WORKING AT HEIGHTS/FALL PROTECTION POLICY

Working from heights and falls from heights, even relatively low elevations, can result in serious injuries. The proper use of fall protection equipment-in addition to planning, supervision, and training as it can reduce or eliminate the risk of falling. This policy will outline the requirements that must be satisfied according to the Canadian Standards Association (CSA), the *Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Act,* regulations, and code.

SCOPE

The [*Occupational Health and Safety Code*](https://search-ohs-laws.alberta.ca/legislation/occupational-health-and-safety-code/part-9-fall-protection/)and Regulations require all workers, contractors, and/or visitors to use fall protection systems when they could fall from a height of 3 m (10 ft.) or more, or where a fall from a lesser height could result in serious injury.

STANDARDS

Anyone working at heights 3 metres (10 ft) or above in Alberta must be trained and qualified in the proper use of Fall Protection systems.

All employees are to follow manufacturer’s instructions in the use, care, storage, inspection and maintenance of all fall protection equipment.

POLICY

[Organization Name] will uphold all requirements set out in the Alberta *Occupational Health and Safety Code* and will ensure all employees and managers are provided with information and safety protocols for safely working at heights.

Fall Protection Plan

Section 140 of Alberta’s Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Code requires employers to prepare a fall protection plan when work-at-height situations meet both of the following requirements:

* A worker may fall 3 metres or more, and;
* The worker is not protected by guardrails.

A fall protection plan must specify

* The fall hazards at the work site,
* The fall protection system to be used at the work site,
* The anchors to be used during the work,
* That clearance distances below the work area, if applicable, have been confirmed as sufficient to prevent a worker from striking the ground or an object or level below the work area,
* The procedures used to assemble, maintain, inspect, use and disassemble the fall protection system, where applicable, and;
* The rescue procedures to be used if a worker falls and is suspended by a personal fall arrest system or safety net and needs to be rescued.

Guardrails

Where fall hazards cannot be eliminated, permanent or temporary guardrails or handrails form a protective barrier around an opening or edge to prevent a fall to a lower level. The employer must ensure that guardrails meeting the legislative requirements or other similar means of fall restraint are used when practicable. If the use of a guardrail is not reasonably practicable, an employer and a supervisor must ensure that a worker uses a travel restraint system that meets the requirements of the OHS regulations.

###### Inspection and MaintenanceEquipment used in a fall protection system must be:

* Inspected by a qualified person before use on each work shift,
* Kept free from substances and conditions that could contribute to its deterioration, and;
* Maintained in good working order.

Employer Responsibilities

* The employer must develop procedures that comply with Part 9 of OHS regulations in a fall protection plan for a work site if a worker at the work site may fall 3 metres or more and the worker is not protected by guardrails.
* The employer must ensure that the fall protection plan is available at the work site and is reviewed with workers before work with a risk of falling begins.
* The employer must ensure that the plan is updated when conditions affecting fall protection change.
* The employer is responsible for ensuring that all fall protection equipment is provided and utilised correctly.
* The employer must ensure that all workers are protected from falling through the installation of guard rails, the provision of fall protection systems/equipment.
* The employer and/or management must ensure all workers are adequately trained in fall protection systems including their use and practical application.

Employee Responsibilities

* Employees must visually inspect their equipment before each use – if it is damaged, worn, or defective, it must be immediately removed from service and tagged.
* Employees must report to their supervisor if any equipment is defective or damaged.
* Employees must follow all safety procedures and make all efforts to perform their duties safely and in accordance with protocol.
* Employees must ensure that where personal protective equipment is required, they are wearing it properly and at all times.
* Employees must visually inspect the work area prior to working at heights to ensure that the area is free from obstructions, debris, or uneven surfaces.