

Fall Protection Introduction

Handout

Falls from elevations are the leading cause of death in general industry workplaces. They can happen in all occupations and in a variety of work settings—from the employee washing windows 40 feet from the ground to the stock clerk retrieving goods from a shelf using a ladder. Thankfully, these types of falls can be prevented by using proper fall protection.

What is fall protection?

Fall protection is any equipment, device, or system that prevents a worker from falling from an elevation or mitigates the effect of such a fall.

When is fall protection required?

Your employer must provide you with fall protection if you are assigned a job that exposes you to a fall hazard four feet or more above a lower level. Fall protection must also be provided regardless of height in certain situations, such as working above dangerous equipment.

What are the different types of fall protection?

The types of fall protection you may use include:

- Covers,
- Designated areas,
- Guardrails,
- Handrails and stair rails,
- Personal fall protection,
- Ladder safety systems, and
- Safety nets.

If you use one of these types of fall protection systems, you must be trained.

Training

Your employer must provide training, taught by a qualified person, any time you could be exposed to fall hazards. The training must include information on how to:

- Recognize fall hazards in your work area,
- Minimize these hazards, and
- Correctly install, setup, inspect, operate/use, maintain, disassemble, and/or store the systems and equipment provided to you for fall protection.

Always use all fall protection systems and equipment your employer provides, it could save your life.

