

# Prevention of Falls Policy & Procedure

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## 1. Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

The Geelong College is a Child Safe School. We have a zero-tolerance stance on child abuse and are committed to the protection of all children from all forms of abuse. The Geelong College recognises that in order to achieve a child safe environment at the College which meets students' intellectual, physical, social, emotional and moral needs, students need to be involved in the creation and maintenance of such an environment.

We are committed to taking a preventative and proactive approach to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe; they are empowered to use their voices when decisions are being made that affect their safety. We are also committed to providing simple and accessible processes to assist all children to identify and communicate when they do not feel safe. Particularly, this includes those who are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, from culturally diverse backgrounds and those with a disability.

We are clear about our behavioural expectations of every person in our community and are committed to having a shared understanding of and responsibility for child safety. All staff are expected to uphold a culture that protects children from all forms of harm.

## 2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy and Procedure is to ensure that all work carried out off ground level is performed in a manner safe to the operator and without placing at risk the health and safety of others. This includes the risks associated with the selection and condition of appropriate equipment to perform the task as well as the use, transport, storage and maintenance of the plant and equipment.

Under the Falls Prevention Regulations, 2004, The Geelong College is required to identify, assess and control the risks associated with the access to operations carried out in designated height safety areas. This procedure establishes the manner in which The Geelong College meets its legislative obligations in relation to Falls Prevention

*Work performed off the ground includes any task that requires or should require the use of plant and equipment for access.*

This policy and procedure cover equipment including portable ladders, steps, ladders which form part of a structure, elevated work platforms and scaffolding.

## 3. Scope

Employees, Contractors, Volunteers and Visitors.

## 4. Implementation

### 4.1 Policy

Where persons at The Geelong College are required to carry out work off ground level, they will be provided with and/or will use appropriate equipment to perform the task.

It is the responsibility of the line managers in all areas to ensure that employees are supplied with the appropriate plant and equipment needed to perform their tasks in a safe manner and without risk to themselves or other persons.

Line managers are required to ensure that employees use the plant and equipment supplied in line with the correct procedures, guidelines or work instructions.

Line managers engaging contractors are responsible for ensuring that the contractor is qualified to use and uses the appropriate plant and equipment to carry out the task in a safe manner.

Where employees have been supplied with the appropriate plant and equipment and trained in its correct use, they are required to follow the training and procedures, guidelines and work instructions.

Job Safety Analysis forms are to be used for all tasks requiring work above ground, or near a void, hole or pit.

#### 4.2 Risk Assessment

The Risk & Compliance Officer and Property Manager shall ensure that a risk assessment is performed for each designated working at heights area.

### 5. Training

All Employees, Contractors, Volunteers and Visitors involved in working at heights must:

- a. Be trained in the Prevention of Falls procedure
- b. If using purchased or hire plant and equipment, be trained in its correct use
- c. If the plant and equipment require specific qualification, certification or licences, to acquire them
- d. The Risk and Compliance Officer along with the Line Manager is responsible for keeping records of training or qualifications of Employees, Contractors, Volunteers and Visitors.

### 6. Responsibilities

#### 6.1 Management

- a. Must control the risks of falls from any height
- b. Provide employees with adequate resources to safely work at height
- c. Ensure that all employees who do work at heights are aware of the regulations

#### 6.2 Employees, Contractors, Volunteers and Visitors

- a. Have a duty to take reasonable care of their own and others safety
- b. Must work cooperatively with their employer to ensure that all work is carried out in the safest possible way

### 7. Controls

#### 7.1 Victorian Legislative Framework

References:

- a. Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- b. Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017 – Part 3.3 Prevention of Falls
- c. AS/NZS – 1891 Industrial Fall-Arrest Systems and Devices 01:2007 Incorporating Amendment Nos 1& 2
- d. Prevention of falls in general construction 2008
- e. Victorian Workcover Compliance Code
- f. Victoria Workcover Code of Practice:
  - i. No. 28 Prevention of Falls in General Construction Edition 1 Oct 2018
  - ii. No.29 2004-Prevention of Falls in Housing Construction (p.7)

#### 7.2 The Geelong College Risk Management Program

### 8. Definitions

Where Employees, Contractors, Volunteers or Visitors work at a height where there is a risk of a fall that could result in injury or death, workers **must** be adequately protected.

