

## Slips, Trips and Falls Policy

|                      |                   |                      |                  |
|----------------------|-------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| <b>Reviewed Date</b> |                   | <b>Number</b>        | HS0104           |
| <b>Revised Date</b>  | November 26, 2025 | <b>Approved Date</b> | January 12, 2005 |

### Introduction

The Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit is dedicated to keeping employees safe by preventing slips, trips, and falls. This policy outlines how both staff and the employer share responsibility for identifying hazards, reporting incidents, and maintaining a safe workplace. Following these guidelines helps reduce injuries and promotes a safer work environment for all.

### Purpose

The Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit and its employees share in the responsibility to prevent injury while on the job. The purpose of this policy is to educate staff on procedures and practices for preventing slips, trips and falls to prevent injuries from slips, trips and falls and promote workplace safety.

### Legislative Authority

This policy complies with the Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA), particularly Sections 25 and 28, which outline employer and worker duties to ensure workplace safety. Additionally, it aligns with Ontario Regulation 851 (Industrial Establishments) addressing workplace hazards.

- OHSA: <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90o01>
- Ontario Regulation 851: <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/900851>

### Policy Definitions and Interpretation

Slips, trips and falls are among the most frequent types of workplace incidents, and are a leading cause of injury and lost productivity.

In Ontario, falls on a level surface account for a significant portion of workplace injuries reported to the WSIB (Workplace Safety and Insurance Board). Strains and sprains are the most common injuries resulting from these incidents.

- **Slips:** Occur when there is a loss of traction on a walking surface, often due to wet or slippery conditions.
- **Trips:** Occur when the foot contacts an object or irregular surface causing loss of balance.
- **Falls:** Result from slips or trips on level surfaces or falls from heights.

Type of fall:

- **A level surface fall:** Most common; occur due to slips and trips.
- **A fall from a height:** More serious, less frequent but pose greater injury risk.

## ***Policy***

The Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit is committed to minimizing slips, trips, and falls through effective prevention strategies, education, and maintenance of safe workplace environments.

## ***Procedures***

### **Prevention of Falls Due to Slips and Trips**

High-risk areas:

- Most falls occur in winter parking lots when exiting vehicles.
- Extra caution is advised when transferring weight to the first foot outside the vehicle.

Footwear:

- Employees are encouraged to wear footwear appropriate for the weather, with slip-resistant soles, in snowy or icy conditions, such as those with chevron designs, or those that have a slip resistance snowflake rating. See [Rate My Treads](#)
- Avoid shoes with smooth leather soles that increase slip risk.
- Consider wearing traction aids during winter months .

Incident Reporting:

All slips, trips, and falls must be reported promptly.

1. **Hazards:** No slip/trip/fall but tripping hazard identified: Complete Potential or Existing Unsafe Workplace Condition Form HS0105 (F1)
2. **No injury:** Complete Near Miss Form HS0105 (F2)
3. **Injury:** Complete Employee Incident Report Form HS0105 (F3A)

Investigation:

Managers will investigate all reported incidents, reviewing factors such as footwear, surface conditions (slippery surfaces, spills on floors or stairs, obstacles), lighting, and attentiveness.

Use of Stairs:

- Employees should keep one hand free to hold handrails when using stairs.
- Employees should not carry items that block vision or require both hands when using stairs.
- Clothing that could cause tripping) should be avoided on stairs.

Maintenance is critical to making the workplace safe from slips, trips and falls. Liability for injuries to the public and clients also needs to be taken into consideration. Maintenance of SMDHU buildings including contracts for snow plowing, sanding and salting of parking lots is managed by the landlords of the properties of which SMDHU is a tenant.

The employer will:

- Negotiate with landlords for the landlord and contracted companies to provide timely snow plowing, sanding and salting of parking lots before and when required during work hours. will have worn or uneven flooring, loose rugs or tiles repaired in a timely manner
- Maintain stair safety by ensuring handrails, lighting and tread surfaces are in good condition

Staff will:

- Sprinkle de-icer on walkways during the winter if conditions become slippery and if physically capable, assist with light clearing snow off walkways or steps if snow accumulates during the work day.
- Report concerns related to conditions in an office parking lot via a Facilities Helpdesk Ticket and/or for urgent issues via direct communication to Facilities.
- Promptly clean spills and tracked water inside buildings, and post warning signs as needed

***Related Policies and Guidelines:***

HS0101 Agency Health and Safety

HS0105 Injury/Illness While in the Course of Employment: WSIB

***Related Forms***

HS0105 (F1) Potential or Existing Unsafe Workplace Condition

HS0105 (F2) Near Miss

HS0105 (F3A) Employee Incident Report

***Final Approval Signature:*** \_\_\_\_\_

Review/Revision History:

October 2025 Policy re-numbered, previous number B2.130

Revised November 26, 2025