



## HEALTHCARE

Use this guide to help develop your Slip, Trip and Fall Program.



*Missouri Employers Mutual can help you protect your employees from slip, trip and fall hazards.*

**For more information:**

 [www.worksafecenter.com](http://www.worksafecenter.com)  1.888.499.SAFE (7233)

Missouri Employers Mutual

**Work SAFE**

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## CHAPTER 1

### HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

***Slips, trips and falls are the No. 1 cause of workplace injuries for the healthcare industry, with lost-time claims costs averaging \$36,000. Unfortunately, these injuries take place every day and result in pain and suffering for employees, as well as significant workers compensation costs.***

Missouri Employers Mutual would like to help you implement control measures to minimize the potential risk for slip, trip and fall claims. We offer valuable resources and strategies specifically designed for the unique environments commonly found in the healthcare industry. Being proactive about these injuries will not only minimize the direct costs of workplace injuries, but also the indirect costs, which account for 80 percent of total losses—lost time of key personnel, hiring and training of temporary or permanent replacement staff, lowered morale and inefficiency.

Use this development guide to create a comprehensive Slip, Trip and Fall Program to help protect your employees and your bottom line.

## SELF-ASSESSMENT

One of the first steps in developing a comprehensive Slip, Trip and Fall Program is to compare and contrast your current policies, work practices and environment with your desired situation. Once these items are clearly defined, the obstacles between the two can be identified, removed and/or altered by way of an action plan.

Before you get started on your plan, take time to:

**DEFINE YOUR CURRENT SITUATION.** Every organization's current situation will be different with both positive and negative attributes. Focus on behaviors, physical conditions, equipment, training and formal policies that currently exist. Do not place blame or make accusations. Simply state the facts of the current environment.

**DEFINE YOUR DESIRED SITUATION.** List the behaviors, physical conditions, equipment, training and formal policies that would be most effective in controlling slips, trips and falls in your workplace. Clearly define a measurable goal that may be used to clearly indicate when your desired situation is attained.

**DEFINE THE OBSTACLES.** Clearly list the obstacles to attaining your desired situation. Obstacles may include poorly defined responsibilities; funding of equipment, projects and activities; employee resistance and/or lack of interest; lack of accountability. Be careful to define your objectives as achievable.

**CREATE AN ACTION PLAN.** Once the current and desired situations, as well as, anticipated obstacles are clearly defined, an action plan must be developed. An effective action plan will state specific steps to attain your desired situation. Each action item must state:

- Action to be performed.
- Who is assigned the action item.
- When and/or how often the action item is to be completed.

## DEFINE RESPONSIBILITIES

*A well written safety program is of little value if the plan is developed but not implemented. This requires responsibilities to be assigned, clearly communicated and periodically measured at all levels of the organization. Each workplace has its own unique physical environment, as well as organizational structure, which will require tailoring to fit its needs. Below are sample responsibilities organized by department.*

### Administration/Management

- Provide employees the resources required to support slip, trip and fall prevention efforts including time, funding, training and equipment.
- Conduct supervisor evaluations periodically (at least annually) to ensure the slip, trip and fall prevention efforts are being supported and enforced.
- Investigate slip, trip and fall incidents, both injury-producing and near misses, to determine root cause and corrective actions.
- Follow slip, trip and fall prevention best practices thus limiting the potential for injury and setting a good example for all employees.

### Supervisor

- Ensure that each employee under your direct supervision has received and understands the expectations regarding slip, trip and fall prevention, including safe work practices, hazard recognition and control.
- Support and enforce all slip, trip and fall prevention efforts, rules and established best practices.
- Provide prompt correction when unsafe behavior is observed.
- Provide prompt reinforcement when safe behavior is observed.
- Conduct daily walks with particular attention to slip, trip and fall hazards.

- Personally follow slip, trip and fall prevention best practices thus limiting the potential for injury and set a good example for all supervised employees.
- Support management efforts to thoroughly investigate all slip, trip and fall incidents to determine root cause and corrective actions.
- Encourage employee participation and safety suggestions.
- Provide suggestions to management regarding possible changes to facilities, equipment and/or work practices that may better control slip, trip and fall hazards.

### General Employee

- Understand, support and follow all slip, trip and fall prevention efforts.
- Support good housekeeping efforts by promptly cleaning up spills and picking up debris.
- Promptly report hazards and unsafe behavior to your supervisor.
- Promptly report all injuries and near misses to your supervisor.
- Provide suggestions to your supervisor regarding possible changes to facilities, equipment and/or work practices that may better control slip, trip and fall hazards.

### Maintenance and Custodial

- Understand, support and follow all slip, trip and fall prevention efforts.
- Properly maintain surfaces and use all floor care products according to the manufacturer's guidelines.
- Promptly respond to spills, leaks and other lubricated surfaces as defined by the Housekeeping Policy in Chapter 4.
- Timely remove snow and ice as defined in the Inclement Weather Policy in Chapter 4.
- Promptly report hazards and unsafe behavior to your supervisor.
- Promptly report all injuries and near misses to your supervisor.
- Remove from service and report equipment found to be in disrepair to your supervisor.
- Provide suggestions to your supervisor regarding possible changes to facilities, equipment and/or work practices that may better control slip, trip and fall hazards.

## COMMUNICATE THE PROGRAM

*The best safety program is meaningless if it lives on a shelf or in a three-ring binder. The key to an effective program is communication with your employees. There are several ways to share information, and you'll need to determine the one that best fits the needs of your organization. Some ideas include:*

### Newsletters

Add a slip, trip and fall section to your current mode of mass communication to keep the safety message fresh in the mind of employees. You can find content on [www.worksafecenter.com/HealthcareSTF.page](http://www.worksafecenter.com/HealthcareSTF.page).

### Emails

Emails are an easy way to send a consistent message to everyone, for no cost. The most effective message comes in the body of an email instead of an attachment. Put the important pieces right where they will be seen once opened.

### Text blasts

There are various smart phone applications and websites available to set up mass texting to communicate with employees. Services vary from free to a small fee per text. This is an excellent choice when it comes to getting the most up-to-date reports on inclement weather, changes in office start times, or ground conditions. Text blasts are also a great way to communicate weekly safety tips. If text messages are a part of your program communication plan, make sure your employees are in compliance with your texting and distracted driving policies.

### Table tents

Common areas, such as break rooms, are excellent locations to place information in the form of small signs, also known as table tents. Print some for free at [www.worksafecenter.com/HealthcareSTF.page](http://www.worksafecenter.com/HealthcareSTF.page).