Australian Standard AS/NZAS – 1891.4:2009 and State Government Regulations require that any worker who works at a height above 2.0m must be protected.

Working at Height: This is any height above 2 meters.

Unprotected edge: An unprotected edge is any edge of any surface from which there is a horizontal gap, void or space of more than 300mm and which is not fitted with a passive fall prevention device.

Passive Fall Protection: Elevated work Platform, Scaffolding or guard railing

Work Positioning System: Industrial rope access system or travel restraint

Fall Arrest System: Industrial safety net, catch platform or safety harness system

Fixed or portable ladder: A secured permanent ladder or a portable ladder which has been tied at top and bottom

Administrative Control: Training, height awareness etc.

Authorised Person: A competently trained person who has the responsibility for raising, authorising, reviewing and closing off permits.

## 9. Procedure

1. All work conducted at heights shall be carried out in accordance with the requirements contained in the Falls Prevention Regulations 2007
2. All working on roof tasks are identified by the WHS representative, management and employees
  - a. Ensure that all machines and areas are capable of supporting workers, materials and loads
  - b. Ensure that there is protection at perimeters, around open penetrations to prevent persons from falling
  - c. Ensure that all areas have even and readily negotiable surfaces and gradients
  - d. Ensure that all areas provide safe means of access and egress

Under the Hazard Identification Risk Assessment and Control Program, The College will identify all systems of work that have a 'fall hazard' and ensure that before the task is performed an assessment to assist in the implementation of the necessary control/s to prevent falling is carried out on:

Employees, Contractors, Volunteers and Visitors who are to carry out the work are to be consulted. All hazards associated with the work must be identified. Records must be maintained accurately, and all identified risks must be eliminated or reduced so far as is practicable.

## 10 Emergency

Any control program implemented must include **Emergency Procedures** that provide for:

- a. Rescue of an employee in the event of a fall
- b. Provision of first aid to an employee who has fallen
- c. Elimination of any risk associated with a non-fall risk (electric shock, crushing and strain or sprain), or if it is not eliminated is reduced so far as is practicable

## 11. Rescue and First Aid

The rescue plan shall be outlined in the risk assessment and shall be developed considering the requirements of shifts and tasks at hand.

Should the need for rescue from a designated height safety area arise, the following shall apply:-

- a. The observer shall immediately initiate the rescue plan
- b. The control process must be carried out in accordance with the hierarchy of control as set out below:
  - i. Work to be carried out on the ground or on a solid construction

*If not practicable*

- ii. Install temporary work platform, roof safety mesh or guard railing
- iii. Use a work positioning system, elevated work platform or boom lift

*When plant and equipment is used to control risk of fall, it must be designed and constructed for the task to be conducted and for the work environment.*

- iv. Person/s at risk to wear a safety harness attached to a suitable fixture that will physically restrain them thus preventing a fall.

*If not practicable*

Fixed or portable ladder used in accordance with the following:

- a. No ladder with load rating less than 120kg shall be in the workplace
- b. Ladder must be Australian Standard Compliant
- c. Inspected regularly and before each use to ensure safe
- d. Ladders must be appropriate for the task
- e. Ladders must be set in a correct manner
- f. Ladders must be properly maintained
- g. Surface where used must be stable and solid
- h. Must be set up to prevent slipping
- i. Must not be used as part of a construction of scaffold, trestle ladder scaffold or ladder bracket scaffold

## **12. Risk Assessment**

As far as practicable the assessment shall be in writing and take into account at least the following:

