WORKING AT HEIGHTS/FALL PROTECTION POLICY

[Organization Name] places the health, safety and well-being of all workers and volunteers as its highest priority. [Organization Name] has established this policy to ensure all workers who work at heights are provided with important safety guidelines and information. We understand the organization is responsible for the safety of the workplace and we will take all steps needed to provide a healthy and safe working environment.

DEFINITIONS

"Fall protection system" means:

* A control zone, in accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations
* A personal fall arrest system,
* A safety net, or
* A travel restraint system;

SCOPE

The Northwest Territories [*Occupational Health and Safety Regulations* require that](https://www.justice.gov.nt.ca/en/files/legislation/safety/safety.r8.pdf) workers use fall protection systems at work sites if:

* A worker could fall 3 meters or more.
* There's a risk of injury from a fall of less than 3 meters.

Additionally, employers must ensure that workers at permanent work sites are protected by guardrails or similar barriers if they could fall between 1.2 meters and 3 meters vertically.

POLICY   
  
[Organization Name] will uphold all requirements set out by the *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations* (the “Regulations”), the Northwest Territories *Safety Act,* and the Workers’ Safety and Compensation Commission (WSCC) and will ensure all employees and managers are provided with information and safety protocols for safely working at heights.

Fall Protection Plan   
  
[Organization Name] will establish a written fall protection plan if:

* A worker could fall 3 meters or more during their job duties, and/or
* Workers are not protected by a guardrail or similar barrier.

The fall protection plan must include:

* Potential fall hazards on the job
* Types of fall protection systems to be used
* Instructions to workers on how to safely use the equipment, and
* Instructions on how to rescue a worker who has fallen and can’t initiate self rescue.

If there's a risk of falling at a work site, the employer will ensure the fall protection plan is readily available to workers before work begins. Additionally, [Organization Name] will ensure that all workers and supervisors are trained in the fall protection plan and the safe use of the fall protection system before allowing them to work at a site where fall protection measures are in place.

Employer Responsibilities   
  
[Organization Name] (the “Employer”) is responsible for:

* Taking all reasonable precautions and implementing appropriate techniques and procedures to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the workplace.
* Ensuring that all workers who work at heights of 3 metres or more, without standard guardrails, use CSA approved fall protection equipment.
* Establishing a fall protection plan if a worker can fall from heights of 3 metres or more.
* Providing guardrails, other similar protective barriers, a personal fall arrest system or a travel restraint system to prevent falls and ensure worker safety when working from heights of 3 metres or more.
* Ensuring all floor openings or potential fall hazards are covered.
* Ensuring all scaffolds are built, assembled, and installed in accordance with manufacturers instructions.
* Ensuring that a fall-arrest system that is used as a means of fall-protection is installed, assembled, used, handled, stored, adjusted, maintained, repaired, inspected, serviced, tested, cleaned and dismantled in accordance with the manufacturer’s specifications and designed in accordance with the requirements of the latest version of CSA standard CSA Z259.16: “Design of active fall-protection systems”.
* Ensuring that all fall arrest systems used in the workplace adhere to the manufacturers’ specifications and load capacity.
* Ensuring that the personal fall arrest system:
  + Prevents a worker from falling more than 1.2 meters without a shock absorber.
  + If a shock absorber is used, it prevents a worker from falling more than 2 meters or the limit specified by the manufacturer's specifications, whichever is less.
* Ensuring that the following equipment, which are parts of fall protection systems, and their installation meet either the manufacturer’s specifications or are certified by a professional engineer:
  + Permanent anchor points
  + Anchors with multiple attachment points
  + Permanent horizontal lifeline systems
  + Support structures for safety nets
* Providing full body harnesses, vertical lifelines, and horizontal lifelines in accordance with CSA standards, where necessary.
* Providing all personal protective equipment that is required for employees to safely work from heights.
* Ensuring that employees are trained in the safe usage, maintenance, and storage of personal protective equipment.
* Training workers to report any defective personal protective equipment, fall protection equipment, or rescue equipment to their supervisor promptly. The defective equipment should be removed from service immediately.
* Ensuring that all personal protective equipment, fall protection equipment, or rescue equipment is inspected regularly, maintained, and repaired by a competent person.
* Replacing personal protective equipment, fall protection equipment, or rescue equipment as needed.
* Ensuring that workers are properly trained in safety and rescue procedures when working from heights.
* Maintaining written records of all training provided to workers.
* Maintaining written records of all repairs and replacements of fall protection equipment.

Inspections

The employer must ensure that a competent individual regularly inspects fall protection equipment and systems, including connecting linkages, personal fall arrest systems, full body harnesses, and lifelines, as per manufacturer's recommendations and after any fall arrest, to determine their continued safety.   
  
Workers must also inspect these components before each use. Any defects or unsafe conditions must be promptly reported to their immediate manager or supervisor.

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.

Please note that this Working at Heights Policy contains general guidelines as set out by the Northwest Territories *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations*, *Safety Act,* and the Workers’ Safety and Compensation Commission. [Organization Name] reserves the right to amend this policy as necessary to ensure the continued health and safety of our employees. Any changes or updates to this policy will be communicated and implemented accordingly.