Fall Protection Policy



This Model POLICY should NOT be confused with a Fall Protection PLAN or PROGRAM. That's because a PLAN or PROGRAM must list the actual fall protection measures used at a particular workplace. And since every workplace is different, it's impossible to create a single PLAN or PROGRAM that will work for everyone. However, you can use this POLICY to develop a PROGRAM for your worksite. Or, if your province doesn't require a PROGRAM, this POLICY may be all you need.

One more caveat: This POLICY is based on Sask. OHS regulations and you'll need to adapt it to fit the requirements of your own jurisdiction.

$1. \ \mathbf{PURPOSE}$

ABC Company has adopted this Policy to prevent vertical fall injuries at its workplaces in accordance with the [province name] Occupational Health and Safety Regulation ("Regulation") as wellas the ABC Company Occupational Health and Safety Program ("OHS Program"), and other applicable requirements and standards.

2. **DEFINITIONS**

For purposes of this Policy:

- "Anchor point" or "anchor plate" means a secure connecting point capable of safely withstanding the impact forces applied by a fall protection system;
- "Anchorage" means a secure connection point for a fall

protection system;

- "Approved" means approved by the Director;
- "Certified by a professional engineer" means certification in writing that bears the engineer's official stamp or seal;
- "Competent" means possessing knowledge, experience, and training to perform a specific duty safely and effectively;
- "Competent worker" means not just a worker with knowledge, experience, and training to do a task safely and effectively but also a worker who is being trained to perform that task and who is under close and competent supervision during that training;
- "Connecting linkage" means a lanyard, safety hook, cable, or connector inserted between a personal fall arrest system and the D-ring on a worker's full-body harness;
- "Construction" means erection, alteration, renovation, repair, dismantling, demolition, structural maintenance, and painting of a structure, and includes:
 - Land clearing, earth moving, grading, excavating, trenching, digging, boring, drilling, blasting, and concreting; and
 - Installation of any plant;
- "Control zone" means the area within 2 metres of an unguarded edge of a level, elevated work surface of 3 metres or more in height;
- "Director" means the director of the Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety, Occupational Health and Safety Division;
- "Fall arrest system" means a system that will stop a worker's fall before the worker hits the surface below;
- "Fall protection system" means any of the following:
 - A control zone;
 - A personal fall arrest system;
 - A safety net; or
 - A travel restrain system;

- "Full body harness" means a safety device that is capable of suspending a worker without causing the worker to bend at the waist, consisting of straps that pass over the worker's shoulders and around the worker's legs, an upper dorsal suspension assembly, and all integral hardware;
- "Lifeline" means a length of rope or strap that is attached to a safe point of anchorage at one end or, in the case of a horizontal lifeline, at both ends to provide support and a guide for a personal fall arrest system or personnel lowering device;
- "Maintained" means kept in a condition of efficient and safe functioning by a system of regular examination, testing and servicing or repair;
- "Personal fall arrest system" means personal protective equipment ("PPE") that provides a means of safely arresting the fall of a worker and that, after the fall is arrested, does not by itself permit the further release or lowering of the worker;
- "Practicable" means possible given current knowledge, technology and invention;
- "Reasonably practicable" means practicable unless the person on whom a duty is placed can show that there is a gross disproportion between the benefit of the duty and the cost, in time, trouble and money, of the measures to secure the duty
- "Safeguard" means a guard, shield, wire mesh, guardrail, gate, barrier, safety net, handrail, or other similar equipment designed to protect a worker's safety-not including PPE;
- "Similar barrier" means any barrier that ABC Company can demonstrate provides a level of protection at least equivalent to a guardrail;
- "Permanent" means intended and designed to last indefinitely;
- "Temporary" means:
 - Designed to be removed by the last workers using

it before commissioning or turnover to a contractor or owner; and

- Intended and designed to last no more than one year;
- "Travel restraint system" means a system that prevents a worker from traveling to edge of a structure or to a work position from which the worker could fall.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

ABC Company will implement reasonably practicable measures to protect workers who are at the risk of falling vertically from an elevated work surface as required by the Regulations and in accordance with the principles and procedures set forth in this Policy.