### Meetings

MEM has presentations and safety handouts available for free at [www.worksafecenter.com/HealthcareSTF.page](http://www.worksafecenter.com/HealthcareSTF.page). The presentations may be used as they are or you can customize them with details and pictures unique to your organization for a more tailored approach.

### Posters

Posters are a great way to communicate high level talking points while promoting hazard awareness to large groups of employees on a daily basis. MEM developed slip, trip and fall prevention posters that are readily available from [www.worksafecenter.com/HealthcareSTF.page](http://www.worksafecenter.com/HealthcareSTF.page).

### Yourself

You will be the walking example of safety practices in your workplace. Make sure you are modeling the behavior you want to see, and give positive reinforcement to employees who go the extra step toward eliminating slips, trips and falls.

## CREATE A POLICY STATEMENT

*Creating a policy statement is a vital first step in developing a comprehensive safety program because it indicates the employer's commitment to safety. Most important is clearly identifying functional responsibilities.*

To be effective, a policy statement must:

- Involve senior management and representatives during development.
- Be consistent with corporate goals and values, as well as, maintaining efficient and productive work practices.
- Be tailored to your workplace's unique environment.
- Be recognized as equal in standing to the organization's other policies.

The policy statement should also provide a clear indication of the company's objectives and plans for employee safety, and should include:

- Senior management's commitment to establishing a safe workplace and integrating safety into all workplace activities.
- Responsibility of all personnel in maintaining a safe workplace and operating in a safe manner.
- Accountability of all levels of management for carrying out safety responsibilities.
- The importance of communication and cooperation between management and employees for effective implementation of policy.
- Commitment to regular reviews of the policy and to monitor its effectiveness.
- Management's commitment to provide adequate resources in support of the policy.

See the "Sample Policy Statement" in Appendix A.



***Model the behavior you want to see,  
and give positive reinforcement  
to employees who go the extra step  
toward eliminating slips, trips and falls.***





## CHAPTER 2



## GET STARTED

### *Understanding slips, trips and falls.*

*There are three major factors that contribute to these injuries.*

<b>SLIPS</b>	<b>TRIPS</b>	<b>FALLS</b>
Bad footwear	Change in elevation by ¼"	Unsafe area
A contaminated surface	Pathway obstructions	No safety equipment
Walking or running too fast	Poorly lit areas	Failure to follow safety rules

Slips and trips also often lead to two different types of falls:

- Same-level falls (high frequency–low severity)
- Elevated falls (low frequency–high severity)

Same-level falls are generally slips or trips when the individual is injured when he or she hits a walking or working surface, or strikes some other object during the fall. More than 60 percent of elevated falls are of less than 10 feet.

## SAME-LEVEL SLIPS AND FALLS

*Slips are primarily caused by a slippery surface and compounded by wearing the wrong footwear.*

In normal walking, two types of slips occur:

- The forward foot contacts the walking surface at an angle near the rear edge of the heel. With this type of slip the front foot slips forward and the person falls backward.
- The rear foot slips backward. The force to move forward is on the sole of the rear foot. As the rear heel is lifted and the force moves forward to the front of the sole, the foot slips back and the person falls.

To prevent such slips and falls, a high Coefficient of Friction between the shoe and walking surface is needed. On ice, wet and oily surfaces this COF can be as low as 0.10 with shoes that are not slip-resistant. A COF of 0.40 to 0.50 or more is needed for excellent traction. To put this figure in perspective, a brushed concrete surface and a rubber heel will often show a COF greater than 1.0. Leather soles on a wet smooth surface, such as ceramic tile or ice, may have a COF as low as 0.10.

Providing dry walking and working surfaces and slip-resistant footwear is the answer to slips and their resultant falls and injuries. High heels and shoes with leather or other hard, smooth-surfaced soles lead to slips, falls and injuries. Shoes with cleated soft rubber soles and heels provide a high COF and are recommended.

In work areas where the walking and working surface is likely to be slippery, non-skid strips or floor coatings should be used. Since a COF of 0.40 to 0.50 is preferred for walking and working surfaces, we should strive for a surface which provides a minimum of 50 percent of this friction. If the working surface is very slippery, no footwear will provide a safe COF.

### Trip and Fall

Trips occur when the front foot strikes an object and is suddenly stopped. The upper body is then thrown forward and a fall occurs. As little as a 1/4" rise in a walkway can cause a person to "stub" his or her toe, resulting in a trip and fall. The same thing can happen going up a flight of stairs; only a slight difference in the height of the steps and a person can trip and fall.

### Step and Fall

Another type of working and walking surface fall is the step and fall. This occurs when our front foot lands on a surface lower than expected, such as unexpectedly stepping off a curb. In this type of fall, we normally fall forward. A second type of step and fall occurs when we step forward or down, and either the inside or outside of our foot lands on an object higher than the other side. The ankle turns and we tend to fall forward and sideways.

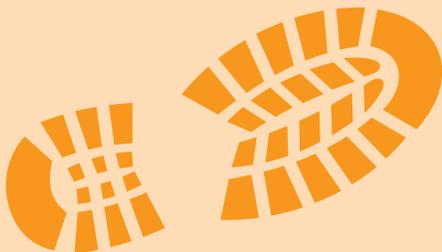
Proper housekeeping in work and walking areas can contribute to safety and the prevention of falls. Not only is it important to maintain a safe working environment and walking surface, these areas must also be kept free of obstacles which can cause slips and trips. One method which promotes good housekeeping in work environments is the painting of yellow lines to identify working and walking areas. These areas should never be obstructed by objects of any kind.

Adequate lighting to ensure proper vision is also important in the prevention of slips and falls. Moving from light to dark areas, or vice versa, can cause temporary vision problems that just might be enough to cause a person to slip on an oil spill or trip over a misplaced object.

Carrying an oversized object can also obstruct one's vision and result in a slip or a trip. This is a particularly serious problem on stairs.

### Behaviors that Lead to Falls

In addition to wearing the wrong footwear, there are specific behaviors which can lead to slips, trips and falls. Walking too fast, or running, is a major problem. We land harder on the heel of our front foot and push harder off the sole of our rear foot; thus, a greater COF is required to prevent slips and falls. Rapid changes in direction create a similar problem.



**Shoes with soft rubber soles and heels with rubber cleats provide a high Coefficient of Friction.**



**Make-shift ladders, chairs, boxes and barrels should never be used as a substitute for a ladder. The risk is far too great.**

## ELEVATED FALLS

*Elevated falls are less frequent, but more severe than same-level falls in the workplace.*

### Falls from Ladders

Ladders may be fixed or portable. They may be straight-extension or step ladders, and may be manufactured from wood, metal, plastic or fiberglass. They may be light, medium, heavy or extra-heavy duty.

