

Pedestrian Safety in the Workplace

Information Sheet

December, 2013

This information sheet deals with pedestrian safety in fixed and temporary workplaces. It is aimed at employers, self-employed people and people in control of places of work. It explains the importance of managing pedestrians in workplaces where vehicles, mobile plant or machinery operates.

Pedestrians can be exposed to potential harm in their own workplaces from vehicle movements, falling objects, or slips, trips and falls. Particular attention should be paid to visitors and visiting workers, e.g delivery drivers, who are unfamiliar with workplace operations. It is very important that visitors are supervised and controlled from the time they enter a workplace to the time they leave.

Who is at risk?

On average twenty people a year are killed by being run over, crushed or otherwise injured by vehicles in Irish workplaces. Many others suffer serious injuries.

Pedestrians are people who travel on foot in the workplace. They can be employees, members of the public or visiting workers. Where vehicles operate, people can be particularly vulnerable. This is why proper controls must be put in place to keep them from harm. Visitors especially can create risks for themselves and others because they are not familiar with the premises and the work activities.

What the law requires

By law pedestrians and vehicles must be able to circulate safely both in indoor and outdoor places of work. Pedestrian routes must be clearly identified and be of appropriate dimensions for the number of users and the work activities. Vehicle routes must have sufficient clearance from doors, gates and routes used by pedestrians. Where vehicles and pedestrians share routes, there must be adequate safety clearance between the vehicles and the pedestrians. Where self-propelled work equipment is in use, procedures must be in place to prevent pedestrians from entering the work area. If employees must enter the work area, appropriate procedures must be in place to protect the employees from harm.



Duty of person in charge of workplace

An employer or person in charge of a place of work has a duty to:

- **Control pedestrians** entering the place of work, For example; by using access gates, barriers or doors.
- **Separate vehicle and pedestrian traffic.** Where possible, this should be done at the entrance to the workplace, such as; separate vehicle and pedestrian entrances and routes directly from the road and throughout the premises.
- **Identify where vehicles and pedestrians interact or meet.** Hot spot mapping of potential danger zones is useful.
- **Provide**
 - o separate defined routes for pedestrians, away from vehicles (both inside and outside buildings)
 - o barriers or guard rails at building entrances and exits, at corners and other areas as appropriate in order to prevent pedestrians from walking straight out into the paths of vehicles
 - o clearly marked pedestrian routes:
 - where possible, follow the normal path that pedestrians would take (which is usually the shortest route to a location)
 - mark traffic routes with a permanent safety colour (red, yellow or amber, blue or green)
 - marked vehicle routes as continuous lines in a clearly visible colour (preferably white or yellow), taking account of the colour of the ground
 - o barriers to protect marked pedestrian walkways and vehicle operating areas
 - o building entrances with separate doorways for vehicles and pedestrians
 - o vision panels on all doors
 - o well marked and clearly signposted crossing points indicating who has priority
 - o barriers, rails or deterrent paving where vehicle and pedestrian routes intersect, in order to direct pedestrians to the designated crossing points
 - o clear warning and traffic management signs
 - o strictly enforced 'NO GO' exclusion zones for vehicles and pedestrians
 - o protection systems on warehouse racking to protect people from potential falling items, if pedestrian route passes behind pallets of racking
- **Make sure that**
 - o vehicle warning devices and flashing beacons are functioning at all times
 - o pedestrians wear high visibility clothing
 - o vehicles have high visibility markings
 - o the workplace is well lit
 - o visitors are accompanied at your workplace at all times unless they are familiar with your premises, traffic management system and safe systems of work
- **Limit vehicle movement** in specific work areas at busy pedestrian times, such as break times, shift changes or home time.
- **Provide** a safe waiting area for visiting drivers during vehicle loading and unloading.

Managing visiting pedestrians

Factors affecting pedestrian safety

- Knowledge of workplace: visiting pedestrians are likely to be unfamiliar with the workplace and work activities
- Types of pedestrians: older people and children suffer from more serious injuries than other age groups in pedestrian-vehicle accidents
- Vehicle speeds: higher vehicle speeds increase both the likelihood of a pedestrian being struck by a vehicle and the severity of injury
- Alcohol and drugs: drivers and pedestrians who are impaired are at an increased risk of pedestrian-vehicle accidents and injury severity

Additional measures to manage visitors at retail and wholesale premises

- **Warn them** – this includes use of universal symbols that do not require reading skills. Where written information is necessary it should be available in several languages (if required) and displayed at entrances. Messages should indicate what pedestrians should do and where they should go.
- **Control them** – prevent visitors from entering prohibited areas. The use of barriers and segregated areas is recommended.
- **Equip them** – providing visitors with the same personal protective equipment (PPE) as employees is advisable (presuming employees have adequate protection).
- **Stay with them** – visitors should be accompanied by someone who knows the dangerous areas and who can make sure visiting pedestrians do not have access to these areas.

What pedestrians should do

- Always report to workplace reception, site office or person in charge.
- Wear high visibility clothing when working in the vicinity of moving vehicles and equipment.
Remember:
you are not always visible to drivers.
- Follow signs, road markings, speed limits and one-way systems.
- Do not enter 'No Pedestrian' zones or 'Vehicles Only' zones.
- Do not walk beside moving vehicles.
- Do not approach a moving vehicle; wait until the driver acknowledges your presence.
- Never walk behind a reversing vehicle.
Remember: vehicles can have blind spots.
- Keep a safe distance from moving vehicles.



Further information

Information on managing vehicles and pedestrians at work is available on our website at www.vehiclesatwork.ie or by contacting the **Workplace Contact Unit** at **LoCall: 1890 289 389** (between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday).

Keep pedestrians safe where you work



Warn them



Control them



Equip them



Stay with them

