



**Somerset
Council**

HS25 Slips and Trips (Same Level Falls) Policy.

Organisation	Somerset Council
Title	HS25 Slips and Trips (Same Level Falls) Policy.
Author	Jo Coles
Owner	The Corporate Health and Safety Unit
Protective Marking	Official – Unclassified
Primary Legislation	Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992

Policy on a Page

Somerset Council (SC) will ensure through this policy document that incidents from Slips and trips are reduced to as low as reasonably practicable.

The Council will provide appropriate arrangements for the provision and management of walkways, stairs, and pathways under its control. These measures will ensure that, ‘as far as reasonably practical’, all pedestrianised areas/access/egress routes etc, that the council is responsible for are maintained in a safe condition for the benefit and safety of staff & visitors.

Footwear needs to be sensible and suitable for the work activities and the working environment. High, fine heels, open toe shoes and shoes which give little support are unlikely to be appropriate.

Managers will conduct risk assessments for activities undertaken by their service which may highlight the need for the provision of specific protective footwear, provided to employees and volunteers as Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Further information pertaining to the assessment and provision of PPE can be found in Somerset Council’s HS013 Personal Protective Equipment Policy ([link required prior to publishing](#)).

This document and associated guidance will be available to: **All Elected Members, Somerset Council Staff, and Volunteers.**

Key Messages

- Somerset Council (SC) aims to conduct its activities so that no one suffers harm whilst working in or moving around premises and other work environments which are the responsibility of the Council.
- Any reference to falls in this policy applies to falls from the same level. For further guidance on falls from one level to another visit SC HS27 Working Safely at Height Policy ([link required prior to publishing](#)).
- Slips, trips and falls to members of public on the Highway Network are not applicable to this policy. Defects pertaining to Somerset Council’s Highway Network can be reported [here](#).

This “policy on a page” is a summary of the detailed policy and guidance documents, please ensure you read, understand, and comply with the arrangements stated.

Responsibilities

Somerset Council	Directors and Delegated Senior Managers
Premises Managers or those in control of premises	Strategic Asset Management
Managers	Employees
The Corporate Health and Safety Unit	Other Information and links

Somerset Council will:

- Ensure that, through design of its premises, its management of them, and supervision of staff, that workplace risks from slips and trips are reduced so far as is reasonably practicable.
- Where specific risks exist that cannot be controlled by other means, the Council will provide special footwear as Personal Protective Equipment and require that it is worn by employees and volunteers.
- Ensure that the surfaces of floors and traffic routes are suitable for the purposes for which they are used.
- Provide sufficient information for managers to recognise those situations giving rise to risk of slips and trips.

Directors and Delegated Senior Managers will:

- Ensure that managers and supervisors take reasonable steps to check the appropriateness of footwear of employees, control behaviour and activities in the areas for which they are responsible to ensure that slip and trip situations are avoided as far as possible.
- Ensure managers will be receptive to and act upon information regarding slip and trip hazards received from employees, visitors, service users and other members of the public.
- Monitor the frequency and nature of slips and trips incidents and near misses reported.

Premises Managers or those in control of premises will:

- Undertake a workplace risk assessment, which examines the potential for slips and trips in the different conditions likely to be encountered.

- Ensure walking surfaces are kept free from conditions, obstructions or holes, which may cause a person to trip or slip.
- Initiate a programme of planned preventative maintenance, allied to regular checks, to ensure that features provided to protect individuals from slips and trips do not wear out, e.g., slip-resistant floor coverings, floor markings and handrails.
- Cleaning regimes for access routes must be designed to minimise any need for people to walk on wet or contaminated floors, which offer a significantly enhanced risk, through time management or separation and signage.
- Ensure investigations into accidents and near misses are undertaken by the person with local responsibility.
- Monitor and review accident information to identify factors of commonality. For example, multiple accidents in a similar or the same location will suggest there is an underlying root cause that has not been identified.
- Follow the HSE '[causes and prevention](#)' guidance and associated resources when undertaking risk assessments and reviewing accident information.

Strategic Asset Management will:

- Ensure that in the case of new buildings and when modifying existing buildings, they are designed to minimise slipping and tripping risks as effectively as possible.
- Appoint competent designers to assist them in ensuring slipping, tripping and fall hazards are reduced as far as reasonably practicable.

Managers will:

- Remind employees to informally monitor work areas as they move through them, to report any hazard to an appropriate person and to take appropriate remedial action to protect themselves and others from injury.
- Identify through risk assessment procedures those situations where special footwear (including footwear with a high level of slip resistance and ankle support) is required as a control measure and providing this to employees as personal protective equipment.
- Provide employees with clear guidance on the standards of footwear they are expected to wear at work.

- Ensure that all incidents that occur are recorded and suitably investigated on the B-Safe incident reporting system.
- Provide relevant information at induction and other occasions on basic awareness to help them avoid creating or suffering from situations which may lead to slip and trip incidents.

Employees will:

- Come to work suitably attired, which includes footwear. Supervisors have the authority to turn away employees who come to work in inappropriate or unsafe footwear for the work environment or activities.
- Select suitable footwear for your workplace. High, fine heels, open toe shoes and shoes which give little support are unlikely to be appropriate. Note also that higher standards of footwear are required in food preparation areas.
- Take sensible precautions such as using the barrier mats provided to avoid bringing water, dirt, or mud into premises.
- Co-operate with systems put in place to ensure their own safety as well as that of others whilst at work.

The Corporate Health and Safety Unit will:

- Offer advice to managers regarding this policy.
- Maintain and communicate this policy.
- Review this policy at intervals not exceeding 3 years.
- Provide technical advice when required.
- Provide historical information on accidents to facilitate the identification of root causes.

Other Information and links.

- HS 004 Risk Assessment Policy (To be linked prior to publishing)
- HS 026 Manual Handling Policy (To be linked prior to publishing)
- HS 018 Investigating H&S Incidents (To be linked prior to publishing)
- [HSE Preventing slips and trips at work](#)
- [HSE Slips Assessment Tool](#)
- [Slips and trips: Hazard spotting checklist \(hse.gov.uk\)](#)

Governance Arrangements

Policy Compliance

If any employee is found to have breached this policy, they may be subject to Somerset Council's [disciplinary procedure](#).

Policy Governance

The following table identifies who within Somerset Council is Accountable, Responsible, Informed or Consulted with regards to this policy. The following definitions apply:

- **Responsible** – the person(s) responsible for developing and publishing the policy.
- **Accountable** – the person who has ultimate accountability and authority for the policy.
- **Consulted** – the person(s) or groups to be consulted prior to final policy implementation.
- **Informed** – the person(s) or groups to be informed after policy implementation.

Responsible	Corporate Health & Safety Unit
Accountable	Chief Executive
Consulted	LGR JNF Union Group, Health, Safety and Wellbeing Steering Group (HSWSG) and HR Committee
Informed	All members, employees, and volunteers

Review and Revision

This policy will be reviewed as it is deemed appropriate, for instance when there is a change in statutory requirements and/or HSE guidance is revised, but no less frequently than every 36 months. Policy review will be undertaken by rolling programme established by the CHSU and agreed by the Health, Safety, and Wellbeing Steering Group.

Version History

Revision Date	Author	Version	Description of Revision
June 2017	Graham Holmes	V1.0	Final Revision
October 2020	Daniel Thomas	V2.0	Full Review
	Jo Coles	V3.0	Scheduled Review

Document Notification

Approval	Name	Date
Corporate H&S Advisor		

Executive Director Strategy, Workforce, and Localities		
HR Committee		