Grocery Store Safety Meeting Kit



THE RISKS FOR GROCERY STORE WORKERS IN FOOD RETAIL

Grocery store work can be physically demanding. Depending on the services offered, (bakery, butcher, deli, floral, etc.) you could be exposed to heat, sharp cutting instruments, and repetitive motion.

1. **Lifting and Carrying – Workers and others are harmed**

- a load is too heavy, it's difficult to grasp, or it's too large
- the physical effort is too strenuous
- they are required to bend and twist when handling heavy loads.

When a person reaches for items above shoulder height, their back becomes arched and their arms act as long levers. This makes the load difficult to control and significantly increases the risk of injury.

Injuries and conditions can include:

- muscle sprains and strains
- injuries to muscles, ligaments, intervertebral discs and other structures in the back
- injuries to soft tissues such as nerves, ligaments and tendons in the wrists, arms, shoulders, neck or legs
- abdominal hernias
- chronic pain.

1. **Slips, Trips and Falls – Workers and others are harmed**

- working at height without proper fall protection
- not following safe work procedures
- working on surfaces that are slippery or uneven
- over exertion
- insufficient training or planning
- using the wrong tool for the job, for example, using a ladder when it's not safe to do so.

What to do

First you must always eliminate the risk where you're reasonably able to. Where you're not reasonably able to, then you need to consider what you can do to

minimise the risk. Examples when using ladders and stepladders:

1. **Lone Working – Workers and others are harmed**

Lone workers can be at greater risk of threats, verbal or physical violence. This can affect workers physically and mentally, resulting in increased stress levels, decreased emotional wellbeing, reduced coping strategies and lower work performance.

What to do

- Is there a safe way in and out of the workplace, for example, for a lone person working out of regular business hours where the workplace could be locked up?
- What is the risk of violence and/or aggression?
- Are there any reasons why the individual might be more vulnerable than others and be particularly at risk if they work alone (for example, if they are young, pregnant, have a medical condition, are disabled, or a trainee)?
- Does the workplace present other specific risks to the lone worker, for example, handling equipment, such as portable ladders or trestles, that one person could have difficulty handling?
- Are chemicals hazardous substances being used that may pose a particular risk someone working alone?
- Does the work involve lifting objects too large for one person?

1. **Violence – Workers and others are harmed.**

Violence at work can include attempted or actual physical assault, verbal abuse, intimidation, and low-level threatening behaviour.

Violence or threats of violence can come from customers, co-workers or even a worker’s family members or acquaintances.

What to do

- workplace layout (for example, a workplace layout must, so far as is reasonably practicable, allow people to enter, exit and move about without risks to health and safety.
- workplace policies and procedures (for example, how to deal with customers including what unacceptable behaviour is and what to do about it)
- what to do in an emergency (for example, you must also provide adequate first aid equipment/facilities and access to first aiders)
- training (for example, you must provide your workers with the training/supervision they need to work safely, such as procedures for working safely)
  other security measures:
    - Panic buttons/duress alarms to seek help and alert other workers to potential danger.
    - CCTV with warning signs.

FINAL WORD

Every business has a responsibility to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of workers, and that others are not put at

risk by the work of the business.