

ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCIL POLICY- WORKING AT HEIGHT

INTRODUCTION

The Work at Height Regulations 2005 came into effect on the 6 April 2005. The Regulations will apply to all work at height where there is a risk of a fall liable to cause personal injury. There are now no height limits. The Regulations place duties on employers, the self-employed, and any person that controls the work of others (for example Building Managers, Property Services and others who may contract others to work at height, such as window cleaners and builders). The Regulations do not apply to the provision of paid instruction or leadership in caving or climbing by way of sport, recreation, team building or similar activities.

As part of the Regulations, duty holders must ensure:

- all work at height is properly planned and organised;
- all work at height takes account of weather conditions that could endanger health and safety;
- those involved in work at height are trained and competent;
- the risk from falling objects is properly controlled;
- the risks from work at height are assessed and appropriate work equipment is selected and used;
- the risks from fragile surfaces are properly controlled; and
- equipment for work at height is properly inspected and maintained.

There is a simple hierarchy for managing and selecting equipment for work at height:

- avoid work at height wherever possible;
- use work equipment or other measures to prevent falls where working at height cannot be avoided;
- where the risk of a fall cannot be eliminated, use work equipment or other measures to minimise the distance and consequences of a fall should one occur.

The key messages are:

- those following good practice for work at height now should already be doing enough to comply with these Regulations;
- follow the risk assessments you have carried out for work at height activities and make sure all work at height is planned, organised and carried out by competent persons;
- follow the hierarchy for managing risks from work at height - take steps to avoid, prevent or reduce risks; and
- choose the right work equipment and select collective measures to prevent falls (such as guardrails and working platforms) before other measures which may only mitigate the distance and consequences of a fall (such as nets or airbags) or which may only provide personal protection from a fall.

Note

Directorates following current good practice for work at height should already be doing enough to comply with the regulations. Managers should ensure that risk assessments already in place for work at height activities are reviewed. Managers must make sure that all work at height is planned, organised and carried out by competent persons and that the hierarchy for managing risk for work at height is being followed. Managers must also ensure that the appropriate work equipment is used and that collective measures to prevent falls (such as guardrails and working platforms) are in place before other measures which may only mitigate the distance and consequences of a fall (such as nets), or which may only provide personal protection from a fall.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Isle of Wight Council General Health and Safety Policy statement, any Directorate policies and the Health and Safety Training Policy. In order to reduce the number of injuries being sustained by employees and to further ensure managers comply with the many statutory requirements and associated codes of practice and guidance, this policy has been formally adopted by the Isle of Wight Council.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. **Strategic Directors and Heads of Service** will be responsible for ensuring that directorate and section policies and procedures are in place and updated annually. These documents will include reference to this policy and state workplace arrangements for risk assessment.
2. **Managers** will be responsible for ensuring that all work is properly planned and the risks associated with working at height within their work areas are assessed and reviewed where necessary.
3. Where there is a risk of a fall liable to cause personal injury written risk assessment record forms (Health and Safety Manual section 2.28) must be completed by an assessor who will be the workplace manager or person to whom that responsibility has been delegated. These forms will identify the levels of risk and remedial action required for working at height.
4. Where remedial action is identified as part of the risk assessment the necessary measures must be taken by line managers to remedy problems.
5. Managers will inform the Health and Safety Section of any working at height accidents near misses or incidents in accordance with Council procedures and the Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 completing and returning forms within the specified timescales (See Section 2.02 - Accidents, Diseases and Ill Health Reporting).
6. Managers will ensure that all work at height takes into account the weather conditions that could endanger health and safety.
7. Managers will ensure that all employees are provided with details of the assessment undertaken for the activities in which they are involved.
8. Managers will consult with workplace Trade Union Representatives about the risk assessment and any remedial action taken. They will also inform them of work

changes and assist them by providing relevant information about training, health and safety measures and work planning which may affect their members.

9. In the event of an accident or incident, managers will carry out an investigation and re-assess the task.
10. Managers/supervisors will ensure that staff consistently uses safe working practices when carrying out work at height.
11. Managers are required to provide safe systems of work (Health and Safety Manual section 2.29) and to develop written procedures and workplace rules which may, if required, form part of their safety policies. These instructions should set out their responsibilities to ensure safe practices in the workplace and be made available to staff.
12. Managers should ensure that contractors are on the approved contractors list and have suitable competence to work at height.
13. Managers should monitor contractors when working at height using the method of work statement supplied.
14. If work at height is contracted by Property Services a copy of the safe method of work will be provided to the premises Manager or deputy before the commencement of the work.
15. Managers must ensure that all equipment for work at height is appropriately inspected.
16. Managers should contact the Health and Safety Assistance section if they have concerns regarding contractors working at height on council property.
17. Health and Safety Assistance section will monitor compliance to the working at height policy during audits.

EMPLOYEES DUTIES

1. All staff shall report accidents, injuries and incidents to their line manager.
2. Staff will ensure that an entry is made in the workplace accident book (B1510) immediately after the incident and that part of the accident report form 2.02a is completed and handed to their line manager.
3. Employees are required to use equipment provided for them in accordance with instruction and training given. (unless you think that would be unsafe, in which case you should seek further instruction before continuing, or contact the health and Safety Assistance section tel: 814790)
4. All employees must comply with any advice, procedures or systems introduced in order to reduce or eliminate risks identified as part of the assessment and to avoid putting themselves at risk.
5. Employees should contact the Health and Safety Assistance section for advice if they have concerns regarding contractors or others working at height on council property.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

1. Managers will ensure that those employees delegated the task of undertaking assessments are competent and have received adequate training.
2. Managers will ensure that staff required to work at height are adequately trained during initial induction on the general dangers and during specialist training sessions on specific use of equipment. Managers will ensure that all staff have sufficient skill and knowledge to minimise injury, providing training where identified as a control measure and refresher training commensurate with the level of risk.
3. Managers are responsible for assessing the health and safety training needs of staff in relation to working at height.