



LADDERS

Scope and Applicability Statement

This document provides general safety procedures and regulatory guidance for employers and workers in accordance with U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards under 29 CFR 1910 and 29 CFR 1926. These procedures apply to all workplaces where they are implemented as part of a comprehensive safety program.

Customization and Compliance Statement

Employers are responsible for ensuring compliance with all applicable local, state, and federal safety regulations. Workers must adhere to established safety protocols to prevent workplace injuries and illnesses.



Purpose

The purpose of this program is to establish minimum requirements for the construction, care, and use of ladders in the workplace.

Scope

This program applies to all employees who use ladders as part of their job duties. Contractors working on-site must follow their own written ladder safety procedures or adopt this procedure.

Definitions

- **Ladder:** A device consisting of side rails joined at regular intervals by steps, rungs, or cleats, used for ascending or descending.
- **Stepladder:** A self-supporting, nonadjustable ladder with flat steps and a hinged back.
- **Single Ladder:** A non-self-supporting, nonadjustable ladder consisting of only one section.
- **Extension Ladder:** A non-self-supporting ladder adjustable in length, consisting of two or more sections.
- **Fixed Ladder:** A ladder permanently attached to a structure or equipment.
- **Cage:** A protective enclosure attached to the side rails of a fixed ladder to prevent falls.

Responsibilities

Managers and Supervisors:

- Ensure employees are trained in ladder use and inspection.
- Remove defective ladders from service and arrange for repair or disposal.

Employees:

- Inspect ladders before each use and report defects.
- Use ladders properly and follow all safety requirements.

Procedures

Inspection and Maintenance

- Ladders must be inspected before each use and after any incident that may affect their integrity.
- Ladders with broken or missing rungs, cleats, or steps must be marked "Do Not Use" and removed from service.
- If a ladder is tipped over, it must be inspected for damage before reuse.
- Wooden ladders must not be painted, as this can hide defects.

Safe Ladder Use

- Ladders must be used only for their intended purpose.



- Ladders must be secured at the top or held by another person at the base.
- Ladders must be placed on a stable, level surface.
- Extension ladders must be placed at a 4:1 incline (one foot of horizontal distance for every four feet of vertical height).
- Ladders must not be placed in front of doors unless the door is blocked, locked, or guarded.
- Barricades must be used when ladders are in high-traffic areas.
- The top two rungs of a ladder must not be used for standing.
- Employees must maintain three points of contact when climbing ladders.
- Tools and equipment must be carried on a belt or lifted using a hoist.
- Ladders must not be moved while occupied.

Portable Ladders

- Stepladders must not exceed 20 feet in height.
- Single ladders must not exceed 30 feet.
- Extension ladders must not exceed 60 feet.
- Ladders must be kept at least 10 feet from power lines.
- Ladders must not be overloaded beyond the manufacturer's rated capacity.

Fixed Ladders

- Fixed ladders must be constructed to withstand at least 200 pounds of force.
- Metal rungs must be at least ¾ inches in diameter; wooden rungs must be at least 1 1/8 inches.
- Rung spacing must not exceed 12 inches and must be uniform throughout the ladder.
- Rungs must be at least 16 inches wide.
- A minimum clearance of 7 inches must be maintained between rungs and the structure behind them.

Fall Protection for Fixed Ladders

- Fall protection is required for all fixed ladders over 6 feet in height.
- Cages must be installed on fixed ladders over 20 feet.
- Cages must begin between 7 and 8 feet above the walking surface.
- Cages must provide a minimum clear width of 15 inches.
- Climbing fall restraint systems may be used instead of cages.