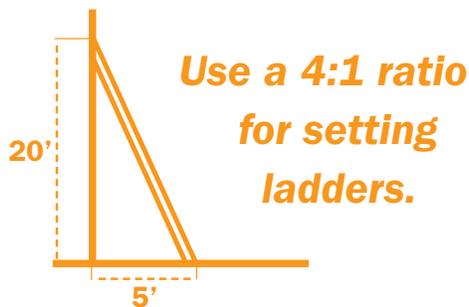
They can be as short as two feet (step stools), 18 feet for extra heavy duty step ladders and 40 feet or longer for extension-type ladders.

The materials from which ladders are constructed have advantages and disadvantages in weight, durability, flexibility, conductivity and strength. The intended use of the ladder should determine the type purchased, and only American National Standard Institute approved ladders should be used. One major caution is that metal ladders should never be used in locations in which the ladder or its user could come into contact with electricity.

A ladder should be long enough so that when it rests against the upper support, the user can perform work without their waist being higher than the top rung of the ladder or above the rung at which the side rails are resting against the upper support. This means that the top three rungs of a straight ladder, or the top two steps of a stepladder, should never be stood on.

The lower ends of the side rails should be equipped with slip-resistant pads, particularly if the ladder is to be used on hard surfaces. The same is true for the

upper ends of the side rails if they are to rest against a surface.



Ladders should be set at, or as near to, a 4:1 angle. For each three- or four-feet of rise from the base to the upper resting edge of the ladder, the base should be one foot out from a vertical line from the upper resting edge of the ladder to the working surface. The base of the ladder must be firmly set so that there is no possibility of slippage or settling into soft ground. The resting edge of the ladder should have both side rails in contact with the object (building or tree) it is against. When setting a ladder against a tree, set the ladder in the crotch of two limbs so that it cannot slide in either direction. Whenever there is any question as to the stability of the ladder, additional effort should be made to stabilize the ladder as it is being climbed. Tying the top of the ladder to the supporting structure can also keep the ladder from slipping or sliding.

Another frequent cause of ladder incidents is attempting to reach too far left or right. When working on a ladder, the person's belt buckle should never extend beyond the side rails. Reaching

further can cause the ladder to slide in the opposite direction. Tying the ladder to the structure supporting it can prevent this and is a recommended practice. Employees should have both hands free to hold the ladder's side rails, not the rungs, when climbing or descending. Small tools may be carried in a tool belt, not in the hands; but a better choice is to raise tools and supplies with a rope. Never raise or lower power tools by the cord or while they are plugged into an electrical source.

### Inspect Ladders Before Use

Ladders should be inspected before use: check for cracks, loose rungs, splinters and sharp edges. Never paint ladders, as the paint can hide potentially dangerous conditions.

The rungs and side rails of ladders must be kept free of oil, grease and mud; they should be kept dry. Since the shoe has limited contact with the rung or step of a ladder, it is very important that these and the shoes have a high COF. Only shoes with heels should be worn when climbing ladders; users should be taught that the rung or step of the ladder should be just in front of the heel, under the arch of the foot. Stepping or standing on a ladder with the front part of the shoe is inviting a slip and fall. Always face the ladder when climbing or descending.

Make-shift ladders, chairs, boxes and barrels should never be used as a substitute for a ladder. The risk is far too great.



***Humorous warnings are more effective than simple warning signs.***

***“WET FLOOR: SKATE, DON’T SLIP”***

***is more effective than***

***“CAUTION: WET FLOOR.”***

### **Falls from Vehicles and Equipment**

Death or serious injury is a frequent result of extra riders falling from equipment or the bed of a truck. Unless the operation requires riders, extra riders should never be permitted. Riding on the bed of a truck is an invitation for an accident. The safe way is “NO RIDERS.” Far too many injuries occur in the simple process of getting in and out of trucks, on or off tractors, machinery, wagons, trailers or truck beds. When the steps are metal, there is a low COF which becomes even lower if they are wet, muddy or oily. Keep the steps clean and dry.

Whenever mounting or climbing on a vehicle or machine, have a good handhold before stepping up. Pulling yourself up reduces the force between your shoe and the step and reduces the danger of a slip. As with a ladder, the foot should be placed on the step or rung just in front of your heel, under the arch. Always face the vehicle or equipment when mounting and dismounting. When you step down backward, you step down on the ball of your foot; when you step down forward, you land on your heel, increasing your chances of falling, twisting your ankle or knees or suffering some other injury.

### **Falls from Loading Docks**

Loading docks and ramps are dangerous areas. They are frequently congested, heavy-traffic areas, and working and walking surfaces are often wet. Metal dock plates can wear smooth and become very slippery; in particular, the edge of dock plates invites trips and falls.

Accidental backward steps can result in a fall from the dock. Portable railings, which can be easily removed from the edge of the dock, could prevent many dangerous falls. They are removed when a truck or tractor is at the dock, and replaced as soon as the truck or trailer leaves.

Proper housekeeping, well-designed traffic patterns and the use of abrasive, skid-resistant surface coatings will reduce the risk of slips, trips and falls. Ramps and gang-planks have hazards similar to loading docks. The slopes should be as gradual as possible, as wide as possible, and as dry as possible. They should also have skid-resistant surfaces.

### **Falls on Stairs**

Stairwells should be well lit, with sturdy handrails on both sides. Employees using the stairwell should have one hand free to be able to use the handrail. All steps should have the same rise and depth, with visible edges. They must be kept free of grease, oil and obstacles which could cause slips and trips. Whenever possible, avoid carrying heavy or bulky objects which obscure your vision and/or require the use of both hands. Carry smaller, lighter loads and make more trips, or obtain help with the load.

### **Fixed Ladders**

Fixed ladders are mounted on buildings, bins and other tall structures which require employees to climb to high levels to perform some functions. Such ladders should be securely attached to the structure and be capable of supporting a minimum of 250 pounds

of concentrated live weight. The rungs should be a minimum of 16 inches wide and a maximum of 12 inches apart. There should be seven inches of toe space between the rung and the structure to which it is attached. Fixed ladders extending more than 20 feet above the ground or floor level should be surrounded by a cage, beginning at 7 to 8 feet above the ground.

If a catwalk or working area is provided at the top of the ladder, it should have a protective railing at least 42 inches high. A toe board, four-inches high, around the edge of the work area should be provided. This reduces the risk of a person stepping off the edge or having tools fall from the work area.

Employees climbing or descending a fixed ladder should have both hands free. Small tools can be carried in a tool belt; other tools and materials should be raised by rope and pulleys or some other mechanical system.

