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Policy Type [University](#)

Contact Office [Environmental Health and Safety](#)

Oversight Executive

Vice President for Research

Applies To Academic Division, the Medical Center, and the College at Wise.

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Reason for Policy

To protect faculty, staff, and students from the risks of injuries or fatality due to falls when working at heights of four feet or greater.

Definition of Terms

Fall Arrest Equipment

Description

The components of Fall Arrest Equipment include a full body harness, shock absorbing lanyard or self-retractable lifeline and locking snap hooks, all of which must meet Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) criteria. Anchor points must be approved for a static load of 5000 pounds or engineered to meet a 2:1 safety factor.

Fall Prevention

Description A structural design to limit a fall to the same level (e.g., guardrails, aerial lifts with work platforms).

Fall Protection System

Description

A system designed to protect personnel from the risk of falls when working at heights of four feet or greater.

Policy Statement

Departments who assign work activities to their faculty, staff, or student members that are four feet or more above a lower level must use an appropriate Fall Protection System. This includes Aerial Lifts, Self-Powered Platforms, Suspended and Supported Scaffolds, or Fall Arrest Equipment.

Assistance is available from the Office of Environmental Health & Safety to facilitate fall hazard analysis, recommend Fall Protection System options and coordinate personnel training on Fall Arrest Equipment.

I. Departmental Responsibility:

1. Departmental management is responsible for providing a safe workplace and working conditions for their faculty, staff, and students. Departments must review work locations and activities to identify if there are any existing or potential fall hazards. Departments must also identify personnel that are exposed to fall hazards. Common UVA work activities to be evaluated include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Roof maintenance and repairs (e.g., roof patching, repairing slates, repairing roof deck, pointing up chimneys, cleaning gutters, painting metal roofs).
 - b. Roof renovations (e.g., replacing roof materials, roof deck and gutters).
 - c. Building maintenance (e.g., window cleaning, painting).
 - d. Building heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems (e.g., access for installation, repairs, preventative maintenance and changing filters).
 - e. Lighting (e.g., auditoriums, stairwells, pools, stadium lights).
 - f. Scoreboards.
 - g. Baghouses.
 - h. Construction and renovations.
 - i. Material storage, high lift reach trucks.
 - j. Production lighting and personnel for rigging (e.g., theaters).
 - k. Tree climbing.
 - l. Utilities.
2. Departmental management must provide resources for personnel training and procurement of fall arrest equipment or other fall protection system necessary for working safely at elevated heights. Refer to [Procedure 14-2](#) for further information on Design and Installation Guidelines for Anchor Points.
3. Departmental management must train faculty, staff, or student members to recognize fall hazards specific to their work location or assigned activities. Personnel must follow Fall Protection Safety Procedures established by the department to protect them from the risks of falls at elevated heights. Personnel who are assigned Fall Arrest Equipment must follow the equipment manufacturer's instructions in the proper use, care, and inspection of their equipment. Personnel must also understand the equipment's limitations and when to remove the equipment from service. Refer to [Procedure 14-2](#) for further information on Fall Arrest Equipment.

II. Design Specifications and Review:

Consideration and review of Fall Protection solutions need to be an integral part of the overall design process of UVA buildings including building systems (refer to Facilities Management Facility Design

Guidelines (page 60), Section GR 5.5 Building Systems Access and Equipment). The review process for new construction and major renovations of UVA buildings must include consultation with the appropriate trade areas or other affected personnel. The purpose of this consultation is to:

1. Identify building maintenance activities or other types of activities that will need to be performed throughout the “life” of the building or building system that will occur at elevated heights and expose personnel to fall hazards.
2. Design appropriate Fall Protection Systems to the extent feasible that will prevent any occurrence of falls. Refer to [Procedure 14-2](#) for further information on design, installation, and load test requirements for permanent fall protection anchors. In addition, refer to Facilities Management [Services Guide \(Section 2\) - Facilities Responsibilities and Building/Project Permits \(page 5\)](#).
 - (Excerpt) “The University Department of Facilities Management is responsible for the planning, construction, renovation, maintenance, repair, and operation of buildings, structures, grounds, and utility systems for all components of the University of Virginia. All University departments are subject to the University of Virginia Design and Construction Guidelines in the planning, construction, and renovation of University owned facilities. All construction, renovation, or alterations to University facilities must meet conformance to applicable codes and regulations and to University standards.”

III. Compliance with Policy:

Failure to comply with the requirements of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination or expulsion in accordance with relevant University policies.

Questions about this policy should be directed to [Environmental Health and Safety](#).

Procedures

Procedure [14-2](#), Fall Protection Procedures.

Related Information

Facilities Management - [Services Guide \(Section 2\) - Facilities Responsibilities and Building/Project Permits](#).

OSHA Code of Federal Regulations 1926.501-.503 – Construction Fall Protection Standard.

OSHA Code of Federal Regulations 1910.23 – Guarding Floor and Wall Openings and Holes.

OSHA Proposed Rule 1910 – Walking-Working Surfaces, *Federal Register*, May 24, 2010.

Virginia Administrative Code 16 VAC 25-60-10; Part III Occupational Safety & Health Standards – section 120 General Industry Standards 21Sept06.

Major Category [Safety, Security and Environmental Quality](#)

Next Scheduled Review Saturday, March 26, 2011

Revision History

Added Compliance section 7/21/21; Updated 8/30/11, 8/22/08. Revised 3/26/08.

Supersedes Policy Text

Fall Protection XIV.H.1.

Approved By Policy Review Committee

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