

# Working at Heights Policy

SAMPLE

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## Purpose

This Working at Heights Policy sets out [Company Name]'s commitment to preventing falls from height and managing the risks associated with working at or near any edge, opening or surface where a person could fall and be injured. It applies to all work activities where there is a risk of a fall, including but not limited to:

- Construction of new buildings, extensions and refurbishments
- Roofing installation, repair, restoration and gutter work
- External painting and decorating on ladders, scaffolds and elevated work platforms
- Glazing and window installation, replacement and maintenance
- Carpentry and joinery works on frames, trusses, decks and mezzanines
- Electrical, solar, air conditioning and refrigeration installation and servicing at height

This policy supports [Company Name]'s Work Health and Safety (WHS) Management System and is designed to ensure compliance with relevant WHS legislation, Codes of Practice and Australian Standards.

## Scope

This policy applies to:

- All workers of [Company Name], including full-time, part-time and casual employees
- Labour hire workers, apprentices, trainees and work experience students
- Contractors and subcontractors (including roofing, electrical, glazing, painting and mechanical contractors)
- Visitors to sites controlled by [Company Name] who may be exposed to fall hazards

It covers all work activities where there is a reasonably foreseeable risk of a person falling, including:

- Work above ground or floor level (e.g. roofs, scaffolds, ladders, mezzanines, platforms)
- Work near openings or edges (e.g. stair voids, penetrations, balcony edges)
- Work on fragile or unstable surfaces (e.g. asbestos cement, polycarbonate sheeting, skylights)
- Work in areas where there is a risk of falling through a surface or into a hole (e.g. roof penetrations, service risers)

This policy applies to all [Company Name] workplaces, including construction sites, client premises, workshops, depots and any other location where work at height is carried out.

## Definitions

### Key Terms

- **Work at height:** Any work where there is a reasonably foreseeable risk of a person falling from one level to another and being injured, regardless of the actual height. This includes falls into pits, shafts or openings.
- **Fall:** A sudden, unintended descent of a person from one level to another, which may result in injury.
- **Fall prevention:** Measures that eliminate the risk of a fall occurring (e.g. solid construction, guardrails, edge protection).
- **Fall arrest:** Systems designed to stop a fall after it has occurred and minimise injury to the worker (e.g. harness and lifeline systems).
- **Elevating Work Platform (EWP):** A mechanical device used to provide temporary access for people or equipment to elevated areas, including boom lifts, scissor lifts and truck-mounted EWPs.
- **Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS):** A document that sets out the high risk construction work activities to be carried out, the hazards and risks, and the control measures to be implemented.
- **Competent person:** A person who has acquired, through training, qualification or experience, the knowledge and skills to carry out the task safely.
- **Fragile surface:** A surface that may not safely support the load applied to it, such as asbestos cement sheeting, polycarbonate, glass, old fibre cement roofing and some timber structures.
- **Edge protection:** A barrier system such as guardrails installed around the edges of roofs, floor openings, mezzanines and other elevated work areas to prevent falls.

### Industry-Specific Examples

- **Roofing contractors:** Work at height includes roof installation, repairs, gutter cleaning, solar panel installation and flashing works on pitched and flat roofs.
- **Electricians and solar installers:** Work at height includes running cables in ceiling spaces, installing solar arrays on roofs, mounting external lighting and switchboards on elevated structures.
- **Painters and decorators:** Work at height includes painting facades, eaves and high internal walls using ladders, trestles, scaffolds and EWPs.
- **Glaziers and window installers:** Work at height includes installing and replacing windows on upper storeys, balcony glazing and curtain wall systems.
- **Carpenters and joiners:** Work at height includes framing roofs, installing trusses, working on decks, balconies and mezzanine floors.

- **Air conditioning and refrigeration technicians:** Work at height includes installing and servicing condensers on roofs, plant platforms and elevated brackets.

## Legislative and Other Requirements

[Company Name] will manage work at heights in accordance with:

- Work Health and Safety Act (jurisdiction-specific)
- Work Health and Safety Regulation (jurisdiction-specific), including provisions relating to:
  - Managing the risk of falls
  - High risk construction work
  - Plant and equipment
- Model Code of Practice: Managing the Risk of Falls at Workplaces
- Model Code of Practice: Construction Work
- Relevant Australian Standards, including but not limited to:
  - AS/NZS 4591 series (Industrial fall-arrest systems and devices)
  - AS/NZS 1576 and 4576 (Scaffolding and guidance)
  - AS 1557 (Fixed platforms, walkways, stairways and ladders)

[Company Name] will monitor changes to legislation, Codes and Standards and update this policy and associated procedures as required.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Officers (e.g. Directors, Senior Management)

Officers of [Company Name] must exercise due diligence to ensure that [Company Name] complies with its WHS duties in relation to work at height by:

- Providing adequate resources for planning, equipment, training and supervision of work at heights
- Ensuring there are effective processes for identifying, assessing and controlling fall risks
- Reviewing performance data, incident reports and audit findings related to work at height
- Supporting continuous improvement of fall prevention systems and practices

### Managers and Supervisors

Managers and supervisors in building and construction, roofing, electrical, glazing, painting, carpentry and mechanical services must:

- Ensure that no work at height is undertaken without appropriate planning, risk assessment and controls