4. **SCOPE**

4.1. Workers Protected

The intent of this Policy is to ensure that **all workers** engaged to work at ABC Company work sites who are or may be exposed to vertical fall hazards are properly protected regardless of who pays or employs those workers, including:

- Full- or part-time workers employed by ABC Company;
- Temporary employees placed by an outside agency to work at the site;
- Contract labourers engaged to perform work at the site;
- Volunteers who work at the site for free; and
- Workers employed by prime contractors, contractors, and subcontractors to perform work at the site under a contract with ABC Company.

4.2. Fall Hazards Covered

This Policy is intended to address *vertical* fall hazards; control of horizontal/same-level fall hazards that cause slips and trips is addressed in ABC Company's slips/trips/falls, housekeeping, maintenance, and other policies.

5. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1. Employer

Owners, corporate officers and directors, upper managers, and other representatives of ABC Company who may be defined as an "employer" under the Act are responsible for overall implementation of this Policy, including ensuring that:

- The resources necessary to implement this Policy effectively are provided;
- The hazard assessment required by Section 6 of this Policy is carried out and appropriately reviewed;
- Appropriate fall protection systems and equipment are used to control identified fall hazards;
- All required fall protection systems, connecting linkage, subsystems, components, and equipment:
 - Is provided to workers at ABC Company's expense;
 - Meets the standards set out in this Policy and the Regulations; and
 - Is properly used, maintained, and inspected;
- Workers are allowed to participate in the hazard assessment and selection of fall protection controls either directly or through their workplace Joint Health and Safety Committee ("Safety Committee") or Health and Safety Representative ("Safety Representative");
- Where required, a written fall protection plan for a work site is developed and implemented;
- Workers are trained in and required to comply with this Policy and any fall protection plan;
- Workers exposed to fall hazards:
 - Are provided and properly use the required fall protection equipment
 - Receive the necessary safety instruction and training set out in Section 12 of this Policy;
- Fall protection systems and equipment are properly used, inspected, maintained, installed, erected, stored, and dismantled;

• This Policy is appropriately reviewed.

5.2. Safety Coordinator, Site Manager

The Safety Coordinator, facility manager, or other person designated as being in charge of safety at the workplace will be thoroughly familiar with and oversee implementation of this Policy, including ensuring that:

- A proper hazard assessment is carried out by a qualified person in accordance with Section 6 of the Policy;
- Appropriate fall protection systems and equipment are used to control identified fall hazards;
- All required fall protection systems, connecting linkage, subsystems, components, and equipment:
 - Is provided to workers at ABC Company's expense;
 - Meets the standards set out in this Policy and the Regulations; and
 - Is properly used, maintained, and inspected;
- Where required, a written fall protection plan for a work site is developed and implemented;
- Workers are trained in and required to comply with this Policy and any fall protection plan;
- Workers exposed to fall hazards:
 - Are provided and properly use the required fall protection equipment
 - Receive the necessary safety instruction and training set out in Section 12 of this Policy;
- Workers are allowed to participate in hazard assessment and the selection of fall protection controls either directly or through their Safety Committee or Safety Representative;
- Workers are trained in and required to comply with this Policy and any fall protection plan;
- Workers exposed to fall hazards:
 - Are provided and properly use the required fall protection equipment;
 - Receive the necessary safety instruction and

training in fall protection set out in Section 12
of this Policy;

- Fall protection systems and equipment are properly used, inspected, maintained, installed, erected, stored, and dismantled;
- This Policy and any applicable fall protection plan are applied to prime contractors, contractors, and subcontractors hired to perform work at ABC Company sites involving exposure to fall hazards in accordance with Section 13 of this Policy;
- All of the manufacturer's specifications and professional engineer certifications required by this Policy are obtained and kept in a readily accessible location at the workplace;
- All other records required to implement this Policy are kept and retained;
- This Policy is appropriately reviewed.