### **Fall Protection Devices**

Employees at high elevations, such as aerial lifts, platforms, or catwalks, should be protected from falling by some kind of fall protection device. This can be a lifeline, lanyard or harness; there are numerous devices on the market. The system should provide maximum protection, but it also should be reasonably comfortable and not restrict an employee’s necessary work activity. Suppliers of safety equipment can provide information on the correct system for your workplace and should provide instruction on its safe use.

## Slip-Resistant Materials

Abrasive coatings can be applied to concrete, metal and wood surfaces to increase the COF and reduce the risks of slips and falls. Many of these products can be applied like paint; others can be troweled on in a thin coat. These coatings are formulated to resist grease, oil, water and a wide range of chemicals. Most paint and building supply companies handle these materials. It is important, however, to purchase the correct product for your particular problem, since some are enamels or epoxies which contain a rough, hard, gritty material with a high COF.

There are also a number of skid-resistant products that can be purchased in strips or rolls. These may have a pressure sensitive backing or be applied with a special glue. They are designed for easy application to stair treads, ramps and other hazardous walking and working surfaces.

Another effective skid-resistant material is rubber or rubber-like mats. This material is long wearing and skid-resistant on both the top and bottom sides. Hard rubber or hard rubber-like mats are ineffective because they have a low COF when wet.

## Signs and Striping

Safety signs to remind employees of slip, trip and fall hazards are always helpful, particularly where hazards cannot be removed or corrected. Such signs should be changed frequently. Recent evidence indicates that “humorous” warnings are more effective than simple warning signs. “WET FLOOR: SKATE, DON’T SLIP” is more effective than “CAUTION-WET FLOOR.”

Yellow striping to identify walking and working areas is most effective if their meaning is enforced. Striped areas should mean that no object should be placed in these areas.

## Common Injuries

Slips, trips and falls, whether on or off the job, are expensive, disruptive and painful.

The back is the most frequently injured part of the body in falls: 37 percent of the injuries are from elevated falls, 29 percent are from same-level falls. The joints—wrist, elbow and shoulder, or the ankle, knee and hip—account for 47 percent of same-level falls and 32 percent of elevated falls.

Most injuries are sprains and strains: 46 percent from same-level falls, 52 percent from elevated falls. Fractures are the result of 19 percent of elevated falls, 10 percent of same-level falls. Bruises and contusions account for most of the remaining injuries.

## Learning how to Fall

Naturally, the goal is not to slip, trip or fall; however, the possibility still exists.

Follow these recommendations to help reduce injuries:

- Tuck in your chin, turn your head, and throw an arm up. It is better to land on your arm than on your head.
- Twist or roll your body to the side while falling. It is better to land on your buttocks and side than on your back.

- Bend your wrists, elbows and knees. Do not try to break the fall with your hands or elbows.

The objective when falling is to have as many square inches of your body contact the surface as possible, thus, spreading out the impact of the fall.

## Recommendations

Established policies and practices can be implemented to significantly reduce the number of injuries and deaths due to slips, trips and falls. Take these recommendations into consideration:

- Commit to preventing accidental slips, trips and falls.
- Report all slips, trips and falls, with or without injury, immediately.
- Conduct frequent inspections of work and walk areas to identify environmental and equipment hazards which could cause slips, trips and falls. Special attention should be given to the working and walking surfaces, housekeeping, lighting, vision, stairways and ladders. Immediate corrective action should be taken.
- Train all employees on the prevention of slips, trips and falls. Special attention should be given to proper walking, carrying, climbing and descending stairways, ladders, vehicles and equipment. Unsafe practices should be corrected immediately.



***Slips, trips and falls,  
whether on or off the job,  
are expensive, disruptive and painful.***





## CHAPTER 3



## KEEP THE OFFICE SAFE

*Today's office presents a number of potential hazards. Some are inherent to the environment year after year, while others are due to the ever-changing role of technology.*

When it comes to office safety, there are guidelines to develop and follow to help avoid painful injuries that can occur as a result of working in this environment.

## OFFICE SAFETY POLICY

When developing an office safety policy, keep the following in mind:

### **MAINTAIN AN ORDERLY OFFICE.**

- Keep cords from electronics (tablets, telephones, laptop computers) secured and away from desks and aisles. Consider a charging station or cart.
- Keep extension cords, papers, pencils and other articles out of aisles.
- Keep all bags and/or purses stored in a designated area off the floor.
- Clean up spills promptly.
- Report or promptly repair damaged tile or carpet.

**KEEP A STEP LADDER WITH A HANDRAIL WITHIN EASY ACCESS FOR REACHING ELEVATED AREAS.** *Never* use a desk or chair to reach an item, even for just a quick task.

**LIMIT THE WEIGHT AND SIZE OF CONTAINERS THAT MUST BE MANUALLY HANDLED.** Keep heavy or bulky storage containers to a minimum, and reduce the potentials for bending or reaching.

**AVOID OVERLOADING ELECTRICAL OUTLETS.** Use the proper gauge power strips for the items to be connected. *Never* connect one power strip into another power strip or into an extension cord.

**KEEP ALL EXIT DOORS CLEAR AT ALL TIMES,** even if they are never used.

With a written and communicated office safety plan, you can clearly establish its expectations regarding slip, trip and fall prevention.

## CREATE AN OFFICE PACKING AND MOVING POLICY

*Relocation, construction and remodeling projects are not uncommon in most office environments. Projects of this nature present some unique hazards that staff may not be prepared to safely undertake. By the time those projects and corresponding hazards are at hand, it is often too late to effectively evaluate the hazards, develop a policy, gather training materials and implement all applicable components.*

When developing an Office Packing and Moving policy, keep the following in mind:

- Proper material handling equipment should be provided and easily accessible such as carts, ladders, dollies, and boxes.
- Provide sturdy boxes and containers.
- Do not overfill boxes.
- Close box top flaps for easy and stable stacking.
- Do not stack boxes greater than chest-high.
- Do not stack boxes or any other items in established walkways or exits.
- Pack liquids, chemicals and paints separately in approved boxes or containers.
- Provided boxes and containers should be small enough to limit potential weights to 35 pounds.
- Prohibit standing on chairs, tables or any other item that was not designed for this use.
- Hang safety signs to remind employees of safe work practices such as “no standing on chairs and tables” and “use proper lifting techniques.”
- Empty all bookcases, desks and other furniture before attempting to move. Seek assistance in moving.
- Take an inventory of heavy, awkward or high items that will require additional staff and/or equipment to move.
- Conduct periodic walkthroughs by administrators and/or facilities managers to monitor compliance with safe work practices.



