower**

Move on to **PROVIDE EDUCATION** and **WRAP UP** sections.

**PROVIDE EDUCATION**

* **How to cool people:**
* Seek cooler indoor and outdoor spaces (i.e. a local community center, library, mall, or cool shaded park)
* Drink plenty of water and other liquids to stay hydrated, even if not thirsty
* Use water to cool off by taking a cool shower or putting a part of your body in a cool bath
* Wear a wet shirt or apply damp towels to your skin to cool down
* Wear loose fitting and light-coloured breathable clothing
* Limit activity, especially during the hottest hours of the day (generally 2 pm to 4 pm in B.C.)
* **How to cool spaces:**
* Close windows and pull indoor/outdoor shades/blinds around 10 am to trap the cooler air inside and block the sun
* Open windows and doors around 9-10 pm to let the cooler overnight air in
* Use one or more fans strategically to help move cooler air inside the home overnight
* Use exhaust fans, usually located in kitchens and bathrooms, to move warmer indoor air outside
* Consider getting an air conditioner for your home; if you have air conditioning be sure to turn it on
* **When to go to a cooler space and nearby options:**
* If indoor temperatures are consistently high and/ or they have symptoms of possible heat-related illness. For people at higher risk from heat, risk for heat-related illness may increase at indoor temperatures over 26 °C (78 °F) and may significantly increase at indoor temperatures over 31 °C (88 °F). Without air conditioning, cooling measures such as adjusting window shades can still drop indoor temperatures, but often only by a few degrees. If the space cannot be cooled with initial efforts, it is important to spend time in other cooler spaces.
* Share nearby cool spaces they can access.
* **When to seek medical attention:**
* For non-emergency medical questions call Healthlink BC, 8-1-1 (available 24/7, translators available).
* For emergencies, including symptoms of possible heat stroke, call 9-1-1.

**WRAP UP**

* Is there friend, family member, neighbor or another person who can also check on them and/ or provide transportation to a cooler space if needed? [Recommend that they check in with this “heat buddy” at least once per day.]
* Do they know when the next check will be and who will be checking? Discuss a time that will work well for them.
* Do they have any other questions?