5.3. Supervisors

Supervisors, lead-hands, foremen, and other persons in charge of work operations involving exposure to fall hazards are responsible for ensuring that:

- The work site is assessed for fall hazards in accordance with Section 6 of this Policy;
- The safety measures set out in this Policy and any fall protection plan are implemented at the work site;
- Appropriate fall protection systems and equipment are used to control identified fall hazards;
- All required fall protection systems, connecting linkage, subsystems, components, and equipment:
 - Is provided to workers at ABC Company's expense;
 - Meets the standards set out in this Policy and the Regulations; and
 - Is properly used, maintained, and inspected;
- Fall protection systems and equipment are properly used, inspected, maintained, installed, erected, stored, and

dismantled;

- Defective fall protection equipment is immediately removed from service and not used again unless and until it is properly repaired, replaced, or re-certified in accordance with this Policy;
- Workers exposed to fall hazards:
 - Are provided instruction in the proper use of the required fall protection equipment and procedures;
 - Actually use the fall protection systems and follow the safe work procedures properly;
- Workers are held accountable for complying with this Policy and any fall protection plan, including where necessary via the imposition of discipline for infractions;
- This Policy and any fall protection plan are properly applied to workers of prime contractors, contractors, and subcontractors hired to work at ABC Company work sites who are or may be exposed to fall hazards in accordance with Section 13 of this Policy;
- This Policy is appropriately reviewed.

5.4. Workers

Workers will cooperate with ABC Company in its efforts to implement this Policy by:

- Not using fall protection equipment unless and until they receive the fall protection training and instruction provided under Section 12 of this Policy;
- Complying with any safe work procedures developed to protect them from fall hazards;
- Actually using the fall protection training and instruction they receive when engaging in work operations involving fall hazards;
- Inspecting their fall protection equipment before each use as follows:
 - Before using a lanyard or lifeline, ensuring that it is:

- Free of imperfections, knots, and splices, other than end terminations;
- Protected by padding where the lanyard or lifeline passes over sharp edges; and
- Protected from heat, flame, or abrasive or corrosive materials during use;
- Before using a vertical lifeline, ensuring that:
 - The lower end extends to the ground or a safe landing; and
 - The lifeline is protected at the lower end to ensure that the line cannot be fouled by any equipment;
- Before using a full body harness, ensuring that it is:
 - Properly adjusted to fit the worker securely; and
 - Attached by means of a connecting linkage to a fixed anchor or lifeline (unless the full body harness is used to allow for rescue from a top-entry confined space and it is determined that attaching the harness to a lifeline would create additional hazards;
- When using a full body harness and connecting linkage, ensuring that the connecting linkage is attached to a personal fall arrest system, lifeline, or fixed anchor;
- Immediately notifying their supervisor or manager of any defects or unsafe conditions they find in the equipment and not using the equipment until such concerns are addressed (or the equipment is removed);
- Properly using, maintaining, and caring for the fall protection equipment they're required to use.

5.5. Workplace Safety Committee/Representative

ABC Company will consult with and secure the participation of the workplace Safety Committee, Safety Representative, or where no Committee, or Representative exists, the affected workers at the site in developing and implementing this Policy, which may include asking for input into:

- Assessment of fall hazards;
- Selection of appropriate means of fall protection;
- Development and implementation of safe work procedures;
- Development and implementation of any required written fall protection plan;
- Inspection of fall protection systems, devices, and equipment before use and as part of routine workplace inspections;
- Investigation of fall injuries, incidents, and accidents;
- Review of this Policy.

5.6. Visitors

Visitors to ABC Company workplaces will:

- Stay away from areas of the work site where fall hazards exist unless they:
- Are authorized to be in those areas;
- Follow all applicable safe work procedures or provisions of the fall protection plan while in those areas;
- Use all required fall protection equipment;
- Refrain from engaging in any conduct that distracts or interferes with the implementation of the procedures and protections set out in this Policy.

6. FALL HAZARD IDENTIFICATION & ASSESSMENT

ABC Company will designate a competent person to perform an assessment of the work area to identify fall hazards requiring use of a fall protection system in accordance with the criteria set out in Section 3 above. Workers will be permitted to participate in the assessment of fall hazards either directly or through their Safety Committee or Safety Representative. ABC Company will review the hazard assessment at least once every 3 years and immediately after fall injuries and before introducing significant changes to operations, technology, work methods, personnel, and other conditions affecting the fall hazards posed by the work or work area covered by the current hazard assessment.

7. METHODS OF FALL PROTECTION

ABC Company will ensure that appropriate fall protection methods are used to control fall risks based on how high the surface the worker may fall from is, as set out in the Regulations.