***Provide shoulder bags or pouches for employees working from ladders.***





## CHAPTER 4

### GENERAL HOUSEKEEPING

*Good housekeeping is essential to preventing slips, trips and falls in the workplace, including installation of slip-resistant flooring, specialty footwear and training.*

*Developing a clear and concise housekeeping policy will keep safety practices consistent across multiple facilities.*

## FORMAL HOUSEKEEPING POLICY

- Ensure all employees have housekeeping responsibilities within their work area.
- Report and/or clean up spills, leaks and other lubricated surfaces immediately.
- Use signage to call attention to wet or slippery areas.
- Do not store items on stairs.
- Report and/or remove tripping hazards from walkways.
- Remove or tack down mats, rugs and carpets that do not lay flat.
- Always close file cabinets and storage drawers.
- Report poorly lit working areas and walkways.
- Return tools and other equipment to their proper storage place after use.

## FLOOR TREATMENT AND MAINTENANCE

Your workplace has a variety of floor surfaces. Understanding and utilizing proper floor maintenance procedures not only helps reduce slips, trips and falls, but also maintains floor life and appearance.

**WHEN ESTABLISHING A FLOOR MAINTENANCE PROGRAM, FOLLOW THE GUIDELINES SET FORTH BY THE FLOOR MANUFACTURER.** Most manufacturers will have specific instructions for floor maintenance along with recommended cleaning products.

**DEVELOP A MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE FOR FLOORS.** This includes daily cleaning—dust mopping, wet mopping, spot mopping, etc. Non-daily activities such as buffing, stripping and waxing should be scheduled during inactive times when few employees will be affected.

**SELECT THE RIGHT CLEANING PRODUCT FOR THE FLOOR SURFACE AND CONTAMINANTS.** Using the improper cleaner could increase slip and fall exposure.

**CONSIDER HAVING FLOORS TESTED TO DETERMINE THE COEFFICIENT OF FRICTION.**

**WHENEVER WET CLEANING FLOORS, PROPER PROTECTION AND LIMITING EMPLOYEE TRAFFIC IN THESE AREAS IS CRITICAL.** Place “Wet Floor” signs where they are visible and provide adequate warning.

**ALWAYS FOLLOW MANUFACTURER’S RECOMMENDATIONS WHEN USING CLEANERS.** Provide employees with Safety Data Sheets from the manufacturer. Before new chemicals are brought into the workplace, evaluate possible hazards to employees.

**TRAIN EMPLOYEES ON HAZARDS AND PROVIDE PROPER PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT.**

# CREATE A FOOTWEAR POLICY

*Employers who implement a footwear policy significantly reduce the frequency of slips, trips and falls. When developing a footwear policy, consider including these guidelines:*

Footwear should be designed for the environmental conditions, as well as activities performed by the employees. Proper footwear selection is a function of two components; tread design and material.

## MATERIAL

No hard plastic or leather soles and/or heels.

- Plastic or PVC soles do not provide adequate slip resistance.
- Leather sole traction is inconsistent as it wears and becomes saturated with water, oil, dirt or grease.
- Softer soled, non-leather shoes are more slip-resistant because they grab the surface more effectively and maintain this characteristic over time.

## TREAD

No smooth-soled shoes.

- Require footwear with adequate tread patterns designed for slippery and wet conditions. Tread patterns should be random and/or perpendicular to the direction of travel. Tread patterns that run parallel to the direction of travel tend to accentuate the forward motion thus increasing the probability of a slip and fall.
- Employees tasked with snow and ice removal and/or working in uncontrolled conditions should be provided and required to wear shoes with additional built in traction aid or a strap-on traction aid device. The additional traction aid will dig into the walking surface thus greatly increasing traction.

Caution is advised as these devices may create additional hazards if worn on non-icy surfaces such as concrete and tile as they ride on top of the surface rather than dig in.

- Require periodic inspection of footwear to ensure that they are maintained, cleaned and replaced as needed.

Once an employer decides to implement a footwear policy, they must consider purchasing options. There are four purchasing strategies to be considered:

### 1. COMPANY PURCHASE

- Pros—provides consistent protection, look and style and is enforced. The age of the shoe can be tracked to ensure a consistent replacement schedule.
- Cons—the employer absorbs the entire purchase price. High employee turnover rates accentuates the cost. The employer absorbs the administrative cost of the program.

### 2. EMPLOYEE PURCHASE

- Pros—the employee absorbs the entire purchase price. A purchase program may be made through payroll deduction. A full or partial reimbursement may be implemented once an employee's tenure meets a given threshold (ex: 90 days).
- Cons—the employer will need to ensure the correct shoes are purchased. This is problematic to enforce. It is more difficult to track and ensure a consistent replacement schedule. It may be unaffordable for the employee.

### 3. SHARE COST

- Pros—both parties have an invested interest in the purchase. The employer can maintain considerable control of shoe selection and replacement schedule. Payroll deduction may be used for the employee contribution.
- Cons—it may be unaffordable for the employee.

### 4. LOAN PROGRAM

- Pros—employers with high turnover rates will incur less cost.
- Cons—administration of a loaner program includes maintaining an inventory of multiple sizes, sanitation protocols, storage, as well as dealing with lost shoes.

## CREATE AN INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

*Environmental conditions, resulting from inclement weather, are known to significantly contribute to slips, trips and falls in the workplace. This policy is designed to minimize the potential for future injuries, related to inclement weather, through the implementation of targeted controls. Controls to be utilized include engineering, administrative, as well as, the use of personal protective equipment.*

### OUTDOOR SURFACES

Parking lots, outside walkways and stairs should be cleared of snow and ice prior to the majority of the employees' arrival. This is generally accomplished with one of three strategies:

- **Contract all snow and ice removal.** This can be a successful strategy but requires the employer to rely on an outside contractor to perform the service in a timely fashion, such as before the majority of the employees arrive. To ensure timely service, clear expectations should be established, written and agreed upon by the employer and the contractor.
- **Perform all snow and ice removal internally.** This strategy eliminates the employer's reliance on outside resources and increases direct control of the process. It also requires the employer to provide and maintain proper equipment, training and protective devices.
- **Use a blend of both contracted and internal resources.** This is a more orchestrated strategy that includes all the strengths and weakness of the first two. It is very important to develop clearly defined roles for both internal and contracted resources to ensure all needed services are provided.

Regardless of which strategy is used, a formal plan should be developed prior to the arrival of inclement weather.