- a. The nature of the designated height safety area
- b. The work required to be done, including whether it is necessary to access the designated height safety area
- c. The range of methods by which the work can be done
- d. The hazards involved and associated risks including
  - i. Manual Handling
  - ii. Falls
  - iii. Trips and slips
- e. The actual method selected, and plant proposed; after going through the correct process.
- f. Emergency and rescue procedures and plans
- g. Any plant or equipment being inspected, tested, maintained, repaired or cleaned
- h. Fragile or potentially unstable surface
- i. A process that requires use of the equipment to gain access to an elevated level or to carry out a task at an elevated level
- j. A sloping or slippery surface on which it is difficult to maintain balance
- k. Work areas in close proximity to an unprotected edge (within 2 metres)
- l. In close proximity to a hole, shaft, pit wide enough for a person to fall in

The risk assessment must be specific to each task and a safe work method procedure and written work instructions must be recorded. The assessment shall be revised whenever there is evidence to indicate that it is no longer valid. Where there are multiple, similar designated height safety areas where work is performed, and where it is not practicable to undertake a separate risk assessment for each of these similar designated height safety areas, a generic risk assessment may be appropriate.

The generic risk assessment shall identify any differences in the condition or location of the designated height safety area, or the work performed in it, which could result in a change to the risk factors.

## **13. General Requirements**

The following procedures shall be addressed in a risk assessment and performed prior to accessing a designated height safety area;-

- a. Isolation (electrical, mechanical, process)
- b. Provision of the appropriated personal protective equipment
- c. Provision of the appropriated equipment (e.g. scissor lift)

#### **14. Personal Protective equipment**

Appropriate personal protective equipment must be worn as identified by the particular tasks safe operating procedure.

Note: All other higher order controls as outlined in the fall's prevention hierarchy of controls, must be examined before fall arrest equipment (safety Harness) is used.

Safety Harness - A Safety Harness should be worn;-

- a. A safety harness has been identified by the risk assessment as a control measure
- b. There is a hazard of falling during ascent or descent, or of falling from the working level

It is not always desirable to specify the use of a Safety Harness, as this may be impracticable. When considering specifying the wearing of such equipment, care should be exercised to ensure that the operator has had suitable instruction in the use of such equipment and rescue plans are in place to remove the operator from the harness as soon as is possible in the event of a fall.

#### **15. Employer's duties**

The Employer must not cause, permit or instruct a person or persons to do any of the following whilst using a ladder in the workplace:

- a. Face away from the ladder while climbing or carrying out work on the ladder
- b. Stand on a rung closer than 900mm to the top of a single extension portable ladder
- c. Stand a tread higher than the third tread below the top plate of a step ladder
- d. Carry out work involving restricted vision, hot work or welding or cutting flame
- e. Carry equipment while on a ladder such that would imperil their stability and safety
- f. Ensure that a pole strap is used if equipment or tools require two hands

OR

A documented procedure is followed by the person's at risk.

#### **16. Employee, Contractor, Volunteer and Visitor Responsibilities**

To carry out tasks in accordance with information, instruction and training received.

To use control measures put in place or provided by the employer in accordance with that information, instruction and training.

#### **17. Training:**

All employees, contractors and others involved in working at heights must:

- a. Be trained in this procedure
- b. If using purchased or hire plant and equipment, be trained in its correct use
- c. If the plant and equipment require specific qualification, certification or licences, to acquire them

The Business Manager is responsible for keeping records of training or qualifications of employees. The Line Manager responsible for the Contractor must maintain a record of that contractor's licenses and/or qualifications.

#### **18. Can the tasks be moved to ground level?**

If the answer is no, implement the following from the top:

- a. A solid construction
- b. A temporary work platform

- c. Use fall protection device
- d. Put in place fall injury prevention system to reduce the severity of injury
  - e. Use a fixed or portable ladder
  - f. Use administrative controls
  - g. Use fixed or portable ladder plus administrative controls

## **19. Review**

This policy is to be reviewed every three years by the WH&S Committee. Any changes to health and safety legislation will generate an immediate review.

## **20. Related Documents:**

[Volunteer management Policy](#)

[Contractor Management Handbook](#)

[Maintenance Risk Management Plan](#)

[Height Safety Equipment Register](#)