7.1. Falls of 3 or More Metres

ABC Company will ensure that a fall protection system is used any time work is performed at a temporary or permanent work area (subject to the exceptions specified in the Regulations):

- From which a worker may fall 3 metres (10 feet) or more; or
- From which a worker may fall less than 3 metres but still possibly suffer an injury, e.g., because of the surface onto which the worker may fall.

7.2. Falls of 1.2 to 3 Metres

ABC Company will ensure that where workers in permanent work areas are at risk of falling vertically more than 1.2 but less than 3 metres:

- The workers are protected by a guardrail or similar barrier;
- Where use of guardrails or similar barriers is not reasonably practicable, workers use a travel restraint system;
- Where use of a travel restraint system is not reasonably practicable, the workers are protected by a safety net,

control zone, or other equally effective method.

7.3. Work on Storage Tanks

ABC Company will ensure that will ensure that:

- Where a worker is regularly required to walk or work on top of a storage tank, the storage tank is fitted with a permanent walkway with guardrails;
- •Where a worker is required to walk or work on top of a storage tank, any opening in the tank into which a worker may fall is guarded by a grid or other suitable means to prevent the worker from falling into the tank.

8. FALL PROTECTION PLAN

ABC Company will develop and implement a written fall protection plan if: i.Workers may fall 3 or more metres; and ii. They are not protected by a guardrail or similar barrier, and that such plan lists, at a minimum:

- The fall hazards at the worksite;
- The fall protection system to be used at the worksite;
- The procedures for assembling, maintaining, inspecting, using, and disassembling the fall protection system; and
- The rescue procedures to be used if a worker needs to be rescued after falling and is suspended by a personal fall arrest system or safety net.

ABC Company will ensure that will ensure that a copy of the fall protection plan is readily available before work begins at a worksite where the risk of falling exists and that all affected workers are trained in the fall protection plan and the safe use of the fall protection system before being allowed to work in an area where a fall protection system must be used.

9. CONTROL ZONES

ABC Company will ensure that a control zone: i. Is used only

if a worker can fall from a level surface in a work area; and ii. Is at least 2 metres wide when measured from the unguarded edge. When crossing a control zone, workers will not be required to use a fall protection system, other than the control zone, to enter or leave the work area and must follow the most direct route to get to or from the unguarded edge. Control zones must be clearly marked with an effective raised warning line or other equally effective method if a worker is working more than 2 metres from an unguarded edge. ABC Company will ensure that will ensure that a worker who has to work within a control zone uses either:

- A travel restraint system; or
- A means that is as effective as a travel restraint system and that prevent the worker from getting to the unguarded edge.

10. FALL PROTECTION EQUIPMENT & SYSTEMS STANDARDS

10.1. Equipment to Be Provided at Company Expense

ABC Company will ensure that will provide all of the fall protection equipment required by the Regulations and this Policy to workers at no expense to them and ensure that:

- The equipment is at the work site before the work begins;
- Workers use the equipment;
- The equipment is stored in a clean, secure, and readily accessible location; and
- Workers are aware of that location.

10.2. Personal Fall Arrest Systems

ABC Company will ensure that will ensure that a personal fall arrest system and connecting linkage required by the Regulations and this Policy is appropriately approved and maintained, and that the personal fall arrest system:

- Prevents a worker from falling more than 1.2 metres without a shock absorber;
- Where a shock absorber is used, prevents a worker from falling more than 2 metres or the limit specified in the manufacturer's specifications, whichever is less;
- Applies a peak fall-arrest force no greater than 8 kilonewtons (kN) to a worker; and
- Is fastened to a lifeline or secure anchor point with a breaking strength of at least 22 kN.

10.3. Snap Hooks

ABC Company will ensure that will ensure that any snap hook used as an integral component of a personal fall arrest system, connecting linkage, full body harness, or lifeline is self-locking and approved and maintained.

