

SLIP, TRIP, AND FALL PREVENTION - HR-XI-24

POLICY:

OPTIONS NORTHWEST recognizes significant hazards related to slips, trips, and falls (STF) risk factors in the workplace and the responsibility to take every precaution reasonable under the circumstance to protect employees and others outlined in the Occupational Health and Safety Act, and Regulations.

PURPOSE:

1. Promote and support the health and safety of all employees, students and volunteers in the organization.
2. Increase STF awareness.
3. Decrease the risk of workplace STF.
4. To ensure compliance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act.
5. Recognize STF prevention as an agency priority strategy in reducing STF injuries and associated injury costs; and improving productivity, quality of work-life, and quality of care and services.

DEFINITIONS:

Slip: a loss of balance caused by too little friction or traction between the footwear and the walking surface.

Trip: a loss of balance caused by a collision of the foot/leg with an object.

Fall: to descend freely due to the force of gravity. It can occur at ground level or from a height (e.g. on a ladder or step-stool).

Hazard: a source of potential damage, harm or adverse health effects on something or someone under certain conditions at work.

Risk: the chance or probability that a person will be harmed or experience an adverse health effect if exposed to a hazard. It may also apply to situation with property and equipment loss.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Management Personnel Responsibilities:

1. Participate in STF hazard recognition, assessment, control including implementation of corrective actions, and control evaluation process in the areas under their authority.
2. Enforce STF prevention policies and procedures including those related to safe footwear through regular monitoring strategies such as management workplace inspections, auditing of employee safe practices, performance management etc.
3. Encourage employees to report hazards and STF symptoms proactively and to report accidents and incidents to the supervisor immediately.
4. Respond promptly to employee reports of STF hazards.
5. Conduct STF hazard, accident and incident investigations, and implement corrective actions.
6. Seek assistance and/or internal/external consultation when solutions or controls are not promptly identified.
7. Communicate solutions and controls to employees in a timely manner to workplace parties.
8. Provide employee related health and safety reports to Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee/Representatives.
9. Ensure all new and existing employees receive STF prevention training included in Total Wellness & Injury Prevention Program (WIP).
10. Encourage employee participation in hazard identification, equipment trials and brainstorming control solutions.
11. Purchase appropriate and adequate amount of equipment considering safety and reduction of STF risk factors.
12. Maintain equipment purchased.
13. Take every reasonable precaution for the protection of employees.

Employee Responsibilities:

1. Comply with the Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations pertaining to slips, trips and falls, and the organization's STF prevention, dress code, and lifts and transfers policies and procedures at all times.
2. Attend regular STF prevention training as established by the organization, which will be included as part of Health & Safety at Work Program.
3. Always correctly use and care for equipment provided by the employer.
4. Report any STF concerns, hazards, incidents or accidents to the Supervisor immediately.
5. Cooperate with STF hazard, accident and incident investigations as required.

Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee/Representative Responsibilities:

1. Review incident/accident data reports related to STF.
2. Inspect the workplace for STF hazard as part of the monthly workplace inspection process.
3. Make recommendations in writing to management.

PROCEDURES:

1. Training:

- a) Mandatory training for STF's will be provided to all new employees, through the agency's Health & Safety at Work Program.
- b) Annually, employee knowledge on STF's will be tested through the WHMIS and Health and Safety Awareness Quiz, which shall include questions on STF.

2. Reporting and Investigation of Hazards, Accidents and Incidents:

All employees are required to report STF hazards, accidents and incidents promptly to their supervisor per policy Investigation of Employee Accident/Injury/Incident HR-XI-10 for follow-up investigation to determine root cause of the event, and for implementation for appropriate corrective actions, including any necessary referrals (i.e.: ergonomic assessments).

3. Workplace Inspections:

Management personnel and H&S Reps and Committee Members shall conduct proactive department workplace inspections per policy Health and Safety Inspections HR-XI-2 and incorporate the recognition of STF hazards in the workplace inspection process and checklists.

4. Equipment Purchase and Maintenance:

- a) All employees will consider STF hazards and other safety features when purchasing cleaning products; cleaning equipment including dispensing systems; STF prevention products such as signage, mats and drains; as well as in the selection of work surfaces and flooring.
- b) Work surfaces shall be kept free of defects and be kept clear of refuse, snow, or ice that may endanger employees, students, recipients of service or others on the premises.
- c) Management personnel may also implement additional department specific preventative cleaning and maintenance.

5. Spills Clean-up:

- a) Spills or wet floor surfaces must be cleaned up immediately.
- b) Employees are expected to immediately clean up small non-hazardous spills such as water, coffee, food etc.
- c) Where there is a delay in cleaning up spills or wet floor surfaces, a conspicuous hazard warning sign must be erected.
- d) Where spills are very large, and/or they are of a hazardous nature, the spill must be reported promptly to the appropriate authority for clean up e.g. supervisor, environmental services etc. and the appropriate safety measures shall be taken in accordance to spill cleanup policies and procedures and WHMIS etc.

6. General Measures:

- a) Keep obstructions and trip hazards clear of work areas, hallways and walkways and store materials in appropriate areas.
- b) Step stools and/or ladders are to be used as needed and employees are not permitted to stand on chairs or boxes.
- c) Ladders shall be used as per manufacture guidelines and inspected before use.

- d) Maintain a clear view of your path when walking or when pushing wheeled equipment.
- e) Lighting shall meet or exceed minimal light requirements for the building and as set out in the Ontario Building Code with brightness levels and glare being minimized or eliminated.
- f) Wet areas are to be assessed by supervisors to determine the appropriateness of implementing absorbent mats or drainage mats, slip resistant surfaces, a cleaning schedule, spill guards, railings, dyke systems etc.
- g) All agency owned or leased walkways, driveways and parking lots shall be kept free of ice and snow build up, as well as other slip/trip/fall hazards. Salt and sand will be made available in all locations and snow removal shall be arranged for as necessary to prevent incidents.
- h) Employees shall wear footwear appropriate to the weather conditions, walking surface and per the dress code policy.

7. Program Evaluation and Quality Improvement:

- a) The STF policies and procedures will be evaluated annually in consultation with the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee/Representatives, as per the Healthcare and Residential Facility Regulation Section 9.
- b) Recommendations for program enhancements if identified will be provided to Senior Management/Executive Director for consideration, and implementation, as approved.
- c) Any changes to the program will be documented and communicated to workplace parties in a timely manner.

RECOMMENDED BY: Director, Human Resources and
Coordinator, Health and Safety

APPENDICES: 0

OPERATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY: Administration, Finance, Human Resources,
Community Services Administration, Community Services (all)

ORIGINAL POLICY DATE: September 2011

AUTHORIZED BY: Executive Director

SIGNATURE:



