

# COOS COUNTY FALL PROTECTION POLICY

This policy outlines safe work practices for employees who perform tasks at heights or in areas where a fall hazard exists. It applies to work done on stairways, ladders, roofs, and elevated platforms, and to any work performed 4 feet (for general industry work) or more above the ground or above hazardous equipment where workers must stay tied off at all times. 70% of falls occur between 3-10 feet.

It is essential that all employees working where falls can occur receive proper training in recognizing fall hazards and understand safe procedures to minimize incidents. The County Safety Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that appropriate fall protection training is assigned and completed, responding to employee concerns, maintaining training records, and ensuring that departments maintain equipment records.

## **Fall protection is required when working:**

- Over or adjacent to dangerous equipment
- Around holes, pits, or skylights
- On formwork or reinforcing steel
- Near wall openings or hoisting areas
- At excavations that are not visible
- At leading edges, top plates, during wall/truss/roofing/sheathing operations
- On established floors, mezzanines, balconies, walkways, ramps, or runways
- During offloading or trucking operations
- Working on flat or sloped roofs
- Working on equipment or conveyors at the crushing site
- Working on any articulating lift

No materials (except masonry and mortar), shall be stored within four feet of working edges.

Excess debris shall be removed regularly to keep work areas clear.

During roofing work, materials and equipment shall be stored at least six feet from the roof edge, unless guardrails with toe boards are in place.

If possible, tools should be equipped with lanyards to prevent them from falling to lower levels.

Safe work areas should be established below any work being performed at height to keep co-workers and public safe. Use cones and caution tape to keep areas clear.

1. Before work begins, analyze the work area and identify fall hazards at the work location and the access path.
2. Identify hazards created by work activities and hazards posed by falling objects.
3. Identify means of controlling hazards.
4. Verify employees (and volunteers) have the requisite skills, training and equipment to comply with the plan.

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions apply:

**Competent Person:** An individual who is capable of identifying existing and predictable fall hazards in the workplace and who has the authority to take prompt corrective action to eliminate such hazards, even stopping the work if necessary.

**Qualified Person:** An individual who, by possession of a recognized degree, certificate, or professional standing, or by extensive knowledge, training, and experience, has successfully demonstrated the ability to solve or resolve problems related to fall protection systems, equipment, or procedures.

**Authorized Person:** An employee who has been approved or assigned by the employer to perform specific duties or to be present in a specific work area, and who has received the necessary training to recognize and minimize fall hazards associated with those duties.

Please view <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z62qFhfT3a4>

OSHA Hazards – Fall Protection. 11 minutes. Discusses anchor points, lanyards and body harnesses.

## ANCHOR POINTS AND EQUIPMENT

- Anchor points must support 5000 lbs. per employee (per OSHA) and cannot be shared.
- A full harness is required; body belts are not permitted.
- D-ring must be placed between the shoulder blades on the workers back.
- Connecting devices must comply with manufacturer's requirements. These items could include ropes, self-retracting lifelines, rip stitch lanyards, bungee lanyards or other approved devices depending on the set up required for work.
- Free climbing is not allowed under any circumstances.

These are examples of anchor points and qualified rigging systems. Each system will be different based on the type of work and set up required for the job.



EXAMPLE OF COMPOSITE SLOPE ANCHOR



**EXAMPLE OF METAL ROOF LIFELINE**

**EXAMPLE OF I-BEAM ANCHOR**



## **PERSONAL FALL ARREST SYSTEM**

### **Harness Guidelines:**

Must be properly sized for the wearer.

D-ring must be located at the center of the back near shoulder level.

Connecting device must be clipped into the D-ring

Leg straps should be snug but not tight. Test by sliding your hand under the straps using four flat fingers and adjust slack at the legs, adjust straps as high as comfortably possible.

Ensure the chest strap is across the breastbone and tight.

Empty pockets completely (no keys or change).

Suspension trauma is a potentially life-threatening condition that can occur when a person is left hanging in a fall protection harness. A harness restricts blood-flow in the body when a person is suspended. Remember the six-minute rescue rule and ensure the worker (team) has a rescue in plan in place before work begins. Remember, suspension trauma can occur in as little as six minutes.

Connection Devices: Use snap hooks or pelican hooks, and do not snap hooks together, ever.



**Examples of a properly worn harness. These are positioning harnesses with extra D-rings for positioning. When using personal fall arrest systems, the only D-ring that is allowed is the one between the shoulder blades on the back**

- Use only rip-stitch or shock-absorbing lanyards (e.g., 6' bungee type with 3.5' deployment).
- A 6' fall can generate up to 4,200 lbs. of force on the body.
- Self-retracting lifelines are ideal for vertical applications and can connect directly to anchor points.
- Inspect all equipment before every use: check for fraying, missing stitches, spring action of snap hooks, and ensure inspection labels are present. Do not use any equipment that does not pass inspection.

## **RESCUE PLAN**

Workers suspended in a fall arrest system are at immediate risk of suspension trauma, oxygen deprivation, and circulatory complications. Time is critical - unconsciousness can occur within minutes, and death may follow if rescue is delayed. Rescue plans are required to be in place before any work begins. A rescue plan should take into consideration the six-minute rule for suspension trauma.

### **Rescue Priorities**

1. Immediate Assessment: Determine if the fallen worker is responsive and if the scene is safe for rescue.
2. On-Site Rescue First: Perform rescue using trained personnel and available equipment whenever possible.
3. Emergency Services: Call 911 simultaneously or if on-site rescue is not feasible or safe.

### **Rescue equipment that should be available onsite includes:**

- Portable ladders or scaffold systems
- Telescoping rescue poles
- Rescue ropes and straps
- Rescue wrench (for SRLs or anchors)

- Mechanical advantage system (e.g., tripod, winch, rope grab)
- First aid kit (including trauma supplies)

**Emergency Readiness:**

- Rescue equipment should be staged at work site for immediate deployment.
- Cell phones must be readily available to contact emergency responders.

**Watch:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qC4aoCrrG4E>

OSHA Hazards – How to rescue a fallen worker. 11 minutes. Discusses what to do and different rescue systems.

All employees who have responsibilities under this program will be trained to fulfill those responsibilities. Employees shall receive training as soon after employment as possible and before they work in areas where fall hazards exist.

# LADDER SAFETY

Each year, 130,000 emergency room visits result from ladder-related falls.

## Causes:

- Using the wrong ladder type or choosing the wrong ladder for the job
- Improper setup
- Sudden ladder shifts or ladder shifting due to unstable set up conditions or lack of tie off
- Overreaching or losing balance
- External impacts (bumped by vehicles or other people) or lack of creating a safe work zone and experiencing an external impact (bumped by vehicles or other people)

## Ladder Types

- Non-self-supporting (e.g., extension ladders)
- Self-supporting (e.g., step ladders)
- Combination ladders

## Extension Ladder Sizing

- Should be 7–10 feet longer than the vertical distance.
- Extension ladder must extend at least 3' over the step-off point or roofline to create stability and a hand-hold for worker.
- Avoid standing on rungs that extend past the contact point.

## Step Ladder Use

- Should not exceed 20 feet.
- Never stand on the top cap or the step below the top step. Ladders were not designed to support or hold weight on these steps and it will destabilize the ladder.
- Must have operational locking arms or spreader bars.
- Must be set up on flat and stable surfaces only.
- When determining the height of the ladder needed, add four feet to the length of the ladder. This calculation is based on standing two steps down on the ladder.

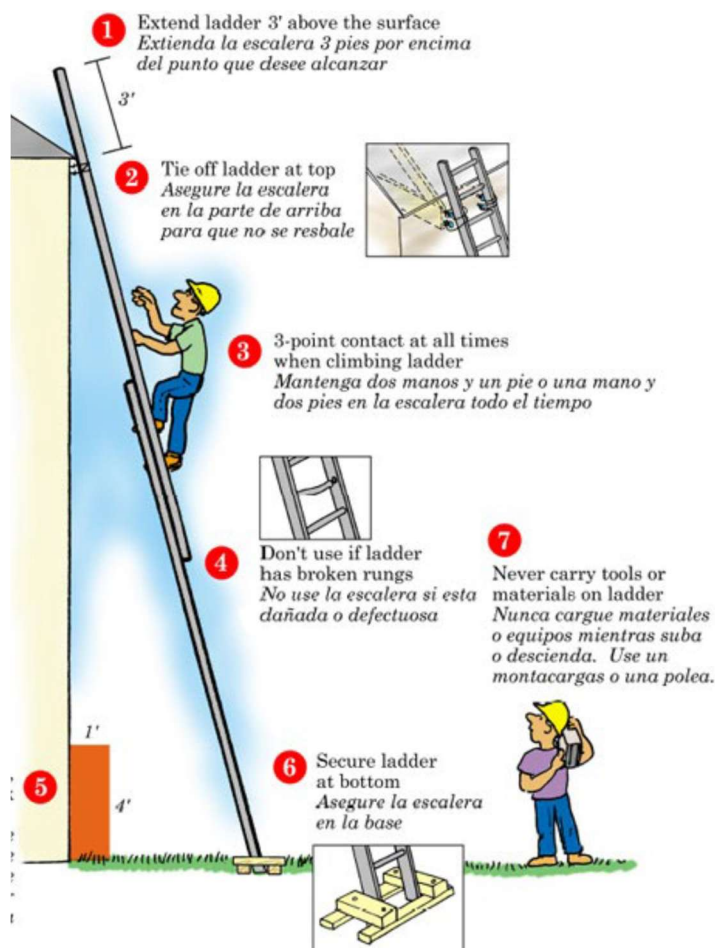
## Ladder Safety Best Practices

- Wear non-slip shoes, free of mud or debris.
- Always face the ladder and maintain three points of contact.
- Use three-points of contact. Use both hands to climb; work with one hand when possible.
- When using a step ladder, use a top-cap tool holder to store tools.
- Use a hoist or hand line for heavier loads - a five-gallon bucket and rope work well.
- Be aware of overhead electrical wires and use non-conductive ladders (fiberglass).
- Use cones/barriers to create a safe work zone and protect the ladder's base.
- Maintain a proper 4:1 angle: One foot out for every four feet of height. Test: toes touching base, arms outstretched - fingertips should touch a rung at shoulder height.

## Ladder Safety Tools and Resources

Employees are encouraged to use the [NIOSH Ladder Safety App](#) as an additional safety resource. This free app, developed by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), provides interactive tools, safety checklists, and reference materials to support proper ladder use. The app includes features such as visual and audio signals to help users set the correct ladder angle, identify potential hazards, and review safe work practices.

All employees who regularly use ladders are encouraged to download and utilize this app to enhance their understanding of ladder safety and help prevent falls.



This is an example of how to properly set up an extension ladder and should go in the extension ladder information.

# Step Ladder Set-up

- Set all 4 feet on firm, level surface
- Spreader bars extended and locked
- Orientation, place ladder so you can face the ladder while climbing and working
- Stay centered on ladder don't lean to one side or the other



Manufacturer's Duty rating (remember to factor in the weight of any tools)

1. Special duty (IAA) 375 lb.
2. Extra Heavy Duty (I-A) 300 lb.
3. Heavy Duty (I) 250 lb.
4. Medium Duty (II) 225 lb.
5. Light Duty (III) 200 lb.