When developing a snow and ice removal plan, keep the following guidelines in mind:

- Formally define responsibilities, starting with the facility manager, who is responsible for arranging all snow and ice removal efforts.
- Walkways with less than four inches of snowfall can be cleared by the use of brooms.
- Walkways with more than four inches of snowfall require the use of shovels, snow blowers, skid loaders or other mechanical means.
- Snow and ice removal should be used in conjunction with the application of sand, salt or ice melt. This will help mitigate the daily freeze-thaw-freeze cycles.
  - » Sand, salt or ice melt should be strategically placed around the facilities. Designated facilities employees will be tasked with initial and follow up applications but all employees may be encouraged to apply this treatment as needed.
  - » Once inclement weather has passed, remove sand, salt and ice melt. These materials create a slip hazard.

Each facility has its own needs and will require a tailored approach to removal processes, such as:

- The identification of plowed snow pile locations. Poorly located snow piles may create additional hazards during the freeze-thaw-freeze cycles.
  - » Locate piles in areas where runoff is not crossing pedestrian traffic.
  - » Locate piles in areas where they are not obstructing the view of traffic.
  - » Ensure that culverts and drains are free of obstruction so that runoff can flow freely.
  - » Locate piles so that fire protection equipment, hydrants, control valves and lanes are not obstructed.
- Establish and clearly communicate snow routes for employees to safely walk to and from parking lots and buildings. Communicate that no other routes are to be used during inclement weather. Established walkways should be well maintained throughout the daily freeze-thaw-freeze cycles in particularly troublesome areas such as shortcuts and steep grades.

## ENTRYWAYS AND FOYERS

A significant percentage of inclement weather slips and falls take place in entryways and foyers. To minimize the potential for incidents in this setting, a formal policy should address applicable controls such as:

- Entryway snow and ice, as well as, sand, salt and ice melt buildup can be minimized by the use of canopy systems.
- Mats should be used to minimize the amount of moisture and other materials tracked into the building. A proven mat strategy includes three components:
  1. Outside scraper mat to remove heavy debris from footwear. Ideally this mat would be under a canopy so as not to clog with snow and ice.
  2. Inside wiper mat used to scrape and wipe off remaining debris.
  3. Inside wiper mat to dry the bottom of footwear thoroughly before transitioning to the non-matted surface.
- Ensure that mats used are designed for your application. A mat not designed for inclement weather use may create additional hazards by slipping and/or abnormal wearing.
- Ensure mats are in good condition. Over time, edges tend to curl up creating a tripping hazard.
- Ensure that mats are placed on a clean dry surface and the area under the mats is periodically cleaned. Mats placed on top of moisture, dirt or dust may slip.

## INCLEMENT WEATHER FOOTWEAR

Employers who implement a footwear policy significantly reduce the frequency of slips and fall incidents. Guidelines to consider when developing a policy include:

- Footwear should be designed for the activities performed by the employees, including walking and working on snow and ice and complicated by uneven surfaces.
- No hard plastic or leather soles or heels. Softer soled shoes are more slip-resistant because they grab the surface more effectively.
- No smooth soled shoes.
- Require footwear with adequate tread patterns designed for inclement weather.
- Require periodic inspection of footwear to ensure that they are maintained, cleaned and replaced as needed.
- Employees tasked with snow and ice removal, and/or working in uncontrolled conditions, should be provided and required to wear shoes with additional built-in traction aid or a strap-on traction aid device. The additional traction aid will dig into the walking surface thus greatly increasing traction. Caution is advised as these devices may create additional hazards if worn on non-icy surfaces such as concrete and tile as they ride on top of the surface rather than dig in.

## SAFETY TIPS

Provide employees with general guidelines on how to walk safely on slippery surfaces including but not limited to:

- Slightly bending the knees thus lowering their center of gravity.
- Turn feet outward to increase their base.
- Take short, slow and deliberate steps.
- Uses of arms for balance.
- Scan ahead for obstacles and/or cleared walking surfaces.



***Establish and clearly communicate snow routes for employees to safely walk to and from parking lots and buildings.***



# APPENDIX

<b><u>SAMPLE POLICY STATEMENT.....</u></b>	<b><u>A</u></b>
<b><u>INCIDENT INVESTIGATION AND TREND ANALYSIS .....</u></b>	<b><u>B</u></b>
<b><u>SLIP, TRIP AND FALL DETAIL REPORT .....</u></b>	<b><u>C</u></b>
<b><u>HAZARD IDENTIFICATION/INSPECTION GUIDE .....</u></b>	<b><u>D</u></b>
<b><u>SLIP, TRIP AND FALL PREVENTION</u></b>	
<b><u>SELF-INSPECTION CHECKLIST.....</u></b>	<b><u>E</u></b>
<b><u>HOME HEALTHCARE</u></b>	
<b><u>RESIDENTIAL SAFETY INSPECTION .....</u></b>	<b><u>F</u></b>
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**(Insert Company Name)** is committed to creating a workplace that is safe, healthy and injury-free. Our employees are our most valuable assets, and their safety and health is our top priority.

Slips, trips and falls are all too common sources of workplace injuries. **(Insert Company Name)** has recognized this and taken actions to ensure the safety of our employees. We will provide support to our Safety Committee by providing them the time, employees and management commitment needed to reach our common goal of an injury-free workplace. We will provide training, review our procedures, review incidents and maintain the equipment. In the event of an injury, we will actively work to return the employee back to work when medically possible. Our Drug and Alcohol policy will be strictly enforced with no exceptions.

Safety is essential to all business functions and is never compromised under any circumstance. Every employee has a responsibility to maintain our work environment including reporting hazards and working toward preventing accidents.

I appreciate your full cooperation to follow our safety program and make our workplace safe, healthy and injury-free.

Sincerely,

**(Insert Signature)**

**(Insert name)**  
**(Insert title)**

*\* A message from your company's President, CEO or other senior leader might have more of an impact on your employees. Consider this when creating policy statements.*



## INCIDENT INVESTIGATION AND TREND ANALYSIS

Contrary to popular belief, a first report of injury is not necessarily an incident investigation. MEM often uses the first report of injury to determine compensability of the claim. Unfortunately many employers stop here. An internal incident investigation can help you foster a culture of caring, deter fraudulent claims, determine root cause(s) and corrective actions.

### Documentation

- Seek at least three different perspectives on the incident (injured employee, witness and supervisor/management). Each should document their account of the incident in writing on separate sheets of paper to minimize influencing each other.
- Use the Incident Investigation and Trend Analysis Forms to standardize the process and insure consistency of information gathered.
- Obtain statements as soon as possible following the incident.
- Take pictures when appropriate.

