Working at Heights (Cleaning & Soft FM)

Cleaning often involves low-level height work, such as step ladders, stools, or reaching high areas. Falls from even one metre can cause serious injury.

Stability, grip, and safe movement make the difference between a close call and a serious incident.

Primary Risks & Hazards to Spot



- **Wet or slippery floors during cleaning**
- **Poor visibility or cluttered areas**



- **Damaged or unsecured platform or podium ladders**
- **Not an approved platform or podium ladder or EWP**
- **Using furniture or bins to reach height**



- **Overreaching or unstable footing**
- **Carrying loads while climbing**

Social Infrastructure & Citizen Services

Where might this happen in our work environment?



Bathrooms and amenities: cleaning high mirrors, wall tiles or vents may involve platform or podium ladders and reaching above shoulder height.



Rooms and wards: dusting cupboard tops, upper ledges or window frames may involve height work around beds and equipment.



Linen and supply stores: reaching upper shelves for linen or cleaning supplies may involve step ladders and carrying loads.

Where else?

Where have you seen working at height hazards in your work area?

What can we check to protect?

1 Is the ladder safe to use?
Use approved platform or podium ladders, never furniture. Inspect steps and anti-slip feet before use. Report damaged ladders immediately.

2 Is the work area ready?
Keep it dry and clear of trip hazards. Stop and reassess if the task is beyond your reach.

3 Can we climb safely?
Face the ladder and maintain 3 points of contact. Never carry heavy items while climbing. Pass items or use an equipment lift.

What will you do today to stop a potential working at height incident from happening?

Social Infrastructure & Citizen Services

Your safety comes first

The SI&CS Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team is here to help.

You don’t have to work through a safety concern alone.

Ask for support when:

You’re unsure

We can help you understand a hazard and discuss a safer way to work.

Something happens

We can help with hazard, incident and near-miss reporting and next steps.

You need support

We can work with you and your supervisor or manager to address health, safety and wellbeing concerns.

Do you know who is your HSW Business Partner?

Stop if the work is unsafe

Pause the task and move to a safe place. Speak up if something feels unsafe or you are unsure.

Notify your supervisor or manager

Report hazards, incidents and near misses promptly, even if no one is hurt. Explain what happened, where it is and who may be at risk.

Do not continue unsafe work

Keep the task stopped until the risk is addressed and your supervisor or manager confirms a safe way forward. Ask for help if you are unsure.