10.4. Lifelines

Unless specified otherwise in the Regulations or another policy in the OHS Program, ABC Company will ensure that will ensure that:

- Any lifeline used to provide fall protection meets the requirements of the Regulations, i.e., that the lifeline:
- Is suitable for the conditions in which it is to be used, with regard to strength, abrasion, resistance, extensibility, and chemical stability;
- Is made of wire rope or synthetic material;
- Has no imperfections, knots, and splices, other than end terminations;
- Is protected by padding where the lifeline passes over sharp edges;
- Is protected from heat, flame, or abrasive or corrosive materials during use;
- Is fastened to a secure anchor point that:
 - Has a breaking strength of at least 22.2 kN; and

Is not used to suspend any platform or other load;
Is maintained according to the manufacturer's recommendations;

- There is a lifeline that meets the above requirements for every worker;
- Any vertical lifeline has a minimum diameter of:
 - 12 millimetres if the lifeline is made of nylon;
 - 15 millimetres if the lifeline is made of polypropylene; or
 - 8 millimetres if the lifeline is made of wire rope; and
- Where a vertical lifeline is used:
 - The lower end extends to the ground or a safe landing; and
 - The lifeline is protected at the lower end to ensure that it cannot be fouled by the equipment;
- A horizontal lifeline is:
 - EITHER:
 - Designed and certified as safe by a professional engineer; or
 - Manufactured to an approved standard;
 - OR:
- Installed and used in accordance with a design certified as safe by a professional engineer or the manufacturer's recommendations.

10.5. Full Body Harnesses

Where a full body harness is used, ABC Company will ensure that will ensure that:

- The full body harness and connecting linkage are approved and maintained;
- The full body harness is properly fitted to the worker;
- The worker is trained in the safe use of the full body harness;

- All metal parts of the full body harness and connecting linkage are of drop-forged steel 22.2 kN proof tested;
- A protective thimble is used to protect ropes or straps from chafing whenever a rope or strap is connected to an eye or D-ring used in the full body harness or connecting linkage;
- The connecting linkage is attached to a personal fall arrest system, lifeline, or secure anchor point to prevent the worker from falling more than 1.2 metres.

10.6. Lanyards

Where a lanyard is used, ABC Company will ensure that will ensure that it:

- Is as short as work conditions allow;
- Constructed of:
 - Nylon, polyester, or polypropylene rope or webbing; or
 - Wire rope that is equipped with an approved shock absorbing device;
- Equipped with snap hooks; and
- Approved and maintained.

10.7. Anchor Points & Anchor Plates

ABC Company will ensure that will ensure that:

- Any personal fall arrest system or travel restraint used by workers includes use of an anchor point or anchor plate that meets the requirements of the Regulations (as incorporated into this Policy);
- A temporary anchor point used in a travel restraint system:
 - Has an ultimate load capacity of at least 3.5 kN (800 pounds-force) per worker attached in any direction in which a load may be applied;
 - Is installed and used according to the manufacturer's specifications;

- Is permanently marked as being for travel restraint only; and
- Is removed by the last worker from use when whichever of the following is earlier:
 - The date the work project for which it is intended is completed; and
 - The time specified by the manufacturer;
- 4 times the weight of the worker to be connected to the system;
- A permanent anchor point used in a travel restraint system associated with a new construction project:
 - Has an ultimate load capacity of at least 8.75 kN (2,000 pounds-force) per worker attached in any direction in which a load may be applied;
 - Is installed and used according to the manufacturer's specifications;
 - Is permanently marked as being for travel restraint only;
- Anchor points to which a personal fall arrest system is attached have an ultimate load capacity of at least 22.2 kN (5,000 pounds-force) per worker attached in any direction in which a load may be applied;
- The following types of equipment used as components of a fall protection system, and the manner in which they are installed, either conform to manufacturer's specifications or are certified by a professional engineer:
 - Permanent anchor points;
 - Anchors with multiple attachment points;
 - Permanent horizontal lifeline systems; and
 - Support structures for safety nets.

10.8. Guardrails

ABC Company will ensure that will ensure that where installation of guardrails is required by the Regulations and this Policy, such guardrail (except where an exception specified in the Regulations applies):

- Has a horizontal top member of at least 920 millimetres located no more than 1,070 millimetres above the working surface;
- Has a horizontal intermediate member spaced halfway between the top member and working surface;
- Is supported for its entire length by vertical members that are:
 - No more than 3 metres apart if the guardrail was installed before 1996; or
 - Where reasonably practicable, no more than 2.4 metres apart for guardrails installed after 1996;
- Is capable of supporting a worker who may fall against the guardrail; and
- Is constructed of 38 by 89 millimetre grade lumber or other materials of equal or greater strength;