### Supervisor and/or Management Investigation and Questioning

- Conduct interviews in neutral areas. The incident site is often best.
- Familiarize yourself with the details available.
- Avoid creating an atmosphere of retaliation.
- Concentrate on gathering facts without looking for fault. Communicate this to the parties involved.
- Interview involved parties individually.
- Ask simple, direct and open-ended questions.
- Avoid leading and accusatory questions.
- Stress your appreciation for the cooperation of all parties involved.
- Gather physical details and evidence from the incident scene as soon as possible.
- Maintain a courteous disposition if there is suspicion that a claim may be fraudulent. Communicate your suspicions and supporting information to your workers compensation carrier.
- Never recreate the accident.
- Complex incident investigations may benefit from outside guidance such as your workers compensation Loss Prevention Consultant.

When slips, trips and falls have an overwhelming presence in a workplace, then an incident investigation supplemental form may be warranted. A supplemental form should be used in addition to your regular investigative forms in an attempt to gather detailed information relative to the hazard. The details provided by using a supplemental form will aid in determining trending and consequently more effective corrective actions. Review the sample Slip, Trip and Fall Supplemental Form found in Appendix C. You may use this form as it is written or tailor it to fit your unique needs.

### Trend Analysis

Consistently using a Slip, Trip and Fall Incident Investigation Supplemental Form will eventually provide you with a database that can be analyzed to determine trending. This type of in-depth analysis will often address deficiencies in management commitment, preventative maintenance, employee behavior, awareness training, proper planning, physical and environmental conditions. Corrective actions resulting from such an analysis often address: hiring practices, new employee training, employee health and fitness, job dissatisfaction, work schedules, workloads, floor maintenance practices, footwear needs and requirements and near miss or close call reporting.



## SLIP, TRIP AND FALL DETAIL REPORT

Injured or Incident Employee Name:	
Date of Incident:	Day of Incident: <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> T <input type="checkbox"/> W <input type="checkbox"/> Th <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> Sat <input type="checkbox"/> Sun Time of Incident: <input type="checkbox"/> a.m. <input type="checkbox"/> p.m.
Was there an injury? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
What was the injury?	
Date Reported:	
Name of Witnesses:	
Did the person fall? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Was this result of a slip or trip? <input type="checkbox"/> Slip <input type="checkbox"/> Trip

### INCIDENT DETAILS

Explain what happened:
Where did the incident occur? <input type="checkbox"/> Parking lot <input type="checkbox"/> Sidewalk <input type="checkbox"/> Indoor area <input type="checkbox"/> Ramp <input type="checkbox"/> Stairs <input type="checkbox"/> Customer site Other:
What was the surface of the walkway? <input type="checkbox"/> Asphalt <input type="checkbox"/> Concrete <input type="checkbox"/> Tile <input type="checkbox"/> Vinyl <input type="checkbox"/> Marble <input type="checkbox"/> Wood <input type="checkbox"/> Carpet <input type="checkbox"/> Dirt/Gravel <input type="checkbox"/> Transitioning surface
Were surface hazards present? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes, please describe hazard(s) below: <i>Examples: crack, hole, lop, non-stationary object, stationary object, gravel, poor housekeeping, ice, wet, oily</i>
Was the hazard identified through some form of communication? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes, name identification means:

### ACTIVITY DETAILS

<input type="checkbox"/> Walking forward	<input type="checkbox"/> Walking backward	<input type="checkbox"/> Changing direction	<input type="checkbox"/> Pushing	<input type="checkbox"/> Turning a corner	<input type="checkbox"/> Carrying
<input type="checkbox"/> Talking	<input type="checkbox"/> Listening	<input type="checkbox"/> Ascending	<input type="checkbox"/> Descending	<input type="checkbox"/> Rushing	<input type="checkbox"/> Jumping

### INJURY DETAILS

Did the person fall? <input type="checkbox"/> forward <input type="checkbox"/> backward Did the person slip? <input type="checkbox"/> forward <input type="checkbox"/> backward
Which body part did the person fall on?
Is there pain in other areas as a result of this fall?
Where is the pain?
Was medical personnel called to the scene? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If the incident was on stairs, list number of steps present _____ and which step contributed to the incident (count from bottom) _____.



# HAZARD IDENTIFICATION/INSPECTION GUIDE

## Purpose

This guide provides supplemental information to assist employees in recognizing common sources of slip, trip and fall hazards.

## Inspection Checklist Guide

- Comprehensive facility and grounds inspections by trained employees to identify slip, trip and fall hazards are recommended at least annually, ideally prior to the rainy season.
- For higher slip, trip and fall risk areas, a formal inspection is recommended at least on a quarterly basis; more frequently depending on the likelihood for changing conditions.
- For these inspections, it is ideal that the following departmental representatives participate, including: central administration, site principal, maintenance, dietary and custodial.

Recommended inspections should include evaluation of the following:

### CONDITION OF FLOORS, CARPETS AND STEPS

Floors should be clear of dirt and debris; free of water accumulations, grease and/or oils. Walking surfaces should be as even as possible. Carpets should be tight and free of rips. Steps should be evenly spaced in height and depth. Yellow paint or equivalent markings should be applied when conditions persist that present a potential slip, trip or fall hazard.

### FLOOR MAINTENANCE PROTOCOL

- Floor care procedures should be in writing and in accordance with the product manufacturer specifications for the type of floor the product is intended. Personnel using these products should be properly trained.
- When spills or other sources are introduced to the walking surfaces, procedures should be in place and promptly followed to immediately clean up such materials. If clean-up is delayed, appropriate markings such as yellow hazard cones or equivalent visual alerts should be placed so that the affected area is clearly identified.

### HOUSEKEEPING PRACTICES

- Aisles and pathways should be free of obstructions that could impede safe passage. Due to the increased presence of electronics in the healthcare industry, power cords and extension cords are frequently found in the workplace. These cords should be properly protected if they lay within pathways of travel. Long term solutions should be considered, such as designated charging stations and additional outlets.
- Never place anything in front of emergency exit doors or within aisles.

### LIGHTING LEVELS

Lighting levels must be appropriate to see walking surfaces. Light bulbs should be in proper working condition. If levels are still too dim, additional light sources should be installed. Parking lots, sidewalks and other commonly traveled paths should have adequate lighting.

### PRESENCE AND CONDITION OF GUARDRAILS/HANDRAILS/FALL PROTECTION AT ELEVATED WORK SURFACES

- Stairways with more than four steps should have handrails. Ideally handrails are permanently and securely attached to the floor for stability on both sides of the stairway. If not possible, handrails should be installed on the descending side.
- Areas where there are unprotected edges that could result in a fall from four feet or more, chains or other equivalent measures should be employed. Loading docks are a common area where this condition may be found.
- When work requires use of powered platforms, be sure to read and follow your owner's manual. When aerial lifts are used, appropriate fall protection is required. Anyone that is issued fall protection gear should be appropriately trained.
- Ladders of appropriate height should be placed within close proximity of frequently used areas. Visual inspections of ladders and lifts should be done before each use and formal inspections conducted on a regular basis as part of the organization's preventative maintenance program.

# SLIP, TRIP AND FALL PREVENTION SELF-INSPECTION CHECKLIST

Facility \_\_\_\_\_ Area \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## General: Interior-All Departments

<b>FLOORS/WALKWAYS</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
Floors clean and free of oil/grease				
Floors are kept dry				
Floor surfaces free of holes, openings, large depressions				
Water/spills wiped up immediately				
Wet floor/caution signs used, placed before mopping				
Wet floor/caution signs removed when floors are dry				
Walking aisles free of obstructions, sharp projections and tripping hazards				
Aisles and walkways marked as appropriate				
Cords running across floor secured with tape				
Cords kept off floor with hose reels/cord drop downs				
<b>MATS/CARPET</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
Carpeting is tight, smooth, and free of tears and rips				
Mats, drainage or false floors provided for wet processes				
Absorbent mats provided where slippery conditions exist/doorways				
Mats/rugs are flat with no curled edges				
<b>STAIRS/ELEVATIONS</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
Stairs contain handrails that are secure				
Stairs contain non-slip treads				
Changes in elevation/ramps highlighted				
Working platforms contain highlighted areas at edges				
<b>LIGHTING</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
Emergency lighting is operational				
All areas properly lighted				
<b>HOUSEKEEPING</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
Containers readily available for disposal of trash				
Absence of clutter throughout area				

# SLIP, TRIP AND FALL PREVENTION SELF-INSPECTION CHECKLIST

Facility \_\_\_\_\_ Area \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## General: Exterior

WALKWAYS	YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
Landscape rocks/materials kept from sidewalks/driveways				
Sidewalks in good condition—level, free of large cracks				
Water drains away from walkway				
Non-skid/highlighted handicap ramps in good condition				
STAIRS/ELEVATIONS	YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
Changes in elevation highlighted				
Stairs in good condition—even, free of cracks				
Handrails exist at stairs				
Handrails in good condition, secure				
Ramps contain handrails				
Ramps in good condition—free of holes, large cracks				
Open sides with more than 4 foot fall potentials are protected				
PARKING LOT	YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
Parking areas free from uneven areas, large cracks, and potholes				
No holes/cracks in parking lot				
Curbs in good shape and painted/highlighted				
Water drains away from parking areas				
Parking lot lighting is adequate and working properly				

## Department Specific: Custodial

POLICY COMPLIANCE	YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
Slip resistant footwear is worn				
Cleaning products used according to manufacturer's guidelines				
Spills are promptly removed				
Routine cleaning conducted in accordance to specified procedures				
Floor mats are positioned correctly and in good condition				
Use of proper ladder for the job when working beyond reach				

**Department Specific: Maintenance**

POLICY COMPLIANCE	YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
Slip resistant footwear is worn				
Fall prevention equipment worn as required				
Use of proper ladder for the job when working beyond reach				
Proactively identify and repair unsafe walking surface conditions				
Promptly apply ice melt and conducts snow removal per policy				

**Department Specific: Transportation**

POLICY COMPLIANCE	YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
Slip resistant footwear is worn				
Bus steps are free of ice and snow accumulations				
Bus handrail is in good condition				
Handrail used when entering or exiting the bus				
Bus aisles are kept clear of articles				
Maintenance shop floors are free of oil and other spills				

**Department Specific: Dietary**

POLICY COMPLIANCE	YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
Slip resistant footwear is worn				
Floors area kept clean and dry				
Floor mats are in proper place				
Floor pathways are kept free of obstructions				
Proper ladders available				

**Department Specific: Ambulance**

POLICY COMPLIANCE	YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
Footwear worn according to company policies				
Good housekeeping practices are employed in the garage				
Good on scene housekeeping practices are employed at incident scene				
Good housekeeping practices are employed in the offices				
Handrails used when walking down stairs				
Incident scenes are surveyed for slip, trip and fall hazards				
Front, side and rear scene lights are used for night work				
Bags and supplies are not stored on the floor or wheel well of the ambulance				

**Department Specific: Home Healthcare–Pre-service Checklist**

<b>POLICY COMPLIANCE</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
Footwear worn according to company policies				
Sidewalks are maintained free of snow and ice				
Sidewalks are free from uneven areas, large cracks, and potholes				
Outside stairs in good condition—even, free of cracks, with solid handrails				
Inside stairs in good condition—free of tripping hazards and torn carpet, with solid handrails				
Carpeting and vinyl in good condition—free of wrinkles and curling				
Oxygen lines and electrical cords are secured or kept away from walking areas				
Good housekeeping practices are exhibited				
Outside lighting adequately illuminates walking surfaces				
Inside lighting adequately illuminates walking surfaces				
Walkways, inside and out, free of lubricated/wet surfaces				
Storage of miscellaneous items in walkways				
<b>PETS</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
Dogs inside or outside home are controlled				
Other aggressive animals inside or outside home are controlled				



# HOME HEALTHCARE: RESIDENTIAL SAFETY INSPECTION

Company employees must complete a Home Safety Inspection on a monthly basis. This process helps the home healthcare employee identify, reduce or avoid hazards. This systemized inspection will help the home healthcare employee identify hazards and document corrective action needed.

Evaluator \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Inspection Criteria

<b>PETS</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
Dogs inside or outside home are controlled				
Other aggressive animals inside or outside home are controlled				
<b>SLIP, TRIP AND FALL HAZARDS</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
Holes in flooring				
Loose or damaged porch or interior steps or stairways				
Cords: Electrical extension, phone, oxygen tubing				
Path of ingress/egress: Furniture/furnishings present hazards				
Ice and snow cleared of sidewalks and steps				
<b>FIRE</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
Electrical outlet cover plates missing				
Smoke detector missing or needing new battery				
Fire extinguisher available				
Overloaded electrical outlet				
Overloaded extension cord or multi-outlet surge protector				
Extension cords ran beneath rugs or carpet				
Improper oxygen storage: Upright, valves closed, marked FULL or EMPTY and secured				
Resident smoking inside home				
Excessive clutter found				
Address of home properly marked on home or mailbox				
<b>ADDITIONAL HAZARDS</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
Knives present				
Firearms present				
Syringes requiring disposal				
Biohazards requiring disposal				
Sharp or burred edges on furniture				

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## RESOURCES

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### For more information:



[www.worksafecenter.com](http://www.worksafecenter.com)



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