ABC Company will ensure that where a wire rope guardrail is used at the external perimeter of a building under construction as permitted by the Regulations:

- The guardrail consists of a horizontal top member and horizontal intermediate member made of wire rope that is at least 9.5 millimetres in diameter, with vertical separators that are at least 50 millimeters wide that are spaced at intervals no greater than 2.4 metres;
- The horizontal top member is at least 920 millimetres and is located no more than 1,070 millimetres above the working surface;
- The horizontal intermediate member is spaced halfway between the top member and working surface;
- A turnbuckle or other appropriate device is used to keep the guardrail taut;
- The guardrail is arranged so that a worker coming into contact with the ropes cannot fall through the ropes.

ABC Company will ensure that will ensure that no worker hangs

equipment on a guardrail.

10.9. Safety Nets

Where safety nets are used to provide fall protection, ABC Company will ensure that the safety net:

- Is manufactured from rope at least:
 - 8 millimetres in diameter; and
 - Equivalent in breaking strength to number one grade pure manila rope of 9 millimetres in diameter;
- Has a mesh size no greater than 150 by 150 millimetres;
- Has safety hooks or shackles of drop-forged steel that is 22.2 kN proof tested;
- Has joints between net panels that are equal in strength to the net;
- Extends at least 2 metres beyond and no more than 6 metres below the work area; and
- Is installed and maintained so that, at the maximum deflection of the net when arresting a worker's fall, no portion of the net contacts another surface.

10.10. Wire Mesh

Where wire mesh is used, ABC Company will ensure that it:

- Is made from wire that is at least 1.6 millimetres in diameter; and
- Has a mesh size no greater than 40 by 40 millimetres.

11. INSPECTION OF FALL PROTECTION EQUIPMENT & SYSTEMS

Where a personal fall arrest system, connecting linkage, full body harness, or lifeline is used, ABC Company will ensure that:

• A competent person:

 Inspects the personal fall arrest system, connecting linkage, full body harness, or lifeline:

- As recommended by the manufacturer; and
- After the equipment has sustained a fallarresting incident;
- Determines on the basis of the above inspections whether it is safe to keep using the equipment;
- Workers inspect the personal fall arrest system, connecting linkage, full body harness, or lifeline before each use and immediately report any defects or unsafe conditions to their supervisor or manager;
- Immediate steps are taken to protect any worker who may be endangered until the defect is repaired or unsafe condition corrected;
- Defective and unsafe equipment is immediately removed from service and not used again unless effective repairs are made (or the equipment is replaced).

12. INSTRUCTION & TRAINING

Workers will not be allowed into areas where fall hazards exist unless and until they receive instruction in the fall protection system used in the area and the safe work procedures to be followed. Instruction will be provided by a competent person and address the system's use, limitations, care, inspection, and maintenance. Workers must use the fall protection system ABC Company provides them in accordance with the training and instruction they receive.

13. PRIME CONTRACTORS, CONTRACTORS & SUBCONTRACTORS

ABC Company will ensure that any prime contractors, contractors, and subcontractors hired to perform work involving fall hazards at an ABC Company work site are, before such work begins:

- Notified about the fall hazards at the site and the dangers they pose;
- Required to ensure that all of their affected workers are provided and properly trained and instructed to use

the fall protection required under this Policy and any applicable ABC Company fall protection plan.

Prime contractors, contractors, or subcontractors in control of work at an ABC Company site that involves exposure to fall hazards will be required to provide exposed workers engaged in the contract work adequate protection against those hazards by either:

- Directly applying this Policy and any applicable ABC Company fall protection plan to the contract work by assuming all of the employer obligations this Policy assigns to ABC Company; or
- Developing and implementing an equivalent policy and fall protection plan that meet the requirements of the Regulations, and that is coordinated with and provides at least the same level of protection as this Policy and the ABC Company fall protection plan to workers involved in the contract work who are exposed to fall hazards.

14. EVALUATION

This Policy and the fall protection plan will be reviewed, in consultation with the Safety Committee or Safety Representative, at least once every 3 years and more often in response to fall incidents, injuries, illnesses, and changes affecting workers' health and safety.

Legislation/Regulations/Standards

Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993, SS 1993, c 0-1.1

Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, 1996, RRS c 0-1.1, Reg